

**Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes
Thursday 23 April 2020
Via Zoom**

Meeting Started: 9.30

Meeting Ended: 11:10

Present:

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Sarah Hinton	Board Member, Bradford Trident
Tracey Hogan	Voluntary and Community Sector representative
Alex Spragg	Programme Director, Better Start Bradford
Ruth Shaw	Senior Head of Strategy, Change and Delivery, Bradford District and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group
Gwen Balson	Community Board member (by telephone)
Shaheen Khan	Community Board member

In Attendance

Gill Hart	Funding Manager, The National Lottery Community Fund
Gill Thornton	Head of Programme, Better Start Bradford
Carlton Smith	CEO, Bradford Trident
Sara Ahern	Programme Manager, Innovation Hub (in place of Josie Dickerson)
Jill Duffy	Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford
Shaista Ahmed	Finance Manager, Better Start Bradford
Liz Pal	Leadership Fellow, Better Start Bradford
Michelle Everitt	Leadership Fellow, Better Start Bradford (item 8 only)
Guy Dove	Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

Apologies for Absence:

Mark Douglas	Duncan Cooper	Fareeda Mir	Sara Hollins
Salma Nawaz	Josie Dickerson	Dawn Lee	Samina Begum
Satnam Singh			

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Vipin welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

It was noted the meeting was inquorate, but it was agreed to proceed with the meeting and share all decisions with the wider group via email later.

Action: Alex to email the Partnership Board with the decisions made at this meeting and ask for comments and queries or to ratify the decisions.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 13 February 2020

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising actions table

Alex explained that the review of the Better Start Bradford timeline was scheduled for the March Partnership Board which was cancelled. It was planned to run this item as a workshop and felt this was inappropriate for a virtual meeting. Our intention is to defer the item to a face-to-face Partnership Board meeting but we may need to cover the item in a different way.

Gill Thornton added that she has written up the BSB timeline from the staff team development day and she will circulate it to the Partnership Board. We could potentially do the timeline activity remotely.

Action: Gill Thornton to circulate the BSB timeline to the Partnership Board by email.

Alex confirmed that recruitment for new Community Board Members is ongoing. Three applications have been received so far and the closing date is 26 April. We propose going ahead with the existing timeline and shortlisting is scheduled for next week. Interviews are likely to be online and Partnership Board members are encouraged to volunteer to join the interview panel.

Action: Alex will email the interview dates for new Community Board Members to the Partnership Board.

The review of honorariums paid to community Board members is pending. The pay scales guidance used at the start of the programme from Volunteering England does not exist any more. Alex and Gill Thornton will discuss the matter with Shaista, considering inflation, and issue a paper and proposal for our next meeting.

Action: BSB to review community Board member honorariums and put forward a proposal to the next Partnership Board.

BSB shall wait until the community Board member recruitment is completed before trying to appoint the two Vice Chairs, probably over the summer. Shaheen asked if the two Vice Chairs would alternate and it was confirmed that they will not. They are being appointed because we need to consider succession planning and share the workload of the Chair.

4. Declarations of interest

Sarah declared her interest in Home-Start and will leave the meeting during item 6.

5. 'Getting to know you' session

There was no session this month.

6. Home-Start discussion

Jill gave a presentation which noted that the November 2019 Partnership Board had decided to recommission Home-Start for 12 months from 1 January 2020, and asked BSB to renegotiate the project's progression criteria with Home-Start, and redesign the theory of

change and logic model. The Board also asked that solutions were identified with Home-Start to the implementation and performance issues in their previous contract and to conduct a market testing exercise.

The Commissioning Advisory Group discussed Home-Start at their meeting on 16 April. The project's annual budget has been increased with inflation to £74k. Home-Start have agreed to have between 15 and 27 active volunteers and to support 50 families per year of which 35 will be unique families. This means that a maximum of 15 families can be carried over each year. Home-Start will also run two volunteer recruitment and training exercises per year. The progression criteria will be the number of new families supported, the number of volunteers and a satisfaction survey score of 4 out of 5.

Discussions are ongoing with the Innovation Hub regarding Home-Start's theory of change and logic model and the evaluation plan and data requirements. The discussions have been delayed by the Covid-19 situation but all parties are committed to a completion date of 31 May 2020.

Jill turned to the implementation issues, Home-Start have agreed to a 12 month limit to support a family which can only be exceeded in exceptional circumstances. Exceeding the 12 months only currently applies to one or two families a year. Home-Start have also reallocated resources to deal with any future staff absences, with an additional member of staff able to match volunteers with families. There is a six week waiting time target for matching, which will be closely monitored and Home-Start are implementing a new caseload management system which will support this. DBS checks are to be done earlier in the volunteer recruitment process to resolve the issue of lag between volunteer training and active volunteering.

Jill outlined the market testing exercise which was completed between 6 and 25 March 2020 and she wished to thank Tabia and Ruth for their help with this. The opportunity had been advertised (via the CCGs platforms, on Bradford Trident's and BSB's website and social media) but no responses were received.

At the Commissioning Advisory Group meeting on 16 April, the number of volunteers and the maintaining of provision was discussed, as was the definition of 'support.' Also raised was the period of support, waiting times, the market testing exercise and the theory of change.

The range of active volunteers, 15 to 27, was also discussed. Jill observed that Home-Start demonstrated in their previous contract that they can maintain this number of volunteers. They have also agreed to have two volunteer recruitment drives a year. BSB are happy that Home-Start have robust processes regarding the recruitment, supervision and retention of volunteers.

'Support' has been defined as a family being matched to a volunteer and receiving regular home visits. In addition to the market testing exercise which brought no responses, a benchmarking exercise was completed in November 2019, other organisations' costs (including Bradford Trident's) were similar to or above Home-Start's.

The Commissioning Advisory Group have recommended extending Home-Start's contract from 12 months to 3 years, with an end date of 31 December 2022, with them supporting 50 families a year. The theory of change and logic model work should be completed by 31 May 2020, as should the evaluation plan.

Vipin asked for questions and Shaheen said we had previously decided to extend the contract for 12 months and she queried if we should not review the contract then. Jill replied that Home-Start's three progression criteria had all been rated 'Green' and Vipin explained that we had agreed a 12 month contract so we could resolve the issues raised by the Board whilst ensuring

continuity for the families Home-Start supports. Alex observed that the contract review has to occur prior to the end of the contract in order to allow the time to close down the project. The timeline to close down a project would be at least three months so the Partnership Board need to review the progress against the queries raised and determine whether they are satisfied that the contract can be extended in line with the original decision.

Gwen said the review was satisfactory, however she felt the market testing could have been more widely advertised using platforms better known by community organisations like Diva Bradford and Carlton mentioned Cnet and CABAD's newsletter which have a good reach.

Decision: Subject to being quorate and pending circulation to the wider Partnership Board by email for approval, it was agreed:

- **The Home-Start contract to be extended to 31 December 2022 to provide a further 3 years of delivery, supporting a total of 50 families per year.**
- **Complete the refresh of the Theory of Change and Logic model with the Innovation Hub by 31 May 2020**
- **Agree the evaluation plan with the Innovation Hub and Home-Start by 31 May 2020.**

7. 10 Year budgets

Shaista explained that the written report documents all of the funding available to the programme, with a breakdown of what is 'investment from partners,' which has previously been referred to as leverage. This amount has reduced but the funding from the National Lottery Community Fund is unchanged.

Carlton asked how much we have spent so far and if BSB are on track. Gill Thornton said that the spend so far is approximately £21 million which is not far off what was projected, with the peak of expenditure expected to be in Years 6 and 7. Shaista confirmed that she could email out the year by year spend shown in a chart after this meeting.

Shaista explained that in the spreadsheet the Years 1 to 5 columns show the actual spend, although Year 5 only ended on 31 March 2020 and there may still be some changes. The figures shown for Years 6 to 10 reflect the rest of the budget. Most of these are based on previous spend and an allowance for future annual inflation of 3 per cent. Any costs not increasing by inflation are explained in the written report.

Most underspend from previous years has been allocated to the Innovation Fund 'pot' and five new Innovation Fund projects have been approved to date with contracts signed from 1 April 2020, totalling £385k. Other non-inflationary changes are for items like events and information campaigns. An Area Wellbeing Survey was completed in Year 5 and this is to be repeated at the end of Year 8 and may run on into Year 9.

Shaista stated that the Finance Officer (Caroline) is exploring anticipated closedown costs for Year 10 such as the requirement to safely store our records for a number of years but a nominal figure had been included.

Shaheen asked about the Wellbeing Survey and Sara confirmed that the Innovation Hub carried this out in Year 5 and her team have plans to analyse the report which have been delayed due to the Covid situation. The Wellbeing Survey focused a lot on green spaces and there is a plan to repeat it towards the end of Year 8.

Shaista moved on to the Projects and noted there is no budget for the Personalised Midwifery project after Year 7. Gill Thornton explained we are funding the enhanced midwifery service and the spreading of learning through the wider Maternity service. The Covid situation has changed Maternity Services however and the Clover Team are not operating as a continuity of care team any more. Maternity are reconfiguring to achieve the national targets re continuity of care, there has been good learning from what BSB have funded but Clover is not likely to be the continuity of care model taken forward. BSB will support with the transition to the new model post-Covid.

Ruth agreed with this and added that Local Maternity Services West Yorkshire and Harrogate have also done lots of work on a continuity of care model. After Covid we will need to discuss the difference between the BSB model and the district's and share learning across the region. Gill Thornton remarked that we want to keep the relationship with Maternity.

In relation to other projects, Shaista explained that Family Nurse Partnership ended in June 2019 and will be replaced by MECSH but this is being phased in. The Neighbourhood project was awarded to two organisations, and started in November 2019 for three years. Some money however was retained so there is capacity for additional community engagement to be commissioned.

There remains a budget for Preventonomics, Gill Thornton explained that this relates to how we will usefully measure the economic benefits of the BSB programme. We are working with York University to develop an economic tool.

Other projects' budgets are based on their existing service level agreements, with an allowance for inflation if they continue to Year 10.

Shaista explained that the Sustainability project is a new line in the spreadsheet. This relates to the work BSB will undertake regarding legacy, looking at community assets and system change. Carlton asked where this project had come from and Gill Thornton noted that the Partnership Board had identified the need to look at sustainability and opportunities to build the capacity of the community, in order to achieve this the workstream needs to be properly resourced. There is not an expectation that all 20 projects will continue beyond BSB funding but there will be a need to resource some of support to system change work and a shift to investment in Early Years and early intervention and prevention.

Gill Hart confirmed that all the A Better Start sites are looking at legacy with an aim to make elements of their projects 'business as usual' or incorporated into other things. Not all of the other sites have this as a separate budget line.

Action: Gill Thornton agreed with Carlton's request to provide the Partnership Board with a briefing paper about the Sustainability project.

Vipin recalled that we had a session on sustainability at the end of Year 2 and work on it needs to start early. Gill Hart observed that sustainability can also be the way things are done such as co-production. Vipin commented that he has noticed far more organisations are talking to each other and strategic partners are doing partnership work, not just community organisations.

It was confirmed that the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee were asked to review the 10 Year budgets and no objections were received.

Decision: The Partnership Board notes and accepts the revised 10 year budget and the basis on which it has been prepared.

8. BSB response to Covid-19

Michelle outlined the BSB Covid-19 response strategy document. The idea is to give our response structure and a framework, and to document what we are doing. These are the key strategic aims and objectives and Michelle will circulate the document after the meeting.

Action: Michelle to circulate by email the BSB Covid-19 response strategy document to the Partnership Board.

Michelle went through the six key strategic aims.

Michelle explained that the action plan part of the document is not yet completed but considerable work has already been undertaken and the action plan will capture this work. Gill Thornton said this is a good way of capturing and managing the work done and supporting partners and the community.

Alex added that we need to capture the work done and interrelate to other areas of work. Post-Covid, we need to be able to understand our contribution and new things that have been developed specifically as a response to the pandemic may inform new ways of working.

Carlton remarked that how programmes need to adapt is critical e.g. there will be a fear of attending large groups. Sara said how seeing how delivery is adapting will be useful for evaluation and she asked that mapping is shared across the system.

Sarah observed that home visits will also be less popular. She said there is huge need, with many families without good internet connection (and so much is online nowadays) or good English language skills. Carlton noted that schools are sending parents with school children work for the children to do but many parents have no printers.

Sara asked about recovery post-Covid and Jill confirmed we are already talking with projects about how they are planning to manage service delivery after the lockdown and transition plans. Problems with home visits are one of the issues we are raising.

BSB are looking at all possible outcomes, what we will do and what families actually need. We need to start planning for after the lockdown now and not everything will completely change back to how it was.

Tracey noted that many families have no internet access and asked if BSB could repurpose funds to help. Gill Thornton replied that our age group is 0-3 and projects are already providing support and we are talking to the Family Hub about needs. Fiona and our engagement team are exploring what resources families need with the Neighbourhood project. Tracey said her organisation has reallocated funds to provide cheap smartphones and dongles etc.

Sarah said that her workplace have supplied smartphones and children's activities such as seeds and soils for plant growing. Families may not have the real basics such as paper, pens and scissors. Shaheen noted the National Literacy Trust have resources such as Bradford Stories on their website and she will send the links to BSB. Gill Thornton said that the Better Start Imagine project are also doing online story telling.

Carlton said we need to capture good delivery methods and share learning with delivery partners. Sara commented that her team are planning on getting delivery data from projects and will do telephone interviews with projects to learn as much as possible, including about post-Covid new ways of working.

Gill Thornton confirmed we are capturing information and sharing it with the other ABS sites too and Alex noted there a Directors' meeting is due to take place next week to share updates across the programme. Jill said we are collating changes at regular project meetings, supporting projects with identifying risks and recording learning.

Alex observed that the Care Trust have recalled secondees as part of their response to Covid, as such Kerry is leading on a multi-agency response to visiting vulnerable children which started this week. Kerry will form a bridge between the Care Trust and us and represents BSB at some strategic forums. Gill Thornton added that BSB have been asked to support the Care Trust with vitamin deliveries to families.

Alex noted that due to Covid the National Lottery Community Fund have provided BSB with flexibility in relation to some funding constraints, this is allowing some projects to take referrals from beyond the BSB area where they have sufficient capacity. Although referral rates have dropped, we are doing an information campaign to say we are still open, telling agencies to still make referrals and promoting the new ways projects are engaging with families.

9. Programme Monthly Report

Gill Thornton explained that Forest Schools have been rated 'Red' as there is no direct delivery possible due to the lockdown. They are putting activities on their website and engaging with the families they were working with prior to lockdown. The rating is not a criticism of the project but as the model is delivering via early years settings it is not possible to deliver at the current time. Jill observed that if early years settings re-open, the project could support them and they are looking at other things they could do.

Gill Thornton advised that BSB have helped Public Health to produce information for parents on a range of issues facing families with young children. These are currently available online but are being printed and we have agreed to support distribution in the Better Start area.

BCB Radio have interviewed Gill Thornton about the Innovation Fund. Four of five Innovation Fund projects have commenced, Sharing Voices have requested that they delay their go live date but remain committed to delivery. Shaheen said she was pleased to see that Parents in the Lead funding has reached the £100k milestone, though it was noted the new projects cannot start until after the lockdown.

10. Any other business

Gill Thornton provided an update on the independent review of BSB's performance. The organisation conducting the review have reached the point of arranging face-to-face interviews and focus groups but due to the lockdown will be unable to do some of this now. This means a new timeline has been agreed with September 2020 for their interim report and October 2020 for the final report.

Sara noted that Born in Bradford are doing a Covid-19 survey including BiBBS BSB families. The survey will capture the response to the virus and the effect the lockdown has on families.

It will include older children (the Growing Up cohort) who were part of the first cohort. 3,000 questionnaires have been issued already and there will be different versions of the survey (for example, a specific survey is about to go out to pregnant women). It includes questions relating to issues such as finances, mental health and internet access. It will be run to capture multiple timepoints and there will be a cohort of children who may be impacted by the lockdown. Issues include less early years education, less socialising and the effect on parental stress and nutrition. BiB want to capture the data and give context for future evaluation.

Shaheen asked for more information about who would get the Covid survey to complete and Sara said it would initially be BSB families and the Growing Up cohort. The intention for the survey for pregnant women however is to issue it more widely in Bradford district.

Sara confirmed that her team plan to revisit the Wellbeing Survey at the end of this year, which is mostly to do with Better Place, although they are now thinking about linking it to the Covid survey. They may need to assure families that taking part is really important as it will feed into the district's response.

Gill Thornton confirmed the Wellbeing Survey will just be done in the BSB area as it relates to Better Place. Unfortunately all capital works have been put on hold due to Covid which will affect the timeline.

Sara said that future surveys will include the home learning environment. Her team are considering Covid's impact on evaluation and there are lots of question marks. They need to be able to interpret projects' data being captured now.

Finally Vipin thanked everyone for attending the meeting and said he would try to ensure better attendance from Community Board Members at our next meeting. He asked if everyone had felt they had an opportunity to contribute to this meeting and all agreed that they had. Vipin asked everybody to stay safe.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is provisionally on Thursday 21 May 2020, starting at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 11.10 am.