

**Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes  
Thursday 13 February 2020  
Myra Shay Pavilion, 489 Barkerend Road, BD3 8QX**

**Meeting Started:** 9.30

**Meeting Ended:** 11:30

**Present:**

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Sarah Hinton	Board Member, Bradford Trident
Mark Douglas	Strategic Director of Children's Services, CBMDC
Alex Spragg	Programme Director, Better Start Bradford
Josie Dickerson	Programme Manager, Born in Bradford
Gwen Balson	Community Board member
Salma Nawaz	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
Alex Horsfall	Service Manager age 0-19, Bradford District Care Trust (in place of Dawn Lee)
Tabia Afsar	Senior Commissioning Officer, Bradford and Craven CCGs (in place of Ruth Shaw)
Guy Dove	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

**Apologies for Absence:**

Shaheen Khan	Duncan Cooper	Fareeda Mir	Tracey Hogan
Samina Begum	Ruth Shaw	Dawn Lee	Zakra Yasin
Sarah Muckle	Peter Horner	Satnam Singh	Ludmila Novosjolova

**1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

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

Vipin wished to thank Myra Shay for hosting us.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 16 January 2020**

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

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

Alex Spragg confirmed that both the items in the table are on the agenda in items 8 and 9.

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

Mark declared that he is now responsible for the Industrial Centres of Excellence and will not take part in item 6.

Vipin agreed to leave the meeting during item 8.

### **5. 'Getting to know you' session – Mark Douglas**

Mark said he wished to use a selection of photos to show the journey of his life. The first one was of Keelmen's Hospital in Newcastle, which was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was a hospital for dockers and formerly a workhouse. By the 1950s it provided single room accommodation for young families. He was born there in the late 1960s when both his parents were age 18. His dad worked in factories in the West End of Newcastle which was a very run down area (although much more sought after now). Mark said he was a white working class boy and proof that these can succeed.

The family then moved to Garth Heads, to a two bedroom flat at the back of the hospital. His dad earned less than £5 a week and would have thought he had made it if he earned £20 a week, but he ended up as an international director of a telecommunications company, working in countries all over the world.

Mark showed a picture of himself as a baby with his grandmother who was from a second generation Irish immigrant family and a girl three years older than himself who was his auntie although they were practically brought up as brother and sister. He grew up on Longbenton which in the 1980s was a very deprived area with very high unemployment. The main aspiration of his school friends was to avoid prison and hopefully get a job in the shipyards, or even better, an office job at the Ministry. This gave Mark some resilience and he has always wanted to work with children.

When Mark was age 13 his parents moved to the Middle East and left him to be brought up by his grandparents who were very old. They unfortunately died when Mark was age 16 and as a result he lived on his own whilst he completed his education. His parents returned to the UK when he was age 19 or 20 but by then he was working in a residential home in Bath for about 64 children with 'maladjusted behaviours.' The home was run by a man also from the north east and Mark was inspired by the way he dealt with the children. Mark lived in the home for a year and worked there for three years in the care home side of the place, this is where he found he had a passion for working with children. He returned to education whilst he was there with the boss of the children's home as a mentor.

Mark attended what is now Birmingham City University, doing a degree and a social work qualification at the same time, and had placements at the NSPCC and in prisons. In his career Mark has always done children's and families work, seeking good outcomes for very challenged kids and he wants them to have the chances that he had.

Mark lives in Morpeth and has three children with very different experiences to his. His older daughter is age 22 and a lawyer in Melbourne, Australia who gained 13 A\* or A grades at GCSE and then a first-class degree at Leeds University, his younger daughter is an apprentice

doing something she loves and his son is age 12. Mark said he has three great kids and is very proud of them and of being from the West End of Newcastle. Mark has really enjoyed his career to date and is pleased to be in Bradford.

The Partnership Board thanked Mark for his presentation and Vipin commented that it was very inspiring.

#### **6. Health and Social Care ICE programme contract review**

Gill Thornton recalled that the Partnership Board had a presentation from the local authority about the health and social care Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE) at our previous meeting. The ICE covers many occupations and over the last four years BSB have helped to establish a health and social care ICE and championed an age 0-4 element to it. The initial contract of the ICE was for three years, with an annual budget of £60k a year of which BSB contributed £30k a year. Other partners such as Bradford Teaching Hospitals and the Local Authority contribute the rest. The current contract ends on 31 March 2020 and BSB propose it is continued for another three years.

