

**Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes  
Thursday 17 October 2019  
Mayfield Centre**

**Meeting Started:** 17:30

**Meeting Ended:** 19:00

**Present:**

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Ruth Hayward	Head of Commissioning (Women and Children), Bradford & Craven CCGs
Sarah Hinton	Board Member, Bradford Trident
Fareeda Mir	Ward Councillor, CBMDC (items 1 to 6 only)
Alex Spragg	Programme Director, Better Start Bradford
Tracey Hogan	Voluntary and Community Sector representative
Josie Dickerson	Programme Manager, Born in Bradford
Samina Begum	Community Board member
Satnam Singh	Community Board member
Shaheen Khan	Community Board member
Yaqoob Ayoob	Community Board member

**In Attendance**

Gill Hart	Funding Manager, The National Lottery Community Fund
Gill Thornton	Head of Programme, Better Start Bradford
Jill Duffy	Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford
Guy Dove	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

**Apologies for Absence:**

Kev Taylor	Jenny Cryer	Rosie McEachan	Sarah Muckle
Sara Hollins	Gwen Balson	Salma Nawaz	Gemma Priestley

**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 – 12 September 2019**

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

### **3. Matters Arising actions table**

Gill Thornton confirmed for clarity that the discussion with BHT regarding their Innovation Fund bid had taken place.

The advert for an organisation to conduct the independent performance review of Better Start Bradford is on our website and Partnership Board members are welcome to share it.

Jill has sent the data dashboard results to Gill Hart and will discuss the visualisations timeline for the Partnership Board with the Innovation Hub.

Guy has sent out the meeting invitations for the Partnership Board meetings in 2020.

### **4. Declarations of interest**

Sarah declared her involvement with Home-Start (item 6).

Josie is a director of Born in Bradford and they helped to design Pre-Schoolers in the Playground (item 7).

### **5. 'Getting to know you' session – Josie Dickerson**

Josie said it was timely that she was doing the session this month as this is a time of change at her workplace and she is now the Programme Director of Phase 2 of the Innovation Hub but with much the same role as before. Rosie and Kate Pickett will be Associate Directors and Josie will be the Born in Bradford representative at the Partnership Board from now on, with Rosie only attending as her deputy when Josie is away.

Josie was born and raised in Bradford, living on a farm in between Denholme and Oxenhope. She was the youngest of five children and has two children as well as ten nieces and nephews. Her dad was from a family of Irish immigrants who arrived in Bradford in the 1930s.

She was born in Bradford Royal Infirmary and lived in Bradford until age 18 when she went to Liverpool University and said she would never return to Bradford. She did a degree in Psychology in Liverpool largely because she did not know what career she wanted to do and then a PhD in York (because she still could not think what job to do) in language learning and loss which involved lots of work with stroke patients. She found a passion in what such work means to real people. Josie then travelled in South America on her own for six months and then at age 25 took her first job which was in Aintree Hospital doing stroke research. She then moved to London and did a stroke and genetics trial at a South London hospital and then moved back to Bradford at age 30.

In Bradford, Josie worked on the impact of strokes on survivors at Bradford Institute of Health Research and then in 2015 she joined Born in Bradford. This was her first job in Prevention and Early Years and there was not much difference in methods from her previous job, but the impacts on families are much better.

Josie is pleased she came back to Bradford and loves her job. She has a daughter (born 2010) and a son (born 2012) and two older step-daughters. They are a very active family who love going to the Yorkshire Dales.

Josie said there are lots of new things going on in Born in Bradford and showed us a mapping of them, with Born in Bradford's role having exploded and the Born in Bradford family cohort just being one workstream of many. All of these, including BSB, feed into research like the inequalities research unit and what BSB do is boosted via Born in Bradford's involvement in things like Early Use and Prevention in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Josie's role sits at the heart of everything that is going on.

The Partnership Board thanked Josie for her presentation.

## **6. Home-Start update**

(confidential item)

## **7. Pre-Schoolers in the Playground end of contract review**

Jill said we have been piloting this project for an initial 12 months which has now ended. She went through the project's aims which are to increase levels of physical activity in pre-school children by running activities in school playgrounds. She mentioned that the project was developed by a group of academics including some based at Born in Bradford and this group own the intellectual property rights. The pilot involved two schools across three sites and the cost was £18K. Jill said there is a need for the project when considering the number of overweight or obese very small children in Bradford and she also quoted advice from the Chief Medical Officer about recommended physical activity levels.

