

Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes
Thursday 16 May 2019
MAPA, 1 Coates Street, BD5 7DL

Meeting Started: 9.30

Meeting Ended: 11.30

Present:

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Rosie McEachan	Programme Director, Born in Bradford
Talat Sajawal	Ward Councillor, CBMDC
Ruth Hayward	Head of Commissioning (Women and Children), Bradford & Craven CCGs
Alex Spragg	Programme Director, Better Start Bradford
Gwen Balson	Community Board member
Ludmila Novosjolova	Community Board member
Satnam Singh	Community Board member
Yaqoob Ayoob	Community Board member

In Attendance

Vicki Smith	Funding Manager, Investment (The National Lottery Community Fund) in place of Gill Hart
Gill Thornton	Head of Programme, Better Start Bradford
Jill Duffy	Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford
Kerry Bennett	Transformation and Integration Manager, Better Start Bradford
Guy Dove	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford
Kausar Iqbal	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

Apologies for Absence:

Kev Taylor	Shaheen Khan	Marium Haque	Gladys Rhodes White
Tracey Hogan	Peter Horner	Sarah Hinton	Zebunnisa Ahmed
Sarah Muckle	Gill Hart	Gemma Priestley	Duncan Cooper

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Vipin welcomed everyone to the meeting, asked everyone to introduce themselves to each other and noted the apologies.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 11 April 2019

In item 5, Gwen asked us to note that her parents moved to Bradford from Dominica and not the Dominican Republic.

With this correction, the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising actions table

Julia is not present to update us on the action point to do with sharing learning among integrated teams in the district. Gill advised that Emma Stafford is picking up the Parents in the Lead work.

Rosie confirmed the Pre-schoolers in the Playground action is in hand and this item can be removed.

4. Declarations of Interest

Yaqoob, Satnam and Gwen represent organisations that have put in bids to the Innovation Fund (item 6), but we will not be discussing their bids at this meeting.

Rosie said she had worked with Peter Day who has put in an Innovation Fund bid from Leeds University to do with oral health, but we will not be discussing this bid today either.

5. 'Getting to know you' session – Alex Spragg

Alex agreed to be recorded for this session.

Alex said as she is new in post she thought this was a good opportunity to share her story. She was born and brought up in Lancashire and her parents lived at the same address from when she was age two until three years ago. They lived in a Lancashire mill town with a lot of interesting heritage but both parents commuted to Manchester and Alex knows the Manchester area very well.

Her parents met at Durham and both trained as teachers and education has always been important in Alex's family. Her mother saw teaching as a vocation but Alex's dad soon realised he did not want to be a teacher and instead he went into youth work and was employed by Greater Manchester Council until it was abolished in the 1980s. He moved to the voluntary sector and became a fundraiser for the Children's Society. Alex was by now a teenager and learned about fundraising and the voluntary sector.

Alex's mother was a primary school teacher specialising in additional needs and training other teachers and was very well known where they lived but she became disillusioned with the SEND reforms. Her parents were also very involved with the local church and Alex's mother was also a Sunday School teacher, and became a children's support worker under the diocese of Blackburn and supported volunteers instead of teachers and learned about working in the voluntary sector in an area where it was important.

Alex has one brother and they both did sports, were involved with the church and guiding/scouting. Alex became a Venture Scout which led to lots of opportunities and activities.

Alex had an inspirational Religious Studies teacher and so decided to do Comparative Religion at GCSE level. Although she was very happy at school it did not offer Religious Studies at A-Level so she moved schools at age 16 to a Blackburn sixth form college which showed her how hard it can be to move and build new relationships. She did not actually take A-Level

Religious Studies but did a degree in it at Edinburgh University, specialising in Islam. This helped her to understand different communities.

Alex picked Edinburgh as she liked the course. It was a four year degree which gave her an extra year to explore what she wanted to do. She spent a summer teaching canoeing at a USA scout camp and another summer in London in an internship at a housing association providing flats for international students in South Kensington. These were often families living in tiny flats and there were students from 24 different countries. Alex realised she wanted to work with people and not in the corporate world and that she did not want to live in London.

