

Minutes from the Birmingham Strategic Partnership Programme Board 12th July 2007

Present: David Cragg (LSC, Chair); Jon Bright (BCC, Vice-chair); Sophia Christie (PCT); Supt Carl Foulkes (for CSupt Paul Scarrott, WMP) Joy Warmington (BRAP); Elaine Elkington (BCC); Paul Tilsley (BCC); Brian Carr (BVSC).

Supporting officers, observers and guests: Dr Naomi Rees (BSP Partnership Manager, notes); Richard Kenny (BSP Performance Manager); Jayne Bench (for Peter Woodall, BCC); and Jackie Mould (BSP Director).

Item 1, 2 and 3: Apologies, minutes and action points

Member apologies were received from Anil Patani, Les Lawrence/Tony Howell and Stephen Hughes. The notes were agreed as accurate.

Item 4: LAA review and LAA assessment

There were 3 separate but related issues under this agenda item; the Annual LAA Self-Assessment, the agenda for GOWM review meeting on 27th July 2007 and a letter requesting views on a number of issues related to LAA/BSP development.

Richard Kenny presented the LAA Annual Self-Assessment report saying that, as it showed positions against targets, it would form the basis for the negotiation process with GOWM at the meeting on 27th July. The draft agenda for the meeting was tabled. Sophia Christie was delighted to note that health issues were not highlighted on the agenda, which was very different from the last LAA/GOWM meeting.

Richard said it was his impression that GOWM would not look at each indicator in turn but were more interested in exploring how the partnership was working together to address off-track performance and capturing joint areas of work. Richard said they were seeking a strategic discussion on community engagement. GOWM had raised concerns about the strength of the engagement of the Economic Development LAA block and questioned whether it was capturing all the relevant regeneration issues or if there was a 'disconnect'. There was also an interest in whether the LAA was beginning to make a difference in the priority wards and what process was in place to capture the future changes in those areas.

A number of comments were made;

- The LAA annual review meeting should concentrate on the delivery captured in the LAA. A great deal of work has taken place outside the LAA and integration is beginning to happen, particularly around the economic development issues. Those involved in this process of integration could usefully be present at the meeting.
- Most of the available information at a ward level either predates the LAA (i.e. there is no new information that GOWM have not seen already) or is unlikely to show dramatic change within 1 year. The group agreed it was more important to demonstrate how the partnership picks up and responds to 'closing the gap' challenges.
- The core team for the LAA annual review would be Anil Patani, Sophia Christie, Paul Tilsley, Stephen Hughes and Jon Bright with Ifor Jones, Elaine Elkington and others attending to cover specific issues. Jackie Mould and Richard Kenny would prepare a more detailed line-up over

the next few days and agree these by e-mail. A pre-meeting on 27th July would also be arranged.

- The group agreed that it was important not to allow the meeting to be sucked down into detail, particularly for indicators where small numbers at ward level, make big distortions. GOWM had been present at PB meetings when the detail had been discussed. It was more important to be clear and consistent about how the partnership is managing risk.
- The group agreed that clarification should be sought from GOWM about how the city/region MAA developments, the sub-regional proposals in the housing green paper, and the recent changes in central government would sit with and/or influence the new LAA.

Jackie Mould introduced the letter sent to PB members seeking views on a number of issues, particularly around priority outcomes to be feed into the new LAA and things that will be explored at the PB away day planned for October 2007. A few comments were made;

- The away day needed to be placed in dairies as soon as possible.
- There was some urgency in considering staffing issues in terms of succession and recruiting, within this the last NRF year. The chair indicated this would be picked up later in the agenda.
- The 27th July meeting and BSP stocktake (item 6) would inform the planning and content for the awayday.
- The development of the new LAA would be a standing item on the PB agendas.
- Jackie Mould would continue to visit each LAA block to ensure the timetable stayed on track.

Action : Jackie Mould/Richard Kenny would organise the necessary arrangements for the 27th July meeting. The PB away day would be in Oct and placed in dairies as soon as possible. Partners would respond to the letter, to Richard Kenny, within two weeks.

