

Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes
Thursday 22 June 2023
Via Zoom

Meeting Started: 17:30

Meeting Ended: 19:10

Present:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Vipin Joshi | Community Board member (Chair) |
| Ruth Shaw | Senior Head of Integration and Change (Health and Care) for Women and Children, Bradford District and Craven Health & Care Partnership |
| Lisa Brett | Head of Service for Early Help and Prevention, Children's Services, CBMDC |
| Sarah Hinton | Board Member, Bradford Trident |
| Ashraf Miah | Development Officer, Community Action Bradford and District |
| Samina Begum | Community Board member (Vice Chair) |
| Gazala Taj | Community Board member |
| Karen Tetley | Community Board member |
| Ludmila Novosjolova | Community Board member (item 6 onwards) |

In Attendance

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Gill Hart | Funding Manager, The National Lottery Community Fund |
| Gill Thornton | Head of Programme, Better Start Bradford |
| Kerry Bennett | Integration and Change Manager, Better Start Bradford |
| Sola Onifade | Contract and Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford |
| Riffat Nasser | Programme Co-ordinator, Better Start Bradford |
| Chloe Stephenson | Maternal and Child Health Development Lead, Better Start Bradford |
| Guy Dove | Senior Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford |
| Aroosa Meherban | Observer |
| Humera Mahmood | Observer |

Apologies for Absence:

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Alex Spragg | Gwen Balson | Ishaq Shafiq | Salma Nawaz |
| Josie Dickerson | | | |

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Vipin welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

Everyone introduced themselves to each other. Aroosa and Humera are soon to become Community Board members and are observing this meeting. Chloe is Maternal and Child Health Development Lead at Better Start Bradford and is also observing.

The meeting was inquorate, and it was agreed to discuss and make recommendations which would then be emailed to the whole Partnership Board asking for comments and approval. A deadline for Partnership Board members to respond by will be imposed, with any not responding assumed to agree with the proposed recommendations.

Action: Gill Thornton to send an email to the whole Partnership Board detailing the recommendations from this meeting asking for ratification within a given time.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 27 April 2023

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising actions table

Josie's presentation from our last meeting was emailed out as requested.

Gill Thornton confirmed that the retention policy was considered by the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee as agreed. Alex was to finalise the policy but unfortunately has had a family bereavement and the retention policy will now be discussed at the July 2023 Partnership Board.

Three further BSB staff members have left or are leaving in June 2023 and Vipin said that we need to discuss the policy as soon as possible.

4. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. 'Getting to know you' session

This was not covered this month.

6. 10 Year Budgets

Gill Thornton presented the written report that was sent out with the meeting papers. The budget for the coming year was discussed at our last meeting, but now we have a revised 10-year budget to 31 March 2025. The budget runs from 1 July 2014 because we had development funding before the 10 years started.

The original bid to the National Lottery Community Fund was for an amount of revenue grant funding of £46,645,635 and capital grant funding of £2,323,635 giving us a total of £48,969,270. The leverage secured through our Partners was originally budgeted as £4,797,495. However, from Year 5 (2019-20) onwards some of this funding was reduced thereby taking our total budgeted partner investment amount down to £3,285,215.

We have also secured additional funding from Reducing Inequalities in Communities (RIC) for Personalised Midwifery project (£622k) and Little Minds Matter (£625k). We did not claim the

full amount for the Personalised Midwifery project due to recruitment problems on their staff team.

BSB have also received other income e.g., from Bradford University for student placements. We have also had additional capital investment for St Stephen's Church and Better Place e.g., from the Pocket Parks fund. The total overall income has therefore changed from £53,766,765 to £53,495,689 – a total reduction of £271,076.

Gill Thornton explained that our finances are constantly changing – this is a very large complex programme and we have had several staff changes. We keep track of the budget, address underspends and update everything on a rolling basis.

For project underspends, a business case is needed from the project for use of underspend. This must fit with our programme objectives, to improve the project and address needs. Gill Thornton explained that we are unlikely to consider any more of these business cases from September 2023 as there would not be enough time before the end of the programme for any changes to have impact.

We expect an increase in budget in Year 10 due to closing activity, sharing, and learning information, which will involve more activity for the Partnership Board with monitoring and evaluation, training, and events. We will also need more input from event volunteers. We have budgeted for a slight decrease in community engagement but expect a big increase in marketing and communication that year as we plan an information campaign and sharing the learning. Gill Thornton said she hopes the Community Board members will play a role in the Year 10 activities.

Provision for redundancy payments is included in the budgets. Also planned is an increase in the Learning Together budget. BSB have made a provision for legal fees so that the programme is closed down in a legally correct way. We also plan another independent review of the programme, and a follow-up Wellbeing survey.