The Commissioning Advisory Group discussed the project after BSB had met with the participating schools. The schools have really helped us to gain learning. Three options were considered by the Commissioning Advisory Group. Option A was to continue with the project with adaptations for another 12 months using three schools. Option B is to continue with the project but to recognise capacity issues in schools by appointing a commissioned organisation to do things like co-ordination and data collection. There is also an Option B2 which is that the commissioned organisation provides the facilitators to deliver the project due to school staff being sometimes too stretched. Option C is to not deliver Pre-Schoolers in the Playground and instead find alternative provision.

Jill went on to the key points and the Commissioning Advisory Group had looked at progression criteria. These were rated as Amber (for recruitment), Red (for implementation) and Red (for completion). The pilot study has proved useful for identifying adaptations to be made. The project worked well and the school staff enjoyed delivering it. It was observed that the participating children developed more quickly but this was not part of the evaluation. Not all data was collected or processed due to capacity issues despite support. The schools found that saturation point was reached quite quickly when it came to recruitment with good engagement in the first term which later diminished. It was found to be hard to recruit outside of the school community when there was no existing relationship with the school. Pre-Schoolers in the Playground lasts for 10 weeks but the schools reported a drop off at weeks 5 or 6 after half term.

Fidelity to the project was found to be difficult with adaptations needing to be made to its activities. Born in Bradford have confirmed that we can do some adaptations to the project if it is continued, such as reducing the number of sessions from five a week but that it must remain at ten weeks long even though both schools have said that ten weeks is too long.

Jill then went through the recommendations from the Innovation Hub which include adapting the model and boosting recruitment. BSB's conclusions are that Pre-Schoolers in the Playground is working but there have been implementation issues so there need to be adaptations. Alternative provision was explored, but this is limited and there is less parental engagement in those identified which is what this project is all about. The schools need more capacity and it is likely that a 'train the trainer' model could work, and there are recognised pressure points during the school year e.g. SATs where they need more people.

The Commissioning Advisory Group have recommended a hybrid model in which we find a commissioned organisation to co-ordinate delivery, train staff, do external recruitment (with the Neighbourhood project) and co-ordinate data collection. The schools value the opportunity to build on their parental relations so their staff would deliver the project wherever possible for a further 12 months. BSB will work with the Commissioning Advisory Group to find the external organisation.

Shaheen said she did the delivery of Pre-schoolers in the Playground in her previous job and thought it was very good and she is not sure why the schools reported problems with the course's length and the data collection. She added that it is a great little project and she would like it to continue. Josie said it was a very small pilot and one of the schools had been fine with the data collection but the other struggled and we would need to look at what another school finds to draw more conclusions. Shaheen commented that there needs to be good parental involvement at the school and sometimes a leaflet is not enough.

Yaqoob remarked that the 30 minutes a day sessions are not long enough and an hour would be better. Alex explained that although the sessions are 30 minutes for the parents, for the children it extends the school day and an extra hour would be too much for very young children. Josie said the project shows the parents how to do physical activities and Shaheen recalled they get free resources. Jill added that the project's value is that it is a structured programme with identified activities and it is very clear what is achieved in 30 minutes.

Shaheen suggested a gold, silver and bronze award incentive for completers, but Sarah noted that 12 months is not very long for a pilot study and we should adapt what we already have instead of starting all over again. Yaqoob asked if private nurseries should take part but Alex said their parents would tend to be going to work instead of taking part in the sessions and it is to still be a school-based activity. Gill Thornton remarked that it would be hard to get the parents to stay otherwise. Vipin said we should remember to thank the schools for taking part. Alex confirmed the project is for nursery-aged children and younger and is based at schools which have nurseries attached to them.

Samina suggested using volunteers from other BSB projects and Shaheen said she did have one volunteer but she brought her own children as well. Gill Thornton noted that we are training the latest cohort of community champions and their involvement is a possibility and Jill mentioned the new Neighbourhood project too. Alex said using this would be better than having the schools do all the recruitment.

The Partnership Board then agreed the following:

- **Decision: To source an organisation to co-ordinate the delivery of Pre-Schoolers in the Playground in a new cohort of schools for a further 12 months. The co-ordinator is to undertake engagement, data collection and training functions whilst also making**

**provision for direct delivery of sessions to cover staff at busy periods within the school year.**

- **Action: Better Start Bradford to work with the CAG to further develop commissioning options to source a suitable provider.**

Vipin said we should thank the Commissioning Advisory Group for their input.

## **8. Innovation Fund – lessons learned**

Gill Thornton said the report in the meeting packs highlights lessons learned that we have to act on following the first round of the Innovation Fund, which was a challenging process. The Innovation Fund was developed during 2018 with input from the Commissioning Advisory Group but a market engagement workshop was cancelled at very short notice due to staff sickness. This was rearranged later but very few of the organisations who submitted bids actually attended it.

We received many more applications to the Innovation Fund than we expected, lots of which did not meet the criteria. The Commissioning Advisory Group acted as a selection panel by extending their regular meetings.

The lessons learned include needing clearer publicity about what is and is not included, a more interactive process (for example a webinar, FAQs, online Q&A sessions), more support for groups, and a meet the buyer event (of which members of the Commissioning Advisory Group have lots of experience). The bidders fed back that there was not enough time (six weeks) to submit applications and there should have been more opportunities to ask questions before submitting. Going forward, it is recommended that the BSB admin team will acknowledge receipt of bids. There were far too many groups (16) for BSB staff to liaise with and there is a need to be clear where responsibility lies.

Another lesson learned is that the burden placed on the Commissioning Advisory Group was significant in addition to their usual business and for future rounds a separate panel for the Innovation Fund should be established. The result of applying the lessons learned should be that the Partnership Board will receive better information and can make quicker decisions.

Gill Thornton reported a delay in notifying unsuccessful applicants. One factor for delays in the process was that the previous Programme Director left and she had to cover both roles for a time. Another issue was that different BSB staff dealt with successful organisations who then received slightly different messages.

The National Lottery Community Fund have approved the successful applications. These Innovation Fund projects will not have as many evaluation requirements as the main BSB projects. We will however look at them mid-way through their first year, partly to see if there is any prospect of scaling-up (which would be brought to the Partnership Board). The service level agreements will also have an end of project process.

Gill Thornton said an issue to address is to clearly define what 'innovation' is and there is still more work to do on the lessons learned. She moved on to the recommendations which include the make-up of a selection panel, defining 'innovation' and agreeing priorities for this round, holding a meet the buyer event and offering support to groups. The last recommendation is considering a new post in the team to oversee the Innovation Fund and Parents in the Lead

projects, but this will be brought forward following a review of the BSB staff team. A further report will be brought to the Partnership Board to further review the Innovation Fund and to agree a further round to start in 2020.

**Decision: To agree the recommendations presented in the report.**

Shaheen asked if the bids we have already approved are Bradford based and Gill Thornton confirmed they mostly are. The oral health project is from Leeds Dental School but they already do some work here.

Vipin remarked that we will need more time at the next Partnership Board than previously to discuss the Innovation Fund and the 'what is innovation?' question.

## **9. Programme Monthly Report**

Gill Thornton confirmed that we held a Nurturing Knowledge event earlier today on the subject of Prevention. George Hosking delivered an amazing talk on Adverse Childhood Experiences. Gill Thornton said it was important for us to talk about Prevention and if we do not there is a danger we will lose our investment in it. Vipin noted that it is an aim of the Innovation Fund.

Vipin wished to pass on some feedback from a new volunteer Doula who is a friend of Salma's, who could not be here this evening. The feedback was that the training course to be a Doula was very tough and involved too much work for a volunteer course. There was also too much of an expectation that becoming a volunteer Doula would lead to paid work straight away and it was felt that the tutors should have shared coping mechanisms for stress. Out of the 13 students on the course, about half of them left and they felt guilty if they were not in a position to support a pregnant woman.

**Action: It was agreed that this was valuable feedback and BSB will feed this back to the Doulas.**

Ruth remarked that she needs feedback about the Doulas too as the CCGs also commission the service. She said that the volunteers need to understand the intensity of the role at the beginning and when the service does work it is brilliant. Gill Thornton agreed with this but said recruitment of service users is difficult and Vipin suggested the Doulas should have a local base in the BSB area.

Gill Thornton reminded everyone that Baby Week starts on 4 November and Vipin asked the Partnership Board to please try to attend. Alex said the events are a mixture of daytime, evening and weekend ones and staff and projects really value when community representatives attend these events.

It was noted that some of the Baby Week events are provided by organisations other than Better Start and are district wide.

Vipin confirmed that negotiations between BSB and Personalised Midwifery are continuing.

## **10. Any other business**

Yaqoob raised the independent performance review of BSB and asked for some figures about how much money BSB has spent since the start of the programme compared to what should

have been spent. Gill Thornton said our budget was spread over ten years and we knew we would spend less at the beginning. With service design, some projects took three years to get to delivery and some ABS sites took longer. We are anticipating a peak in spending in Years 6 and 7 although maybe later than this.

Vipin added that the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee look at BSB's spending every quarter and Alex said our budget is reprofiled every year and presented to the Partnership Board. Vipin also noted that the National Lottery Community Fund also look at our spending and Alex added that they have to approve the reprofiling.

**Action: Shaista will be asked to contact Yaqoob and send him the information that he needs.**

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.

#### **11. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is on Thursday 14 November 2019 at the Mayfield Centre, starting at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.