



Terms of Reference available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/mutuals-taskforce>

### **Overview**

Agreed that the Taskforce would have an aspiration of getting 1 million (15%) public sector workers into mutuals by 2015. While still recognising that this has to be grassroots led.

Discussion of what constitutes a mutual and the importance of employee ownership and/or employee-leadership. It was discussed whether a mutual would normally mean that employees own 51% of the organisation.

Taskforce to send existing papers or information on different organisational models for consideration.

### **Rights to Provide – Departments**

Following a discussion on the areas of public service which the Taskforce should focus on, the following service areas were shortlisted:

- CLG - Local Government.
- MOJ – Probation and Youth Offending Teams
- DH – Social Care and potentially wider NHS (Foundation Trusts etc).
- DfE – Sure Start and youth services.
- BIS – Further Education
- Civil Service – Director of Commercial to be invited to the next Taskforce meeting.

Service areas not to be pursued at this stage (but remain within scope) are primarily the responsibility of:

- DWP
- Home Office
- Defra
- DECC
- DCMS
- Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) – as the focus of the Taskforce is the wider public sector.

Representative from EOA to provide data collected from the *pro bono* Mutuals Information Service, provided with help from the Employee Ownership Association and Co-ops UK<sup>1</sup>. This will be analysed at the next meeting to refine or amend the areas identified above.

### **Rights to Provide and Cross Cutting Barriers**

<sup>1</sup> Forerunner of Cabinet Office Mutuals Information Service

Generic and service specific barriers to be considered at the next meeting. The barriers will then be prioritised, in line with refined list of priority areas. One or more of the following actions will then be agreed:

- Papers commissioned
- Organisations/individuals invited to Taskforce.
- Meetings arranged.

Agreed that it would be helpful to put a call for evidence on the Cabinet Office website.

Taskforce need to understand the reasons why managers below Chief Executives are blocking mutuals from developing. Taskforce to invite people to further meeting to gain an understanding of these issues.

Agreed that an understanding of the key elements of success would be important. Member of Taskforce to send round paper to be discussed at the next Taskforce meeting.

### **Mutuals Support Programme**

Some individual members of Taskforce declared a potential interest in the MSP. This interest will need to be managed.

A general discussion on what support mutuals may need took place which included the following:

- Access to finance, including start up costs and support to grow. Role of Big Society Bank.
- Shared learning /action research.
- Need to learn from previous work (e.g. Social Enterprise Investment Fund).
- The Chair indicated that he believed the information line should be funded.
- Member of the Taskforce indicated that any potential provider needs to understand the mutual model(s) and that quality assurance of specialist suppliers are important.

### **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy**

Agreed that the Taskforce will produce working papers / pamphlets where possible, to support organisations currently facing barriers. Comments will be invited from stakeholders to inform future versions of the documents.

A report to be published in 6 months. The Chair to draft a structure. The possibility of some short working papers on priority issues, e.g. procurement, was discussed.

Role of Unions discussed. Taskforce agreed need to build narrative around the role of unions in mutual model(s). To be considered when reviewing

evidence submitted to Taskforce.

Stakeholders to be considered:

- Devolved administrations
- Financial organisations

**Minister for the Cabinet Office**

Informal discussion took place.

**Future Meetings**

15.30 – 17.30 as follows:

17<sup>th</sup> March

7<sup>th</sup> April

5<sup>th</sup> May

26<sup>th</sup> May

All Taskforce members to indicate if these dates are suitable.