Gill Thornton noted that the Commissioning Advisory Group considered the matter last week and raised a number of queries. The first related to the impact of BSB's proposal to reduce our financial contribution. It is acknowledged that in the short term the activities would reduce due to a funding reduction but it is anticipated that the funding base will expand with a greater contribution from local employers in the future. The ICE Board would encourage other partners to pay a little more, as BSB's contribution reduces. The proposal is that we pay £20k next year and the year after then £15k in year 6.

A further query was raised regarding the ICE programme's alignment with the SEND Strategic Partnership Board – 'Preparation for Adulthood' workstream and risk of overlap or duplication. It was confirmed that these two areas are aligned and that oversight of them sits in the same team so they will work in a complementary way.

The Commissioning Advisory Group had also asked if the ICE is having any impact and how would we know if it is. Gill Thornton explained there has been limited tracking or progression work done so far as the first three years have focused on building infrastructure and reach. Qualitative evidence has been collected with a significant number of children being reached through the programme and feedback secured from some of them. The last page of the report provides some statements about the experience of young people and training and career paths they have pursued following their involvement. The plan is for BSB to work with the ICE Board to complete a service design of the health and social care ICE. This would be less detailed than for our projects but a theory of change and a logic model would be developed.

Josie remarked that she was not sure how we could capture the impact of ICE but Gill Thornton said this would be done by measuring progression of the young people reached.

#### **Decision: The Partnership Board agree the following:**

- **Better Start Bradford should continue to contribute funding to the Health and Social Care ICE for the next three years.**
- **Better Start Bradford should reduce its proportion of annual funding for this workstream by £10,000 for Years 4 & 5 and £15,000 for Year 6.**

- **Better Start Bradford to support a light touch service design, in order to clarify expected outputs and the processes that will lead to these.**
- **Better Start Bradford, through the Integrated Workforce Programme Board, will ensure there is no overlap with the SEND Strategic Partnership Board – ‘Preparation for Adulthood’ workstream and that the two programmes are aligned to broaden the opportunities for young people.**

Vipin wished to pass on our thanks to the Commissioning Advisory Group.

## 7. Review of theory of change

Jill Duffy presented slides to update the board on the review of the theory of change. She explained that some work had been done updating the preconditions and assumptions of the theory of change. The theory of problem describes why we need the change, using evidence to demonstrate the need. Jill explained that we are working on updating the ‘Need’ which is why the wording on the Powerpoint slide is in red.

The theory of solution is why we think our proposed activities and inputs will lead to the changes we seek. The key elements are explanation of interventions, evidence for how the intervention is expected to deliver outcomes and how activities work to either reduce risk factors or increase protective factors and deliver expected outcomes. Other key elements are being underpinned by logic models that provide detail on inputs, outputs, activities and outcomes and providing a framework for robust evaluation.

Jill explained that the BSB programme is based on certain preconditions and assumptions. Interventions have logic models and there is the matter of how we support leading change. She turned to outcomes and noted that system change is still being worked on which is why it is in red on the Powerpoint slide. Jill then read out the identified preconditions such as that necessary venues and service infrastructure are in place and asked for comments on how we might evidence them.

The assumptions include that the preconditions will not change significantly e.g. that the population will not change much so our programme remains aligned (though in fact the birth rate has dropped). Another assumption is that national and local policies remain supportive. Jill then described the next steps, which are to develop an underlying narrative, developing an underpinning logic model, consult on and agree assumptions and preconditions and develop current position and comparison statements for need and preconditions.

Josie said we need to measure system change in Bradford and this work gives us an opportunity to do that and it is important for the evaluation of the programme. Tabia recalled that at the last Commissioning Advisory Group Sara Ahern mentioned a consultative exercise about change in systems and Jill said we propose a wider working group with Sara to take this forward. Josie suggested members of the Partnership Board including community Board representatives be involved in this to get a community perspective.

Gill Thornton raised the Story So Far work and explained that the timeline of significant events that has been developed during the recent team development day has lots of information on it and gives a good picture of what has happened since the inception of the programme in 2013, including to systems and is a useful reference point. Gill Hart said this is an excellent starting point and we now need to get others’ perspective to add to its richness. She explained that this exercise is being carried out across all the A Better Start sites. We need to consider what has changed, what we can track and the impact of local and national policy.

Alex Spragg suggested for timing purposes we could bring this back to the March Partnership Board and this would be before the Story So Far events. Josie said the focus group should input into this.

