

Minutes from the Birmingham Strategic Partnership Programme Board 15th May 2007

Present: David Cragg (LSC, Chair); Jon Bright (BCC, Vice-chair); ACC Anil Patani (WMP); Sophia Christie (PCT); Les Lawrence (BCC); CSupt Paul Scarrott (WMP); Elaine Elkington, (BCC); Joy Warmington (BRAP); Jerry Blackett (Chamber of Commerce); Brian Carr (BVSC); Stephen Hughes (BCC); Paul Tilsley (BCC).

Supporting officers, observers and guests: Dr Naomi Rees (BSP Partnership Manager, notes); Mashuq Ally (BCC); Philippa Holland (GOWM); Richard Kenny (BSP Performance Manager); Louise Collett (BCC); Ifor Jones (BCC); Jackie Mould (BSP Director); Jayne Bench (for Peter Woodall (BCC)).

Item 1, 2 and 3: Apologies, minutes and matters arising

Apologies were received from Jason Lowther. The notes were agreed as accurate and outstanding matters were on the agenda.

Item 4: Local Area Agreement Final Outturn 2006/7 (Appendix 1)

The group noted that the overall NRF outturns for 2006/7 achieved 100% spend. The group also noted that the speed of spend at the end of the program may have reduced opportunities for strategically addressing objectives. It would be even more important to see the 'pace of spend' within the final year of NRF so that a more responsive approach could be developed.

Item 5: Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Proposed Allocations 2007/8 (Appendix 2)

There were three parts to this agenda item, 2007/8 allocations, financial guidance and governance arrangements and evaluation. Each part was taken in turn and actions agreed can be found below.

2007/8 allocation (Appendix 3)

The chair asked the group to confirm the proposed 2007/8 allocation, following on from and inline with previous discussions. More recently, associated with internal reorganisation within the Home Office, the Stronger and Safer Communities block would experience a shortfall of £195K and the chair suggested that this was reimbursed as a priority. Anil Patani gained approval that the partnership would register concern. Paul Tilsley also promised that the BCC would also express their concern over the unexpected loss of funds.

Action: Anil Patani and Jon Bright/Jackie Mould to identify ways of reinstating the loss to the SSC block, making adjustments elsewhere. Anil Patani and Paul Tilsley to register concern over the SSC fund reductions from the partnership and BCC respectively.

Financial guidance and governance arrangements

This followed on from the March 2007 Programme Board discussion. Jackie Mould told the group that the financial and governance arrangements were currently being

revised in line with the recent grant determination and audit report and would be brought forward to the June meeting. The proposal would be to have monthly monitoring statements and a set of 'shelf' projects, which would be ready to fund should shortfalls become apparent.

Paul Tilsley felt that any process that was developed would not kick in before September while Paul Scarrott said that a system that could respond quicker than 6 months was necessary to effectively contribute to this critical final year of the PSA 1. Les Lawrence felt that any attempt to clawback ward NRF would invoke a response by councillors that would slow down the process. He suggested that this be removed. The group also questioned the feasibility of monthly reporting and agreed that quarterly reporting was more likely. While the group agreed that the BSP chair (Paul Tilsley), PB chair (David Cragg) and Jon Bright should be in a position to make one-off interventions as opportunities emerge, the existing opportunities for match funding/aligning particularly with respect to local tasking within wards should be utilised to the full. The PSA1 remained a challenge for the whole partnership.

Action: Jon Bright would prepare a more detailed paper for the next meeting taking on board the comments raised by the group. BSP team to produce guidelines for constituencies and blocks including quarterly financial reporting arrangements.

Evaluation

Jackie Mould updated the group on the proposed evaluation of the NRF program. She suggested that a number of previous evaluations be reviewed independently and seek to describe the impact achieved and provide suggestions for future strategies. The group agreed with this approach and Joy Warmington made an additional observation that the evaluation process should also comment on the mainstreaming lessons.

Action: Jackie Mould to produce an NRF evaluation brief.

Item 6: LAA Allocations 2007/8

This was for information only. Points were raised on the whether funds were pooled and the Home Office reductions in support in the SSC block.

Item 7: Report from Anil Patani on the PSA1 target (reduce crime by 20%)

Anil Patani stated that the paper was for information and served as a marker for further discussion. Crime rates have shown step change reductions every two years but this shift had not happened, as expected, this year. He felt this was a combination of diminishing returns and the increasing importance/influence of the underlying social factors. The crime rates therefore cannot be seen in isolation and there was a real risk that the target will be missed. Failure to achieve the PSA 1 target at this stage, given Birmingham's performance over the last two years would impact on both credibility and reputation.

Anil Patani described how he wanted to proceed. There were four Constituencies that, if targeted, could deliver the necessary performance to achieve the PSA 1 target. He wanted the commitments from the partners to help achieve the PSA1. While the group agreed that constituencies/wards should be encourage aligning activities for the maximum benefit of reducing crime, this should not divert funding from other critical issues within their area.

Action: Ifor Jones and Anil Patani to explore ways of lining up activity within the priority Constituencies.

Item 8: Lozells report

Mashuq Ally summarised the events leading up to the production of the Black Radley report and outlined the main points from the analysis and key recommendations. The nature of the Lozells disturbance was described as a combination of context, fault line and flare up and recommendations were proposed under three headings; designing in links, developing personal relationships and vision building.

Anil Patani expressed his disappointment about progress since discussions held over a year ago. He was not sure that a largely conceptual report would convince people that things would be different. The 6 projects established last year (on Community Consultation & Empowerment, Youth Engagement and Services, Inter/Intra Community Engagement, Safe Environment and Neighbourhoods, Community Intelligence and Tensions and Socio-Economic Issues and Perceptions) didn't appear to influence the direction of the report. He felt the report went back to first principles than set a framework for action on the ground.

Stephen Hughes replied that while a great deal of useful work had been done on 6 themes it was difficult to bind them together. There were inconsistency and some conflicting conclusions suggesting a rather more complex picture than first thought. The consultant was brought in to independently and robustly identify clear messages. The Community Cohesion Forum was now carrying out a mapping process and exploring how improvements can be measured. The Lozells report had been fundamental in describing the depth and importance of the underlying deep rooted social and economic disadvantages. Phillipa Holland suggested that the new style LAA provided an opportunity to develop these issues further.

Paul Tilsey agreed the report had merit particularly on describing the extent of the issues in a neutral way. He felt projects, particularly on worklessness and encouraging people to have a stake in their communities, would be beneficial and asked whether there would be any extra GOWM support. Joy Warmington highlighted the importance of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation research on ethnicity and poverty as it critically examined the types of interventions that add value. Elaine Elkington saw linkages with other work stream such as housing allocations and she felt that there were some positive developments to feed into the process.

Paul Scarrott, as commander responsibility for Handsworth and Lozells, highlighted the importance of rooting out firearms, drugs and gangs ahead of addressing the underlying issues. It was his view that economic development could/would not take place until the criminal culture had been challenged. Sophie Christie noted that any work that builds self-esteem and reliance, particularly in preparing young men for employment, would also help reduce drug use. The Chair (David Cragg) agreed that community cohesion is a big long-term issue and requires a broader partnership approach. The work the LSC is developing around individualised focus with NEETs can also contribute to this agenda. Anil Patani agreed that the Community Cohesion Forum was the best vehicle to move this agenda forward and the BSP partners should see community cohesion as a priority.

Action: Jon Bright and Jackie Mould to consider how this issue can be further developed given the role of the Community Cohesion Forum.

Item 9: Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder

Mashuq Ally described the bidding process that led to £525K being agreed for Birmingham. There were 3 areas of work (supporting mosques, working with young people and engaging the media) and a project board was being established to develop performance indicators and governance arrangements. The fund would be managed by the SSC with the equality division taking the leading on behalf of the BCC, the accountability body. Mashuq felt the project ideas needed further development and the BSP partners would be involved in this.

Anil Patani asked why, given the guidance stated that safer and stronger block, local police and partners and the partnership be informed/included/involved, that he was unaware of these developments. It was a part of a common interest; ensuring the safety of the community. While he agreed the BCC was best placed to lead the process he felt the SSC governance arrangements should be utilised rather than a separate process. Stephen Hughes accepted the points raised by Anil Patani.

Action: It was agreed that Jackie Mould organise a meeting of Anil Patani, Stephen Hughes, Paul Tilsley and Jon Bright to discuss further outside the meeting.

Item 10: Community Engagement

Brian Carr declared an interest.

Jon Bright told the group that the paper was a progress report as the group had met twice since the last PB meeting and he was simply seeking views on the list of suggested options.

Brian Carr made a few observations; the option of merging BANF and bcen was not a possibility, the table in appendix 1 was not complete, other options might be achievable by combining/configuring those presented and the why/what questions about community engagement still needed further development. Sophia Christie felt the document was helpful but raised two challenging points. Firstly the paper seemed to propose options about 'engagement through groups' and she felt an engagement process dependent on stringing structures together may not add value. There were experts within the partner agencies that might be able to provide a useful view. Secondly she asked what was being considered. Each partner agency had a role to do community engagement and had commissioning systems. The challenge was to articulate what the partnership needed over and above that, a collective response that must be nested within the partnership.

There was some further discussion on the options presented and Jon Bright thanked the group for their comments.

Action: Jackie Mould to organise bilateral meetings with partners to further develop the proposal.

Item 11: Neighbourhood approach

Jon Bright told the group that the paper described some early thoughts about developing a single Neighbourhood Programme. The framework would be developed around a clear assessment of need, focus on the Council Plan/LAA targets in each neighbourhood and be based on an outcome focussed planning approach. A meeting had taken place with the guide neighbourhoods and 4 blocks. Constituencies would

oversee these developments with the expectation that other neighbourhood based activity such as neighbourhood policing would 'meet' and share good practice. The group thanked Jon for the early discussions and offered to further develop the proposal outside the meeting.

Action: Jackie Mould to

- Arrange further discussions with partners to test out the idea
- Consult with priority neighbourhoods and constituencies
- Consult with the BCC Policy network
- Produce a joint BCC/BSP proposition on a single neighbourhood programme for the July Programme Board meeting
- Set up shadow Neighbourhoods Performance Board to consult further and refine the proposals and oversee work already underway on the Neighbourhood Area Agreement

Item 12: Supporting people

Elaine Elkington said that the paper was put before the PB to start a conversation as the Supporting People fund would be pooled into the LAA in 2009. Louise Collett would be the accountability officer. Both the CYP and HWP were already involved and Elaine was keen to make links across the other two blocks. The group offered their support and asked for a further discussion at a further meeting.

Action: This will be scheduled at the next appropriate meeting.

Item 13: Constituency Strategic Partnerships

This would be discussed more fully at the next meeting. Anil Patani made the observation that Paul Scarrott, with a lead responsibility for BSP/CSP linkages, should be involved and would be able to describe the key learning points when the Police developed the Local Delivery Groups. David Cragg pointed out that the LSC was operating at a city/region and increasingly at the neighbourhood interface and the proposed 3 clusters would be an issue for his organisation.

Action: This will be considered at the next meeting.

Item 14: Innovation development fund

Brian Carr declared an interest.

There was a limited amount of time available for discussion. The group agreed that the 6 projects should be (embedding compact principles, voluntary sector assembly development, alcohol strategy, social corporate responsibility, climate change, anti-poverty) further developed. The group agreed in principle that Jackie Mould could lead on this provided the BSP board were content. Six projects were agreed on principle and would be worked up into full applications for consideration and approval.

Action: Seek approval from the BSP board to proceed with these 6 projects.

Item 15: Directors report

There was a limited amount of time available for discussion. The group agreed that the Director should proceed with the outline work programme, continue to improve the quality of PB papers and seek membership to a CS task group by e-mail.

Action: Jackie Mould to e-mail partners about the CS task group and partner scenario events.

Next meeting

Wednesday 13th June 2007, 9:00-10:30am at Council House, Committee Room 2