Gill Thornton explained that the Contingency fund covers payment of the redundancy costs of projects. She explained that this was not budgeted for in the project's budgets as they would result in them running an underspend year on year. There are clear rules about BSB funding project redundancies, which have been agreed with the projects.

We have budgeted £45k for closure costs, which include putting things right in our office as per our tenancy agreement, and storage of our information, which needs to be done for 7 years.

Gill Thornton said for Personalised Midwifery project, from Year 7 it received £1.341 million of our funding over three years plus £622k of RIC funding over the same period. The Midwifery service partly fund it itself, and ideally will fund all of it from next year.

Family Nurse Partnership closed in June 2019 and BSB spent lots of time on supporting the development of MECSH. There is joint funding of Little Minds Matter, with £625k from RIC until March 2024 and this is all shown in the accounts.

Gill Thornton advised that the majority of projects' contracts will close before the end of our programme, so their budgets are limited. Sustainability Projects are on the budget, to support community assets, strengths, and capacity and how BSB can be built in to existing and future

activities. There is also system change and working with partners to embed BSB projects, learning and approaches into 'business as usual'.

To date in partnership with Public Health approximately £244k has been allocated to joint funding the District ACEs Coordinator costs, joint commissioning the Early Years Play and Learn Support contract and supporting the development of the Start for Life offer with Children's Services.

Gill Thornton explained that capital costs should have finished earlier, and what is remaining is smaller charges for things such as fencing. There are also retention fees. Additional contributions have been received for capital costs. The National Lottery Community Fund have allowed £20k to be transferred to the revenue account, with the funds to be used to lease an electric van for the Better Place project.

Vipin observed that the accounts are scrutinised by the Finance & Audit sub-committee in a two-hour meeting, with an expert from the council and another from the former CCG. Shaista has now left BSB, and he wished to record thanks for her good work in getting the accounts understandable for the Partnership Board.

Gill Thornton confirmed that we have not managed to replace Shaista and trying to recruit is difficult at present, and she will be reviewing using a recruitment agency with Alex.

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

7. Programme Monthly Report

Gill Thornton mentioned that Bradford Literature Festival is about to start and BSB are a key partner again. Baby Raves have proved so popular that some extra dates have been put on. We have a good relationship with the Festival and an Insight paper has been done about how this is good for the programme, linking babies and books and encouraging the Festival to feature events for under-fives, which is an example of sustainability and legacy.

BSB are supporting the workforce element of Public Health's Adversity, Trauma & Resilience (ATR) programme. Gill Thornton mentioned that Public Health are now reviewing the ATR structure and governance.

Gill Thornton mentioned the Urban95 Academy, a seven-week online programme designed to help leaders evaluate how successful policy is measured on a city level. It is designed to look at how the urban environment works for children under 95cm tall. She said this is a nice idea and there is the possibility of some funding. By participating in the programme, BSB will have the opportunity to connect and network with fellow participants from other cities including designers, architects, behavioural scientists, and policy experts to develop strategies to make Bradford better for our youngest citizens.

There have been lots of staff changes at BSB, with no applications received for the Contract & Implementation Officer role and it has been readvertised. One application was received for the Finance Manager role. A new Programme Administrator starts in post on 5 July.

Both Family and Community Engagement Workers and the Activities Fund Co-ordinator have left or are leaving BSB this month. We are trying to recruit a new Activities Fund Co-ordinator.

Gill Thornton explained for the other FACE team roles, we will be thinking about what we need from community engagement in our final two years. It could be done in a different way maybe and linked to our Neighbourhood project.

Ludmila suggested in the Chat sub-contracting the function to the Neighbourhood project. Gill Thornton replied that we are considering the Neighbourhood project but this would not be sub-contracting. We would need to follow a proper recruitment process and the impact of this may be the Neighbourhood project losing staff so we are looking at involving the project.

The Family Hubs had launch events recently and BSB attended all of them in Bradford district. We promoted Baby Week at them and the Volunteer Fair.

Gill Thornton mentioned the training for BSB staff and projects about Cousin Marriage and Genetic Disorders in Diverse Communities and Raising Awareness to Identify, Understand and Respond to Domestic Violence.

We have launched the new Event Volunteer role which went live on 22 May 2023. BSB's Comms team have supported this, and Gill Thornton mentioned the posters they have recently designed.

Community Partnership 5 have decided to fund a Maternity Circle and Gill Thornton said that thanks are due to Kerry and her team. Kerry added that an expression of interest has been done and the contract was awarded to Family Action and there was lots of interest in the opportunity. It will be delivered at the Vine Project in BD4. This is a great opportunity to work with CP5 and share expertise.