In her third year at university she was in a group supporting women into leadership roles and Alex was the only person there who wanted to go into the public sector. She looked for jobs in her final year and became a development officer for Kent Scouts. Alex said Scouting was not in its best state then (the late 1990s) and she was on a staff team supporting volunteers, recruitment and developing new groups and it was hard to get some areas of Kent to respond but there were opportunities as well.

The job had a fixed term contract and when it ended Alex moved to Kids Club Network as a development officer. At the time there was Lottery funding for creating childcare and enabling people to return to work. This role was in Thurrock, then Havering and Alex became project manager of a large project in Essex. At the time Early Years and childcare were developing hugely and Alex was involved in local authority partnerships and structures. Children's centres came onto the horizon and Essex identified a building for one co-located with a youth service and Alex ran a children's centre for 4 Children. She had to write a paper to their Trustee Board to get the organisation to be involved in the project but before she could do the delivery, she got a new role as Strategic Lead of Children's Services at Essex County Council. At the time Essex had the second highest targets in the country in this area and there were lots of capital works and commissioning of children's centres and Alex was involved in leases, planning and she worked with a range of voluntary organisations and was rolling out the children's centre programme.

Alex's family was still in Lancashire and she decided to move nearer and took a role in Staffordshire in Early Years and childcare services about ten years ago. However within 12 months there were huge changes within the local authority and with austerity starting. Alex did four roles in Staffordshire and managed three restructures which was very difficult. The services were thriving but then were diminished and now Capita do all the education support there.

Alex also worked in safeguarding, social care and managed early help which was interesting but Alex did not want to do it long term and is not a social worker. Stoke had some funding for organising co-operative working in people-facing services and Alex brought together 20 local authority staff teams which was exciting. However there were more political changes and the commitment to co-operative working was lost so Alex left local government and went back to the voluntary sector (to Family Action) which felt like coming home. She was a Deputy Director at Family Action covering a huge geographical area, and between 38 and 45 different projects which involved much travelling and although Alex thrived on this it was all-consuming.

Last year her parents decided to downsize and moved near to Bradford and Alex stays with them during the week. Both of them now have health issues and Alex can no longer have an all-consuming job. She needed a career change and all the Early Years things she has done are relevant to the job at Better Start Bradford and also her brother went to Bradford University.

Alex has got to understand her new job more and feels it is meant to be and is really excited about what she can bring. At present her husband and dog live in Staffordshire and Alex lives with her parents during the week. Alex is based in Staffordshire and she and her husband have no children, they have strong links with the local hockey club but Alex will be looking for a property closer to work. Alex has not had time to pursue many interests other than hockey as her previous job was so involved, but now she has more time and is into keeping fit and she said this is an exciting part of the world.

The Partnership Board thanked Alex for her presentation.

6. Innovation Fund applications

(confidential item)

7. Annual Review of Partnership and Governance

Alex explained that an annual review is required in the Partnership Agreement which also needs updating. Further recruitment of community Board members is required and we will look and see if any more changes are needed. There are a number of community Board vacancies coming up.

Alex noted that the buddying scheme has been a mixed success and we need to discuss the support needed for new and existing Board members. She mentioned coffee and chat sessions to do with recruitment and asked if we should do this or for other ideas. Issues for prospective community Board members are childcare and interpreters and Gill said paying for childcare is always an option and we have not been asked for interpreters before but it is a possibility. Alex noted that we need to look at ways to increase attendance at Board meetings which is an issue and make it meaningful and helpful.

Ruth mentioned sustainability and that there is nobody from Children's Services or Public Health present today. Attendance from our statutory partners has declined since Michael Jameson stopped chairing our meetings and this may need attention. Alex agreed and noted there is a lot of change going on at Children's Services and Public Health and she is meeting the new people. Vipin also noted the decrease in attendance and Ruth suggested escalating the matter via Ali Jan Haider. Gill said the issue is for the Strategic Reference Group and Sarah Gibbs from The National Lottery Community Fund is planning some more visits to Bradford. Rosie suggested asking our statutory partners how they find our meetings and Gill remarked that we need them here as we are supposed to be influencing the development of services in the district. There is also the district reference group and BSB have helped data and information sharing to become strong in the district through the partnership.