Item 5: Community engagement

Jackie presented the paper on community engagement. It considered previous work and also summarised the key issues raised by PB members she had spoken to. She said it was clear that there was a lot of good practice going on by public sector bodies already. The gap that the BSP could help with was around co-ordination, setting clear LAA compliant outcomes, encouraging effective community engagement within the proposed single neighbourhood programme and developing bespoke cross-cutting activity as opportunities and funding emerge.

The group welcomed the direction taken in the paper but asked that it be made crystal clear that the BSP was not seeking to get involved in service delivery engagement or statutory requirements to consult on key decisions. These processes remain the responsibility of the relevant public agency. In a similar vein the BSP community engagement process would not attempt to do things that others were responsible for. The BSP activity would be complimentary, not separate or new, and 'go with the grain'.

The high level outcomes for the BSP community engagement strategy are :

Outcome 1	To communicate and consult effectively with local people about their experiences of living and working in Birmingham and their aspirations for the future
Outcome 2	To help to improve service delivery to local people that is appropriate and meets their needs
Outcome 3	To enable the development of strong, successful and cohesive communities by building social capital
Outcome 4	To support the development of active citizens who are able to influence local decisions and play a full role in civil society

The group also agreed that further work was needed on working up the suggested outcomes, which were more about processes, so that they can be tracked. Members agreed the proposals for 'local engagement links' which are not just 'health links' as stated in the paper. This was originally mentioned in the white paper and there was an opportunity to influence how it could be done in Birmingham.

The group agreed that the new community engagement process needed a different approach and an appropriate infrastructure model. The group noted that previous tension within communities arose because there were 2 geographically representation mechanisms and therefore agreed that the new model would not encourage or support competing structures. The new model of community engagement had to be able to deliver and performance manage the outcomes, be consistent with other BSP developments at city, constituencies and neighbourhoods, acknowledge the role of communities of interest, keep abreast of national developments and build on existing opportunities with sustainable funding.

With those criteria in mind the proposal agreed by the PB was to have a small team to facilitate co-ordination across the constituencies supporting communities of interest, with a volunteer presence within neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood presence would form part of the single neighbourhood programme and would need some support to make them more demographically representative and fit for purpose. The group felt it was very important to unlock the new system from any one organisation or past way of working, but acknowledged there were valuable opportunities to build on the existing neighbourhood forums and the information collected on community of interest by b:cen.

The support package for neighbourhood forums would be an open competition as will the staff needed to form a small team to focus on communities of interest across constituencies.

In the meantime the funding to both BANF and b:cen would end in September 2007 and they, and others, will be invited to tender and/or apply for these opportunities. A letter from Paul Tilsley, as chair of BSP, would be sent to b:cen and BANF to inform them of these decisions and opportunities.

Summary of decisions made:

- Progress so far will confirm that each key agency has a range of statutory duties to consult which sit outside the scope of partnership activity, but which would be highlighted to the team for the database;
- The 'outcome' approach was welcomed and the content approved but agreed currently descriptive processes and will be re-written as outcomes;
- The database will be of 'engagement' activity not just specific consultations;
- A task group will be set up;

- Existing spend will be pulled back into a commissioning pot which current providers can bid against for specific areas of work; there will be a continuing commitment to maintain a network of neighbourhood forums;
- Proposals to develop a small community engagement team to work across constituencies will be developed further
- The Board will identify key priorities for community engagement as part of the LAA;
- The framework will consider the requirements of the Health and Local Government white papers for community petitions and development of LINKs.

Action : Jackie to;

- take on the comments raised by PB members,
- work up the community engagement outcomes into a commissioning framework and shape the new LAA around this,
- develop a database of community engagement activities underway by partners,
- develop a community engagement task-group (the suggested members are Pam Dixon, John Grayland, link to constituencies, Candy Passmore, Joy Warmington (chair) and Brian Carr (vice-chair))
- further develop the links to the voluntary sector assembly.

Paul Tilsley, as chair of BSP, to send a letter to b:cen and BANF to inform them of the PB decisions and opportunities.