**Action: Alex Spragg to consider scheduling 'Review of the Better Start Bradford Timeline' at the March Partnership Board and will share what we have done so far so people can feed into it.**

Sarah felt that the community view is that there is some progression but this is a continual process with new people and new parents coming in and the issue is how to sustain this. Work needs to be done with some swathes of the local population including the most vulnerable while some other parents go to everything. Josie said feedback like that should go into the Story So Far which can also be informed by BiBBS data.

Vipin asked, in relation to the preconditions identified, about delivery venues such as Sure Start centres and community settings shutting down over the last five years. Jill agreed that this has impacted on our programme and we have had to adapt and the Innovation Hub will map this change. Gill Thornton remarked that BSB responding to change was a key element identified at our recent team development day. We have managed to respond to the loss of some delivery venues but this has come at a cost. Alex Spragg observed that the government programme of children's centres was always fragile due to its heavy reliance on central government funding. The change in funding levels has increased use of community venues and the programme is potentially part of sustaining community provision. We need to capture this and there is an infrastructure and our projects do use community venues although their suitability varies.

A broader discussion regarding engagement followed identifying that there remain varied perceptions and levels of awareness of the programme. Alex Horsfall raised the universal health visiting service and that part of their role is signposting. She is confident that all the health visitors working in the BSB area are very aware of the programme. Also, the MECOSH project is about to roll out and health visitors will receive additional training and there will be more linking of families to activities within the community.

Josie also raised midwives and the perinatal coordinators. BiBBS currently engage with 70 to 80 per cent of pregnant mums in the BSB area and provide information to them. She noted however there is a difference between knowing what is there and actually going to it.

Gill Thornton noted the reduction in children's centres has led to changes in approach, and functions that were assumed in the original service design no longer exist. The new Neighbourhood Project has been developed partly in response to this and indications at the end of the first quarter are that significant numbers are being reached and the Neighbourhood Workers are working with the BSB team and projects to break down barriers to engagement.

Josie explained that the data dashboard will provide information on who has participated in the programme to date and if a particular group or area has been missed we will be able to identify and focus on those.

## **8. Community Board Member & Partnership Board Chair and Vice Chair Recruitment**

Vipin left the meeting for this discussion.

Alex Spragg advised that a number of Community Board Members' terms are coming to an end, including that of the Chair. The report in the meeting pack discusses the recruitment processes and leadership. Vipin has been in post as Chair since April 2017 but at that time there were no applications for Vice Chair and the position remains vacant. Vipin was mentored by the previous Chair (Michael Jameson) in 2017 but there has been lots of change since then. Limited meeting attendance and a lack of regular attendance have caused challenges.

Two Community Board Members have stood down prior to the end of their term and Alex Spragg has contacted all the others whose terms are coming to an end. Some of them are soon to meet her and she hopes some of them will apply to continue. The last recruitment round was quite successful with seven or eight applications, five of whom were interviewed. We will hold information events for prospective applicants across the Better Start area and Alex Spragg said she would welcome volunteers to represent the Partnership Board at the events and to help with the recruitment process which Emma Stafford, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, is managing.

Alex Spragg advised that the Partnership Board can agree a further term as Chair for Vipin. He is agreeable to continuing in the role but wants to support others to take on a greater role in the leadership of the programme and plan for succession beyond his tenure. He also wants to prioritise having a Vice Chair and would ensure there would be mentoring available to anyone willing to undertake this function.

A discussion followed regarding the desirability of the Chair to be a parent. It was agreed that whilst it should be acknowledged that recent experience as a parent, grandparent of a child under 4 was desirable, the mix of skills and commitment required of a Chair is such that it is helpful for the pool to be as wide as possible

The proposal to extend the current Chair's term partly comes from a desire to develop succession planning within the Board leadership. Alex Spragg explained that as a new Programme Director having the support of an experienced Chair has been very important. She would support extending Vipin's role but perhaps varying the term length. In his absence Peter Horner emailed a view that the term of Chair could be shorter (two years not three) and suggested that recruiting two Vice Chairs to share the workload would also aid succession planning.

Sarah acknowledged that the role of Chair is very complicated and it is important to grow the skills and Gill Thornton noted there is an appraisal process for Partnership Board members which the Chair and Alex Spragg lead on.

Jill commented that we need the right skill set as Chair and Gill Thornton noted the role includes mentoring, coaching and inducting new Community Board Members. As part of the preparation for a new cohort of Community Board Members the experiences of existing Members needs to be explored to ensure the best possible support is offered.

**Action: Alex Spragg to ask Emma Stafford to talk to the community Board members about support, to identify gaps and additional training needs.**

A discussion regarding the ongoing process of developing volunteers followed. Whilst the full range of volunteering roles are continuously advertised, focused recruitment is undertaken in the lead up to training or vacancies such as the Community Board positions becoming available. It was recognised that there is more that can be done by the programme team,

partners and our current pool of volunteers to make the community aware of the opportunities to be involved and to undertake training to develop the skills required.

Sarah raised the honorariums paid to the Community Board Members and it was noted that it is proposed that the honorariums for the Chair and Vice Chair roles are increased in the role descriptions circulated. Gwen queried whether it was proposed that increases are awarded to the other Community Board Members. Gill Thornton recalled the amounts originally came from standard rates from Volunteering England when the Partnership Board was established and Alex Spragg confirmed that we would review them.

**Action: BSB to review the amounts of the honorariums paid to the community Board members.**

Alex Spragg asked if the Board supported the proposal for an additional Vice Chair position. Alex Horsfall agreed this may help with recruitment as they would be able to provide mutual support. Sarah noted that if we extend Vipin's role as Chair for another two years instead of the proposed three that would give him five years in total which she felt was an appropriate term. Alex Spragg added that this would also aid succession planning.

Josie said we should acknowledge Vipin's contribution and Gill Thornton noted he has attended lots of events and been an active ambassador for the programme.

**Decision: The Partnership Board agreed that Vipin Joshi's role as Chair be extended for two years (to the end of April 2022).**

**Action: Better Start Bradford will try to recruit two Vice Chairs.**

Vipin, on returning to the meeting, welcomed these decisions. He said that the role is very time consuming and it would be good to share the work.

## **9. Story So Far discussion**

Alex Spragg explained that the BSB staff team had undertaken a number of exercises at their recent team development day as preparatory work for the event and publication. It has been good to reflect on how much work has been undertaken leading up to the five year point, a lot has been achieved and there is much to celebrate as the Story So Far. Many people have been a part of this and it has been useful to reflect on how the programme has had a significant influence on the system. Staff are currently writing up the contents for publication and we have some significant stories from people. Editing is taking place over the coming weeks and it will be necessary to have some offline conversations with partners and Board Members due to the event being on 30 March and involvement in events.

Save the Date invitations have been emailed out and Alex Spragg said she hopes for good Partnership Board attendance and involvement on the day. She still wants to hear if there are specific things that people want to be covered on the day and in the accompanying written report, and the invitation to contribute ideas remains open.

## **10. Programme Monthly Report**

Gill Thornton explained that community partnerships, as referred to in the first objective of part 1.0 of the report, refers to the health structure in primary care and are based on clusters of GP practices. Bradford Trident is the community anchor of one of them and there are 3½

community partnerships based in the BSB area. All community partnerships have a voluntary sector lead and they are a good opportunity for primary care to be made aware of BSB and for age 0-3s and prevention to be on the agenda and be part of social prescribing.

In item 3.2.2, Gill Thornton explained that the Commissioning Advisory Group have used their powers to extend the Personalised Midwifery project by two months to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020, which will allow the full appraisal of future options to be presented and a decision made prior to restriction of registrations.

For item 3.2.4, Gill Thornton noted that the staff member who was dealing with the Innovation Fund is currently off sick and so other team members have had to pick the work up which has led to a further delay. In item 3.3.1, she noted BSB have recently had two student nurses on placement who have got a lot out of the experience. It is good that the work of the programme and the importance of early years and early intervention is being promoted in this way. The Bradford College course revalidation event was successful.

Gill Thornton mentioned the Mary Street traveller site engagement work (item 3.5.1) with Leeds GATE, Better Place's plans and Sarah Muckle's visit to the site and Public Health funding improvements there. The site suffers from poor air quality and is a challenging environment to bring up children in but has about 25 children living there aged under four. This is a really good initiative, with relationship building, plans to improve play facilities and potentially a Parents in the Lead application from some of the residents. This is an excellent example of collaboration and engaging a hard-to-reach community. Vipin noted the Thornbury Centre has staff who work with the traveller community and suggested we see if they can help.

#### **11. Any other business**

Alex Spragg said she would be presenting a quarterly strategic update at Partnership Board meetings, starting at our April meeting.

Vipin thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

#### **12. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is on Thursday 19 March 2020 at the Mayfield Centre, starting at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.