Vicki noted the amount of the grant stated on page 3 of the Partnership Agreement is incorrect – it should be £48,969,270. Any changes to the document have to go through The National Lottery Community Fund's legal team before it is signed off. Vipin noted there is also the leverage funding from partners which Shaista chases up. Gill confirmed, in response to a query from Gwen, that leverage funding is actual cash being put in. Ruth noted there is other support from partners as well, like attendance at the Commissioning Advisory Group. Partners have a stake in BSB and it is about sustainability, and we need engagement and links for our

legacy now. Ruth remarked that all Health money is committed, and they need a demonstration that something new is worth investing in.

Alex asked if it was worth keeping the buddying scheme and it was decided to keep it as it is. Vipin said we need to agree a process for recruitment and support for new community Board members and it was confirmed that Gwen is working on this with Alex, the FACE Team and Emma Stafford.

The next point was to suggest any improvement to our meetings and Ruth said the minutes are very good. Kerry asked if we had done an anonymous survey of Partnership Board members and Gill confirmed that we had not although a satisfaction survey is proposed.

Vipin said we are trying to schedule a community prep meeting on 17 or 18 June and urged community Board members to respond to Guy's Doodle poll. Gill suggested that we could have a quarterly meetings summary and put the minutes on the website which would be useful for the BSB team.

The final point is about suggesting any other opportunities for Board members to be involved in the BSB Programme. Vipin said this includes attending events and Alex observed with Nurturing Knowledge this year there will be lots of opportunities. She asked that BSB be informed of any training needs and noted that some social media training is planned. Vipin noted that there is a budget for Board member training and the BSB team will circulate the information.

Ludmila said she felt there should be more on Facebook about the Big Little Moments campaign and noted that local parents look at Facebook more than Twitter. Alex noted that Facebook was more about the whole programme and Gill confirmed that 23red can put Big Little Moments on our Facebook site and they do use Twitter. They are not just targeting parents – there are other partners and spheres of influence. Satnam said Twitter is more direct and Vicki confirmed that 23red are doing more targeting and research about demographics, lots of social media, analytics and there are some incredible statistics. Rosie said Born in Bradford have found that Twitter is better for professional contacts and Facebook and Instagram are more for parents. Alex noted that we could do training in other social media. Kerry noted BSB's Instagram account is inactive but will be renewed. Gill also noted that we also have content on YouTube and BSB's Comms team need to keep control and we cannot have a free for all.

Also in the meeting pack was The National Lottery Community Fund's annual overview report of BSB. Alex said this was a positive report and she wanted to share it. Talat asked where the information in the report comes from and Alex confirmed it is from The National Lottery Community Fund's findings and they do meet us and our partners. Vicki said her team have a huge document relating to all five ABS sites and it is peer reviewed.

Talat queried the 'Green' rating for Engagement at the end of the report and suggested organising an independent review of BSB's performance. This could look at learning and pitfalls and what we have learned over the last four years. Vipin said the report is done by The National Lottery Community Fund and is independent and they talk to our partners on the Strategic Reference Group. Alex said we could build on this with lessons learned and we need to involve the people involved and be inclusive.

Yaqoob felt public perception would benefit from an independent review with some locals having a trust issue and we need to get them onside. Ruth said we would need to be clear what we want to review, think of our legacy, and capture some of what we are already influencing and what locals think. Satnam said the report in the meeting pack might be viewed as 'blowing your own trumpet' and remarked that an independent review would stop people saying 'why didn't you do that?' later on. Gill noted the report in the pack was a performance report and we are asking for statistics for the programme monthly report and there is already the NatCen survey, People in the Lead and we will be appointing a Community Engagement Strategic Lead. Ruth added that any independent review should be tied to our original aims and objectives.

Vicki said this discussion is timely because The National Lottery Community Fund is going back to its original aims and objectives. Talat said he did not feel Engagement was so much of a strength and it is key to the whole programme. Without an independent review, he asked how we could move forward and we need a clear picture at ground level of changing communities and mindsets. Rosie agreed this is really important and the new PhD student Laura McLarty will be looking at how well we are engaging (at BSB's request) and Shahid Islam is doing community readiness research which has shown that some communities are not ready for interventions as they have other priorities.

Gwen said engagement should be linked to sustainability which should have a community voice. Talat asked what we are doing about the unready communities and one solution might be employing an Eastern European worker. Gill said the reason we were on Green for engagement was because we have not been sitting still but have responded to challenges, for example; PITL, the neighbourhood project, and the joint work with the Innovation Hub. Alex explained that The National Lottery Community Fund's overview report shows we are progressing as we should be at this stage of the programme, and we are aware of gaps and the academic work just mentioned will give us an understanding of what works.

Rosie mentioned that Welcome to the World had low recruitment and so has been redesigned being explicit about engagement methods. Jill said Improvement Science has been applied – what we try and what we learn.

Action: The BSB team will come back to the Partnership Board with options to do with having an independent performance review.

8. Programme Monthly Report

Gill confirmed that we have received three tenders for the neighbourhood project and the selection panel is meeting tomorrow afternoon.

We held a successful launch event for the Nurturing Knowledge programme on 3 May.

Fiona Saville has been appointed as Interim Community Engagement Co-ordinator for six months as we need someone to oversee the neighbourhood project. We are discussing the vacant Community Engagement Strategic Lead post with Gwen and will bring this to the Partnership Board in July.

We will discuss risk at the June Partnership Board and consider our risk appetite rating again.

Vipin wished to pass on a concern from the community Board members about the level of underspends. Some of this money goes into the Innovation Fund (part of which is Parents in the Lead) and we have discussed underspends before.

Gill confirmed, in response to a query from Talat, that for some projects, not enough resource has gone into data input and so now more resource has been put in. Underspend can be used by projects to improve delivery and effectiveness. An example is that Family Action needed a more diverse team and they used their underspend to appoint a Central and Eastern European worker.

Vipin confirmed that the concern from the community Board members is that if projects are not spending all their budget, they are not doing the whole role that we are paying them for. Ruth observed that these are innovative projects and things will change naturally. Bradford City CCGs should not have money left over and if it does then increasing engagement is a legitimate use for it. A reason for underspend could be staff sickness.

Gill confirmed that projects always need a business case for use of underspend and Gwen said a business plan should have all the communities it is trying to target in it. Talat mentioned the Innovation Fund and said we need to learn that some organisations have costed things wrongly and the case they put forward does not match their delivery. If we are offering support to these organisations then their costings must be right. Alex said we have agreed that approach and our learning will change as projects develop. We need to provide projects with flexibility and are working with them so they can adapt to meet our needs.

Jill said BSB projects undergo comprehensive service design but things change and impact on us. Underspends can arise for legitimate reasons and there is a robust process to deal with them. Gill added that these projects are not just contractors delivering contracts but they are part of our programme and we need to support that and we do monitor them carefully.

9. Any other business

Vipin noted a good wishes message to us from Ruksana Sardar-Akram who used to represent Public Health at our meetings and has now left the local authority. He wished to record our thanks to Ruksana for all her hard work which has made a big difference.

Rosie mentioned Bradford Council's Clean Air strategy which needs consultation with local families and focus groups and she will email the details around.

Vipin thanked MAPA for hosting us.

Finally Vipin asked if everyone had felt they had an opportunity to contribute to this meeting and all agreed that they had. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

10. Date of next meeting

The June meeting needs to be extended by 30 minutes as the agenda is very full. After some discussion it was agreed to provisionally schedule the meeting from 5.30 pm to 8 pm (although BSB will consider a 5pm to 7.30 pm meeting nearer the time).

The next meeting is on Thursday 20 June 2019 at the Mayfield Centre (with a 5.30 pm start to be confirmed).

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.