The Start for Life funding agreement has been signed and we are looking at doing the contract variations. Public Health funding has been agreed for Talking Together to deliver Owlets, a group led speech and language intervention in the four Family Hubs. It will be offered to run alongside the current offer of Talking Together within the BSB area.

Gill Thornton advised that the Happy Early Years Fund panel meeting for Round 3 was meant to be today, but it could not proceed as there is not enough capacity on the BSB staff team to support Round 3 of the HEY! Fund. There were 12 applications for Round 3 and there are already more than 20 existing HEY! Fund projects. All need support from the BSB team with payment cards, Comms and this involves the engagement team, the Comms team, the admin team, and the finance team. We cannot guarantee we would be able to service and support the groups as there is considerable follow-up work after the panel meeting, such as contracts, funding agreements and training.

BSB are asking the Partnership Board to affirm this decision. We have advertised for a new Activities Fund Co-ordinator. We have also contacted all the panel members and the people who made the applications. We hope to hold the panel meeting in October / November 2023.

Vipin remarked that this is an understandable recommendation. The situation is unfortunate, but BSB will try to get the HEY Fund back on track.

Decision: The Partnership Board approves the decision to postpone Round 3 of the HEY! Fund, due to insufficient capacity in the team to deliver it.

8. Risk Appetite review

Riffat gave a presentation and explained that the Partnership Board reviews its risk appetite every two years. This involves understanding the role and responsibility of the Partnership Board in overseeing risk management and understanding what role risk appetite plays in risk management.

The Partnership Board sets and/or approves the overall risk appetite and ensures appropriate risk governance. Riffat explained that the Programme Management Office at BSB develops strategy and delivers plans. It also manages the programme to achieve results according to the plans and agreed risk limits.

Riffat defined a risk as an uncertain event or set of events which, should it occur, will have an effect on the achievement of objectives. A risk can be a negative threat, or an opportunity and Riffat thought Covid could be both – a negative event but it gave us the opportunity to trial hybrid working.

Risk appetite is the amount of risk that an organisation is prepared to accept, tolerate, or be exposed to at any point in time to achieve its objectives. Riffat explained that how 'hungry' someone is for risk is not tangible.

Riffat showed a slide with the four levels of risk appetite. 'Averse' is ultra-safe, then there is 'Cautious,' 'Open' (which is what we are using now), and 'Hungry.' She explained that at the beginning of BSB, when we were identifying the programme, we were maybe more risk averse and cautious. Once we had decided on implementation, we switched to 'Open' in Year 5 and kept it for Year 7. Now we are in Year 9, a different tranche of the programme, seeking opportunities for sustainability and legacy. We have had lots of learning and are at the benefits realisation stage.

Riffat displayed a heat map for each of the four levels of risk appetite. She explained that they are made up of Likelihood and Impact. Each is scored from 1 to 4 and for Likelihood, she gave an example of staff turnover which has changed since the last review two years ago. Riffat suggested that for Impact, the highest score of 4 would apply to the pandemic.

We need to think about when we want to be notified of risks, the likelihood of new risks, the frequency, where we are in the programme and what this might mean in terms of impact. Riffat showed the heat map for 'Averse' and on that, only the lowest scored is rated 'Green,' (Likelihood and Impact both 1).

Riffat showed the heat maps for the other risk appetite levels and explained further what they involve. For 'Hungry,' only the highest scored outcomes are rated 'Red,' (Likelihood and Impact both 4). This risk appetite level means the Partnership Board would be eager to seek original/creative/pioneering delivery options. We would be willing to accept the associated substantial risk levels to secure successful outcomes and are at the benefits realisation stage of the programme.

Vipin remarked that we have had the 'Open' risk appetite for some years. The programme is coming to its end, and we agreed to review the risk appetite level every two years.

Ruth commented that she has been to a couple of these sessions before and she is not sure we refer to the risk appetite level when making decisions. Vipin thought the change from Family Nurse Partnership to MECSH is an example and that the BSB staff team look at risk

appetite when making a decision. Gill Thornton said Ruth had made a good point and that most decisions are made by the programme team and the risk appetite level informs decisions to an extent.

The last few months have made BSB go to 'Hungry;' Start for Life has started, and we have not done all the commissioning decision making processes. We have lost staff, and this has made us take difficult decisions, but Gill Thornton confirmed that we have never put the children and families at risk.

The programme needs to be more responsive and BSB need the Partnership Board behind us when we are making decisions. Ruth said that risk appetite needs to be in line with the Partnership Board's if there is any challenge to decisions made.