Item 6: Directors report – BSP stocktake

Jackie explained that the stocktake was to reposition the BSP and develop a joined up approach to the new LAA, while addressing the challenge of phasing out the NRF, streamlining the staffing accordingly and developing the BSP support team to provide a stronger delivery function. Jackie said that some posts were directly related to NRF projects, others to administratively running the programme and she had identified 64 staff in partnership manager roles (4% of total NRF). Some staff already had succession plans in place and each NRF project have been asked to describe their exit strategy. She planned, by September, to have fully costed scenarios for the PB to consider.

Jon Bright said that the BCC cabinet were aware of these issues (a paper went in November 2006) and they would reconsider at the end of July 2007. In the meantime the BSP had to consider the most critical issues given there is no guarantee of like-for-like replacement funding.

External support was being negotiated for the BSP stocktake and a small task and finish group would be needed to guide the process. Jerry Le Sueur had been selected and had undertaken a BSP stocktake previously. The group agreed that he could be considered at this stage of the process.

The group acknowledged that the BSP developments were not just about structure and frequency of meetings, but there was an important organisational design element as well. This would help develop a BSP vehicle for the future. The group agreed that Jackie would circulate the specification for Jerry Le Sueur's piece of work to the PB members. The project group (suggested as Elaine Elkington, Jerry Blacklett and Sophia Christie) would guide the urgent content/structure work and commission an organisational design expert thereafter.

Action: Jackie Mould to circulate the specification for the BSP stocktake and agree through written procedures. Jackie Mould would call a meeting of the taskgroup.

Item 7: Performance board

Jon Bright said that with a greater focus on collective responsibility and the central role of the LAA, the BSP needed a strong response with regard to performance. The proposal was to establish a performance board, meeting quarterly, chaired by the BCC Chief Executive. This would reinforce the BCCs role as the accountable body and further align the LAA with BCC delivery. The role of BCC in this group was not to prescribe to the partners but rather to be challenged against delivery, as every other partner.

The group agreed with the proposal provided the performance board did not function as a scrutiny body, confuse or cut across statutory responsibility, duplicate other negotiations/developments or confuse the function of the PB. The group agreed with the observation that the performance board would be high on significance but light on process and be constructed from the previous performance group. The role of the performance board should be to solve under-performance on an inter-agency basis. Jackie reminded the group that there would be 4 meetings before the new LAA was in place, so there would be an early opportunity to review the effectiveness of the proposal.

Action : Jackie Mould/Jon Bright to ensure the performance board meetings are scheduled in.

Item 8: Innovation and Development Fund

Brian Carr declared an interest.

Jackie said there were more project than funding available and after a process of review she was recommending 4 projects be funded as they fit most closely with the BSP objectives.

After some discussion the group agreed that Jackie should consider the points raised by several PB members on the community facilitator project proposal, particularly around exit strategy and link to the community engagement developments discussed earlier in the meeting. Jackie would also consider whether and how the financial inclusion proposals added-value to the other council work. Jackie would also consider how the compact project, put to one side due to lack of funding, might be advanced while it waited for funding to become available. The other two projects; social corporate social responsibility and voluntary sector assembly gained agreement.

Action : Jackie Mould to further reconsider the community facilitators, financial inclusion and compact projects and agree through written procedures.

Item 9: Pump priming grant

Richard described the rationale for allocating the LPSA grant between 4 projects; essentially these had the greatest chance of meeting their associated targets and gaining a reward grant. The BSP would identify a project officer to define with the relevant groups, what could be commissioned for £75K each, to reach the target. Richard reminded the group that it is likely that the new LAA will contain some sort of

a cross-partner incentive system and this current LPSA/BSP process might help inform the partnership about how this might work.

Action : Jackie Mould to identify a project officer to lead this piece of work and the projects would be agreed through written procedures.

Item 10: Forward planning information

This was for information only.

AOB

Sophia Christie asked who represented the CYP on the PB and was it strong enough for the LAA developments. Jackie said she would ensure this was reflected in the BSP stocktake.

Next meeting

Thursday 13th September 2007, 9:00-10:30am at LSC, 15 Bartholomew Row, Conference room 1