



## Be Birmingham Executive Board Brief

The meeting of the executive board on 30th July considered the following:

### Collective action praised

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is government's new way of reporting to residents what it is like living in a particular area and how effectively partnerships are working together to deliver local people's priorities. The assessment will be published on a new website, OnePlace, from mid-December 2009.

As part of the process the Audit Commission attended this month's board to give an outline of their emerging findings for CAA. Audit Commission representatives began by praising Birmingham for its strong partnership working and highlighted good progress in areas including:

- Supporting people into work
- Children's GCSE attainment
- Crime reductions
- Reducing CO<sup>2</sup> emissions
- Reducing health inequalities and infant mortality
- A range of housing issues including meeting the needs of vulnerable people and
- Community engagement

Board members were told that partners clearly understood the scale and complexity of delivering significant benefits to local people and that they had a clear and consistent focus particularly on deprived neighbourhoods which have some of the most entrenched levels of disadvantage in the country.

The commission also highlighted challenges and areas of concern for the city including:

- Child poverty
- The high levels of unemployment
- Continuing to deliver further reductions in health inequalities and infant mortality
- Reducing violent crime
- Adult participation in sport
- The potential impact of the recession on community cohesion

The board was also asked to consider the impact of possible future public sector spending cuts on its planning and delivery processes. Throughout the discussion, the economy was highlighted as pivotal to Birmingham and its citizens' success, whether through wealth generation, housing, health or community safety and cohesion.

The board's latest addition, the Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Rev David Urquhart, also praised Be Birmingham for its range of achievements to date. In addition, he emphasised the value of the Third Sector which he believed would provide huge opportunities if correctly harnessed, particularly within the context of declining resources.





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### Jobs hope for young people

Birmingham is to create 2,000 job placements for young unemployed people and those struggling to find work, thanks to a successful bid into the government's new £1bn Future Jobs Fund.

The aim of Be Birmingham's Future Jobs Fund programme is to provide 1,000 placements for 18 to 24-year-olds who have been claiming benefits for a year or more. A further 1,000 placements will be created for long-term benefit claimants over 25 in unemployment hotspots across Birmingham. The training will be in the public, voluntary and community and private sectors in skills areas relevant to the local economy.

More than 80 prospective employers from across the sectors attended a Be Birmingham event on August 4th to find out how they could provide a young person with a job placement opportunity.

### WNF performance review

As WNF approaches the halfway stage of the three-year programme, the board unanimously agreed that this was the time to review how well the programme was doing.

The review, led by Be Birmingham's director, will identify areas of both success and risk. The successes should be built upon whilst the risk areas should be mitigated against to ensure success by the end of the programme in March 2011.

The board also agreed this review would include Be Birmingham actions to reduce bureaucracy and help streamline the proposal and appraisal processes to ensure they reflect the scale of resources being requested.

Subsequently, the thematic partnerships have been asked to provide full details of their progress and performance including options and contingencies for accelerating delivery.

While some elements are making excellent progress others are not and the board made clear its commitment to take firm action to address the greatest risks. Low levels of expenditure may threaten the success of some of the key LAA targets, especially helping people into work.

### Recession to resurgence summit

The board heard that the last summit at the end of June had received some excellent feedback. The key issues that the summit delegates had identified included:

- More investment in entrepreneurship and social enterprise needed
- Young people needed more help especially with links between education, skills and the future jobs market
- Greater development of Birmingham's micro economy needed
- Total Place programme recognised as the route to more efficient and effective service delivery





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Some members of the board felt that following the success of the first three summits, this was the time to take stock and ensure that key summit messages and actions were not being lost and that the summit work added value to Birmingham.

Subsequently, the thematic partnerships have been asked to ensure they respond to appropriate summit actions, thus strengthening the relationship between the summit and action on the ground.

The next summit on child poverty will take place on October 20th.

### Community engagement

The board considered the proposals to adopt a common standard of practice developed by Be Birmingham's Health and Wellbeing Partnership. A final version will be approved at a future meeting. The board also approved a package of community engagement activities that will be commissioned over the summer.

### The future of the LSC

The Learning & Skills Council Economic Development Director, Michael Kilduff, presented the new planned changes to LSC which will be implemented in post April 2010.

### Governance

Finally, the board signed off its refreshed governance arrangements including membership.

### Next meeting

The next meeting is to be held on 10th September 2009 at 8.30am.

Jackie Mould  
Director