Vipin noted that we are approaching the final year and there is need to go from 'Open' to 'Hungry.' We need to move a lot faster, think and act and need to test and learn more. Lisa agreed with this and noted that for service delivery, Start for Life processes are not all in place. BSB are moving towards the final year and the risk appetite needs to be 'Hungry' or it will be difficult to mobilise.

'Hungry' does not mean reckless. Gill Thornton said we will not 'go crazy' and we do talk to the National Lottery Community Fund, and nothing will be done without thought.

Decision: The Partnership Board agreed to adopt a risk appetite level of 'Hungry' until the end of the programme.

Lisa asked about evaluation opportunities during the 'Hungry' phase and learning from other organisations. Gill Thornton replied that BSB are doing a review of the Programme Management Office, which completes in September 2023, when we will look at this.

9. Baby Week update 2023

Kerry gave a presentation and noted some new people are at this meeting so gave some Baby Week history. It is a district-wide partnership, and our first Baby Week was in 2018. There are other Baby Weeks in Leeds and Cheshire & Merseyside, and BSB have good relations with them and share best practice.

Our Baby Week 2020 had to be adaptable due to the pandemic and was delivered online. In 2022 it was good to work in partnership with BBC Tiny Happy People, Floella Benjamin was our keynote speaker and we received very good evaluation.

Kerry showed a video of the highlights of Baby Week 2022. She will circulate this to the Partnership Board as there was no sound.

Plans from Baby Week 2023 are well underway. It will run from Tuesday 14 November to Monday 20 November, so it ends on World Children's Day and this ties in with other Baby Weeks in other districts. It also includes a weekend, which could help to include working parents.

Work is going on with the Baby Week Steering Group and it has great representation. This year's Baby Week theme is good health and nutrition. There is a strapline of 'Ready, Steady,

Grow,' and Kerry explained that the infographics are not signed off yet and she would welcome feedback.

Kerry displayed a slide about pathway work – BSB are involved in the diet and nutrition pathway, and we can link in with that.

The Baby Week steering group meets monthly, it is a partnership, and an insightful consultation was done with families and the workforce. Kerry read out a list of topics in the spotlight and we will work closely with the Family Hubs and celebrate the Start for Life offer. Delivery shall be face-to-face and online.

Kerry asked the Partnership Board to get involved and there is a mailing list and a QR code. Early years settings can sign up for a resource pack, there will be use of social media, and work going on to secure venues.

Kerry said we need to add the 'sparkle' to Baby Week (with engagement being different between the workforce and communities) and decide the content. Kerry wished to give credit to the Comms team and Chloe for their work so far.

Aroosa suggested in the Chat combining messy play with food, educational packs and children may display sensory relations with food. Chloe clarified that we need a large-scale Family Event, with sensory play, interactive and we hope to repeat last year's, but with food as a theme. It will not just be about eating – people can see what can be done about nutrition. As for Aroosa's mention of sensory issues, we will signpost to other services as we need our offer to be universal. Kerry added that Little Minds Matter have been very vocal about that and mentioned routines in families about food. She asked all to send emails to her about Baby Week and suggest contacts and offer to deliver.

Sarah said we can say positive things about food. We can compare healthy options with all the fast food in Bradford and she suggested delivering fruit to fast food places. Chloe mentioned the sustainable food partnership in Living Well and that there is already work going on. We could suggest replacing takeaways with 'fakeaways' and put equitable swaps in Baby Week, fast food for home cooked. First Steps Nutrition have done a report about how detrimental ultra-processed food can be on health.

Karen suggested weaning, Cook and Eat sessions, HENRY and linking with other things going on. Gill Thornton mentioned that Better Place is to feature as well, and we should guard against people being told they are doing wrong. The First Steps Nutrition initiative Chloe mentioned is in really early days. Guy noted in the Chat that takeaways are a livelihood for many local families.

Chloe confirmed that messages will be positive, in line with local things and family friendly. Aroosa mentioned the cost-of-living crisis and if parents can access funding. Kerry confirmed that we are discussing this, working with, and promoting the Healthy Start scheme, of which there is low uptake in Bradford.

Ashraf remarked that the cost-of-living issue is really important, and we can provide information to families about help with food and energy bills. Chloe confirmed that we have made links with key food banks, who will be present at our events. Vipin suggested a 'soft sell' through HENRY. Baby Week has grown and is now mainstream, and other districts are coming to us.

Kerry asked for any other Baby Week questions to be emailed to her.

10. Any other business

Vipin wished to thank the FACE team for their efforts, noting that Humera Khan had been with BSB for many years and wished them well in their new ventures.

Finally, Vipin asked everyone if they had felt able to participate in this meeting and all agreed that they did.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on Thursday 20 July 2023, provisionally via Zoom, starting at 9.30 am.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm.