

**Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes
Thursday 12 December 2019
Mayfield Centre**

Meeting Started: 9:30

Meeting Ended: 11:10

Present:

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Mark Douglas	Strategic Director, Children's Services, CBMDC
Ruth Shaw	Head of Commissioning (Women and Children), Bradford & Craven CCGs
Alex Spragg	Programme Director, Better Start Bradford
Josie Dickerson	Programme Manager, Born in Bradford
Tracey Hogan	Voluntary and Community Sector representative
Salma Nawaz	Community Board member
Samina Begum	Community Board member
Satnam Singh	Community Board member

In Attendance

Gill Hart	Funding Manager, The National Lottery Community Fund
Jill Duffy	Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford
Shaista Ahmed	Finance Manager, Better Start Bradford
Guy Dove	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

Apologies for Absence:

Kev Taylor	Duncan Cooper	Fareeda Mir	Gemma Priestley
Gill Thornton	Shaheen Khan	Sarah Hinton	Ludmila Novosjolova
Yaqoob Ayoob	Gwen Balson	Sarah Muckle	

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Vipin welcomed everyone to the meeting, asked everyone to introduce themselves to each other and noted the apologies. He also welcomed Mark who is attending his first Partnership Board.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 14 November 2019

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising actions table

Alex explained that Gill Thornton will present a further report about the Innovation Fund at our meeting next month.

Alex has received no feedback via email from Partnership Board members about what they want to see in the 'Story So Far' document. She will provide a verbal update today under item 9.

The theory of change has been emailed around the Partnership Board as requested at our previous meeting.

4. Declarations of interest

Ruth confirmed that Bradford City CCG also commissions Bradford Doulas (item 6) but theirs is a separate contract to Better Start Bradford's.

5. 'Getting to know you' session

There was no volunteer to do this session this month and volunteers to cover future meetings would be appreciated from those who are yet to do so. Mark agreed to cover this at our February 2020 meeting.

6. Bradford Doulas end of contract review

(confidential discussion)

Decision: The Partnership Board agrees to recommission the Bradford Doulas project with the following amendments:

- **That the contract be extended on a 1 plus 2 basis (up to 3 years) subject to success criteria to be reviewed after 12 months.**
- **The provider to plan to run multiple training offers and offer training for volunteers within the BSB area.**
- **That BSB work together with the CCG to ensure consistency of approach across the City CCG and BSB geographical areas.**

Josie asked that this time we focus on the impact on volunteers in the service redesign and Vipin asked Salma to join the review. Tracey said she would be interested in being involved in the review of the training offer. At the Bridge Project they have learned a lot over the last ten years about preventing drop-outs from volunteer training and she would like to contribute.

7. Proposed amendments to projects

Jill explained that two of our projects have proposed increases to their budgets and any increase over 10 per cent has to be approved by the Partnership Board and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Better Start Imagine – mobile engagement activities

The project have reported recruitment issues in the wraparound activities and have tried to improve that in a number of ways. They would like Better Start Bradford to fund a van to go around residential areas in the BSB patch to take the activities near to the families. The van would have to have a three year lease so we cannot test the idea over one year and the cost would be £50k over three years which represents a 28.7 per cent increase to the project's budget. The van would enable three sessions a week to be delivered over three BSB areas.

The Commissioning Advisory Group considered the proposal and suggested the cost might be able to be shared across other BSB projects as a programme-wide solution to engagement and this could potentially be developed into an Innovation Fund proposal.

It was confirmed that this has come to the Partnership Board for information only. The Commissioning Advisory Group have asked that the proposal be referred back to the BSB team for further exploration and development and consideration as to how it could be tested.

Josie commented that Born in Bradford used to have a bus and there is learning from that and the idea did not work as well as they had hoped. Tracey also commented that her workplace have a van which we could potentially borrow to trial the idea.

HENRY – proposal for increased funding

Jill said the project had some assumptions in place when they were first contracted, including having free office space at a children's centre or a peppercorn rent, but this is no longer the case. They have to leave their current premises early next month and have looked at several options across the BSB area, the best of which are Woodroyd Nursery or Communityworks. The local authority have a lease at Communityworks which HENRY may be able to pick up at a discounted rate but they feel that footfall would be greater at Woodroyd, with a GPs surgery being there and they could offer hot-desking space to midwives. The cost would be £18,900 over two years.

HENRY have also made a proposal about funding creche provision. They had an initial assumption that this would be available via the Family Hubs but this has also turned out not to be the case. Jill advised that the Commissioning Advisory Group thought that there proposal was expensive and the matter should be referred back to the BSB team for further consideration.

There is also an increased budget proposal of £4,050 for delivery venues. Again, HENRY had thought there would be free venues available in children's centre buildings but this no longer the case.

HENRY have also requested a budget increase of £11k to increase provision of 1:1 delivery of the project by paid staff. While facilitators are being trained they are not always being released to deliver HENRY, and there is a long waiting list for the service users who need 1:1 provision. This would be a measure to add capacity over nine months, with paid staff delivering HENRY 1:1s while we talk to the local authority about capacity in the district.

Jill confirmed that the Commissioning Advisory Group have recommended we agree to the proposals for office premises, delivery venues and 1:1 provision but that the creche proposal be referred back to the BSB team for further consideration.

Satnam noted that Woodroyd have a nursery already but Josie said the idea is that there is a creche wherever HENRY is delivered and that lack of a creche is a well cited barrier to engagement. Alex observed that other BSB projects provide creche or fund childcare and HENRY are asking for a creche. She said we would not want to fund a creche for children who should be in age 2 or 3 year old places. Salma recalled that she would not have done HENRY had a creche not been there and her children were not eligible for funded provision at age 2. They were more familiar with the creche workers and setting and it would be more difficult if there were different creche workers or a childminder. The mums were comfortable that their children were next door, especially if they were breastfeeding, and all of them enjoyed the HENRY course. Jill said this is really valuable feedback and the Commissioning Advisory Group had just said we need to do more work on HENRY's creche proposal. Josie remarked it was a good point about the age 2 offer and when mums are not engaging it would be increasing inequality.

Alex said we should remember sustainability and look at the equity of the universal offer and the creche proposal is expensive. Tracey observed that Salma's point about breastfeeding is important and the child needs to be on site. We could look at funding transport to venues with a creche. Josie said her team have looked at differences in families engaging with childcare provided and without it. Gill Hart noted that HENRY is being delivered elsewhere and suggested looking at models in other areas.

Decision: The Partnership Board recommend to the National Community Lottery Fund that:

The budget for HENRY be increased to accommodate the costs for office premises, delivery venue hire and paid 1 to 1 provision. The BSB team are given delegated authority to work with HENRY and community partners to negotiate the optimum solution for office premises, with Woodroyd to be approached in the first instance.

Vipin said that lots of work had been involved to get to this point and the Commissioning Advisory Group need additional Community Board member representation, there are currently two vacancies.

Action: Guy to email those community Board members who are not present about joining the Commissioning Advisory Group.

Vipin noted that we should thank the Commissioning Advisory Group for all their work.

8. April to September 2019 accounts

Shaista presented the spreadsheets in the meeting pack which show the actual expenditure to 30 September 2019 against what was budgeted and the forecast to 31 March 2020.

There was an underspend of £546k at 30 September 2019. The main reasons for variances are given in the report. Salaries have been overspent for various reasons including changes to cost headings.

Learning Together has an underspend but other events are planned for the second half of this financial year. There is a £38k overspend on Computers and Software due to a one-off full IT refresh. Management overheads is also overspent due to an increase in IT support which was agreed after we had set the budget.

Shaista moved on to projects and confirmed that variances against the budget are in the spreadsheet in the meeting pack. Underspends are mostly due to staffing issues and we also look at making savings where we can.

Vipin confirmed that the Finance & Audit sub-committee have already reviewed these accounts and we should remember to thank them for doing so. Shaista said this gives a lot of reassurance and Vipin noted that Partnership Board members are welcome to join the meetings.

Shaista advised that work is being done on improving the presentation of the accounts, including showing the start and end dates and spend so far of projects. A new Finance Officer will be joining the BSB staff team in January.

The forecast spreadsheet shows the actual spend from April to September 2019 and the projection for the rest of the financial year. Shaista has forecasted an underspend of £293k at 31 March 2020. The assumptions are covered in the accompanying report. Some projects show underspend but will start spending in the second half of the year, with the Neighbourhood project starting in August 2019 and the Better Place capital manager is now in post.

Decision: The Partnership Board notes and accepts:

- **The accounts for the quarter ending 30 September 2019**
- **The forecast for the year ending 31 March 2020**

9. The ‘Story So Far’

Alex advised that we plan to mark the end of BSB’s fifth year with a Story So Far event and report. Plans are underway for a Bradford event hopefully at the end of March 2020. This will be a celebration event and an opportunity to show how broad the programme is and what we have learned to date. We are working with the Innovation Hub to get data and evaluation to support this.

The Story So Far will include sharing stories about what has made a positive difference to families, and stories from volunteers and the projects. It will be a ‘feel good’ event that sets us up for the second half of the BSB journey. We are also reviewing our theory of change which will be shared and will help to contribute to the Story So Far.

There will be a report to back this up aimed at two levels of audience, with a more detailed one for professionals.

Vipin asked everyone to email Alex with ideas about what they want to see in the event and the report.

10. Programme Monthly Report

The Partnership Board watched a video about Baby Week which Vipin said was a great success and Alex observed that we had almost double the number of attendees of last year. 25 per cent of the attendees at the Baby Rave were from the BSB area at what was a district-wide event and held in the city centre. It is important that we keep the buzz going about the importance of babies and ensure it feeds into Bradford's bid for Unicef Child Friendly City status.

Alex moved on to Adverse Childhood Experiences and said that our community awareness sessions worked well, and there is a district-wide strategy and we are setting up a community steering group in the BSB area.

We are negotiating to be significant contributors to the next Bradford Literature Festival. This will give us a platform to spread the key messages of Better Start and provide opportunities for our families to engage with the events. We have also had good publicity in the Telegraph and Argus with the Community Star Awards and stories from our volunteers.

Alex mentioned that Matt Price, the lead on our Little Minds Matter project, had an article published on the National Children's Bureau's website. It is excellent when our work is displayed nationally as good practice and helps to raise Bradford's profile.

Following the Innovation Fund bid for a Sleep project our newest research fellow, Liz, is researching the issue further and other interventions that are happening.

A skills audit of the BSB staff team is currently being undertaken to identify strengths and any skills gaps and staff development needs.

Alex moved on to projects and those mentioned in the report are those that have had reviews recently with the majority rated Green. The latest round of Parents in the Lead had ten applications, of which eight were successful. We are working with the other two and finding Parents in the Lead is a successful way of working with the community.

On 18 December we are having a team development day with Andy Cope (Dr Happy) and Partnership Board members are welcome to attend.

Alex mentioned the large Big Little Moments billboard on Bowling Back Lane and said the Big Little Moments campaign is being evaluated.

There will be our Festive Fun event on 16 December at Laisterdyke Centre.

Vipin commented that it was good to see a programme monthly report with no 'Red' ratings.

11. Any other business

Josie mentioned the Born in Bradford seminar on 18 December with Professor Jane Sandall, to do with Continuity of Care.

Tracey raised Parents in the Lead and sustainability and asked if any of the groups need help with becoming constituted. Alex replied that we have discussed this and work is being done on the matter.

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

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on Thursday 16 January 2020 at the Mayfield Centre, starting at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 11.10 am.