

Better Start Bradford Partnership Board Minutes
Thursday 19 September 2024
Via Zoom

Meeting Started: 09:30

Meeting Ended: 11:30

Present:

Vipin Joshi	Community Board member (Chair)
Sarah Hinton	Board Member, Bradford Trident (item 8 onwards)
Gill Thornton	Director, Better Start Bradford
Josie Dickerson	Programme Director, Born in Bradford Innovation Hub
Rizwana Jamil	Ward Councillor, Bradford Council (item 3 onwards)
Gwen Balson	Community Board member (Vice Chair)
Humera Mahmood	Community Board member (Vice Chair) (items 1 to 11 only)
Samina Begum	Community Board member (Vice Chair) (item 4 onwards)
Aroosa Meherban	Community Board member (items 1 to 11 only)
Karen Tetley	Community Board member
Ludmila Novosjolova	Community Board member

In Attendance

Sara Ahern	Programme Manager, Innovation Hub
Kerry Bennett	Assistant Director, Better Start Bradford (item 7 onwards)
Vikrant Bhatia	Programme Manager, Better Start Bradford
Sola Onifade	Contract & Implementation Manager, Better Start Bradford
Heather Fawcett-Jones	Contract & Implementation Officer, Better Start Bradford
Sophie Eveleigh	Contract & Implementation Officer, Better Start Bradford
Guy Dove	Senior Programme Administrator, Better Start Bradford

Apologies for Absence:

Ishaq Shafiq	Lisa Brett	Richard Padwell	Zakra Yasin
Becky Mcilvenny	Gill Hart	Matt Sandford	Salma Nawaz

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Vipin welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 18 July 2024

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising actions table

There is an action for Better Start Bradford to put on a Learning Together session about the Neighbourhood project, including co-production. Gill confirmed that this will be picked up by our new Workforce and Learning Manager, Chloe Stevenson, who starts in post on 1 October. She is currently our Maternal and Child Health Development Lead and we will not be replacing that post. Chloe has lots of experience of the workforce brief and some Partnership Board members supported the recruitment process.

Another action is for Gill to chase up our statutory partners about Partnership Board representation. Gill said she met with Children's Services last week and BSB do have links there and they will try to get us a representative. Gill explained that we do have Lisa Brett, but she is from the Children and Families Trust and BSB and Children's Services think they should be represented too. Jo Medd who used to be at HENRY and is now in Children's Services has agreed to join our Commissioning Advisory Group but may not be able to attend many of their meetings.

We also have a new Integrated Care Board representative, Matt Sandford. He is replacing Nancy O'Neill, who is retiring and who some will remember from the early days of the BSB programme.

Gill felt that Board membership is building back up again and partners are still keen. We are looking for a more senior Public Health representative and Gill will meet Sarah Muckle next month before she leaves Bradford Council. Gill explained that Zakra Yasin of Public Health chairs the Commissioning Advisory Group.

No recommendations have been received about a private sector representative joining the Partnership Board. Vipin noted that we have had eight weeks to put someone forward and agreed this should be removed from the action table.

An additional funding decision about Talking Together is on the agenda for this meeting (item 6).

4. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. 'Getting to know you' session

This was not covered in this meeting.

6. Talking Together additional funding decision (Confidential item)

7. Better Place end of contract review

Sara explained that she would just give the highlights of the evaluation as it is a long report. The context is that the Innovation Hub had high hopes of an effectiveness evaluation, based on staged capital works, with the BSB area to the east of Wakefield Road being the control area (their capital improvements would start later than areas to the west). However, the Covid

pandemic caused delays to some of the works, so there was no clear distinction between the two areas. Sara noted that a Wellbeing Survey was done, with its results presented in 2021.

Sara's team also did a qualitative longitudinal study, which included interviews with local families at three timepoints about the sites that had received Better Place funded improvements. The evaluation included themes such as community ownership, usage and maintenance issues.

A 'before and after' evaluation is ongoing, with two measures (SOPARC, which looks at usage of urban green spaces, and NEST, which assesses their quality). Sara explained that no SOPARC measures were used last year as different people would have been involved to who did the work before, but she does have the NEST data. There will be a further report at the start of 2025 covering the whole timespan of the project.

Sara said that the qualitative evaluation contains some amazing data from the interviews and focus groups, with some lovely comments. Better Place supported the health and wellbeing of the local community.

The evaluation also revealed a lack of access to other free recreational activities. More needs to be done about maintenance though there is some sense of ownership. It is unclear what the community can do about e.g., repairs and keeping parks tidy and what the council do and there needs to be more collaboration. Having local people involved in decision making increases their sense of ownership.

The evaluation also found that the sites that received Better Place investment are well-used and valued and the local community would like the work to be expanded. The activities in the parks help the community to engage, with improved playgrounds and new facilities.

Samina wrote in the Chat that the improvements in parks helped elders as well as families with young children, benefitting their physical and mental health. Humera put in the Chat that it was good to see there were lots of events in parks over the summer.

Sara read out all the measures that NEST scores, such as accessibility and safety. 30 urban green spaces were assessed last summer, which was a large undertaking. The Better Place 'investment sites' scored 81 on NEST, whereas the non-investment sites scored 63. Sara said however that when breaking down the measures, there was not much difference between investment sites and those that had received no Better Place investment, except for the useability of the spaces.

Sara explained that the Innovation Hub's next report will analyse changes over time. Finally, she reported some high scores for satisfaction questionnaires and some lovely quotes.

Sola then gave a Powerpoint presentation which is linked to here:



PB_End of Contract
Better Place_19.09.24.]

Sola also mentioned the sense of ownership, and the provision of snacks to improve participation at activities. A lesson learned was the setting up of a WhatsApp group which helped speed up the issue of information.

Gill said that there are prospects of Better Place continuing for longer and we may ask the Partnership Board to revise their decision, having asked the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee first. Better Place is a popular, successful project with significant reach which demonstrates successful work with local parents.

Gill advised that Bradford Trident have about five funding bids in for Better Place which BSB could support with. Sara said her team are finalising the full analysis of the qualitative evaluation and how things could change to help sustainability. A disconnect between Better Place, local 'Friends Of' groups and Bradford Council was found and there needs to be better connections and a plan to strengthen relationships. Gill agreed that there should be such a plan.

Decision: The Partnership Board (subject to the approval of those members not present) approved that the BSB funding for Better Place ends on 30 November 2024, while funding from Natural England is used to continue activities to March 2025. This decision may be subject to later review.

8. Breastfeeding Support contract completion

Sola presented some Powerpoint slides which are linked to here.



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completion presentati

He explained that the presentation would be brief as the BSB funded project has closed and it has been discussed before.

Sara said she wished to highlight what a success this project has been. When it went through service design several years ago, its targets such as number of contacts in a certain timescale were thought to be really ambitious. Data should be used well to show Breastfeeding Support's success.

Gill said the project's Start for Life offer is delivered via BSB and Breastfeeding Support has consistently exceeded expectations. Health for All have been awarded more work and are especially good at reach and this is an excellent project. Kerry agreed and shared that the Start for Life Steering Group does the recognise the quality service, the change in practice and service provision.

Decision: The Partnership Board (subject to the approval of those members not present) approves that the BSB funding for Breastfeeding Support has ended, and that the project has transitioned into the Start for Life programme.

Vipin wished to thank Humera for spotting a misprint in the project report that was emailed out and to Sophie for amending it quickly.

9. Incredible Years contract completion

Sola gave a Powerpoint presentation which is linked to here.



PB_Contract
completion presentati

Josie observed that it is important to recognise that Start for Life are delivering a different Incredible Years offer to the BSB funded project, to older children (Pre Schoolers, not Toddlers). She shared the good news that the National Lottery Community Fund have agreed funding so that the Innovation Hub can continue the Incredible Years Toddlers and the HENRY evaluations to 2027/28, to get effectiveness evaluations. This shows that the NLCF value the work that has gone on in Bradford.

Gill commented that it is remarkable how successful the project has been, especially as attendance by parents at similar courses in children's centres was poor. We were told that Incredible Years was unlikely to work in our communities but Start for Life acknowledge great attendance even though it is a 16-week course.

Gill said this shows that with the right offer and the right engagement, parents will attend and Incredible Years is evidence-based. We should tell the new government this and we know Incredible Years is expensive, but its benefits outweigh the costs. Vipin agreed and shared that at the community prep meeting two evenings ago, it was hoped that the new government would continue support and funding for age 0-4s and that the data collected is used long-term.

Decision: The Partnership Board (subject to the approval of those members not present) approved that the BSB funding for Incredible Years has ended, and that the project has transitioned into the Start for Life programme.

10. Little Minds Matter contract completion

Sola gave a Powerpoint presentation which is saved here:



PB_Contract
completion presentati

Sara said that as well as the implementation evaluation of the project (except for the community engagement strand, which was not evaluated) her team have done a systems evaluation over the last three years. Little Minds Matter needs to 'embed' in the early years system and the evaluation was a qualitative piece of work starting in 2021. The report will be finalised very soon and a huge amount of work went into it. Some interesting things came out which will be lessons learned for Little Minds Matter and the wider system. It will be important to share the report and get wider partners embedded.

Sara said the evaluation found that Little Minds Matter is 'embedded' but more work needs to be done in parts of the system. The Training strand is very valued and the Consultation strand especially so. Knowledge of infant mental health has increased due to Little Minds Matter, practitioners and organisations are prioritising infant mental health which Sara explained is not entirely due to Little Minds Matter, but it is a 'driver.'

Sara moved on to barriers and facilitators said that it was difficult to navigate services for families. A new service may not consider the capacity of existing services to engage with training, for example, and existing services are under lots of pressure. Little Minds Matter needs to 'fit' with existing provision, avoid overlap e.g. with CAMHS and try to deal with perceived competition for funding and families from other services.

Sara confirmed that collaborative working has happened, there are positive experiences from practitioners who report an improved sense of job satisfaction and that they are doing a better job of working with families. She moved on to the Innovation Hub's recommendations – the first is that Little Minds Matter tailor their training for smaller VCS organisations. The project should continue their flexible approach to consultation work. Referral processes should be improved and simplified. The final recommendation is that funding is continued, mentioning the need for clearly defined infant mental health pathways.

Gill commented that CAMHS was not part of the NHS Care Trust's offer at the start of Little Minds Matter and recalled that we did consult all partners. She wished to correct the earlier presentation – Little Minds Matter was not consulting practitioners – it was the other way round.

Kerry informed that much work is going on behind the scenes about seeking continued funding for Little Minds Matter and there is a mapping exercise. She noted that the project has been shortlisted for a Health Services Journal award. Sophie wrote in the Chat that Little Minds Matter have also been nominated for a Children & Young People Now award. Although Little Minds Matter is to continue to March 2026 with ICB funding, this is only 12.6 per cent of the funding they currently receive. BSB and LMM will be submitting a business case to the PLE (Partnership Leadership Executive), hopefully in early October to try to influence their commissioning decisions.

Vipin observed that, as a Community Board member, it is amazing how many projects have transferred into the mainstream from being community-led – it can be done. What the learning is and the parts we can take and age 0-4s are discussed much more in commissioning meetings he has seen as a Chair. He suggested putting all the BSB projects that have transitioned on to an A4 sheet. Gill agreed and added that parents were involved in designing this project. Parents on the Partnership Board give us 'living information' and tailor what the community requires, instead of it just being senior decision-makers. This has enabled us to show what will work.

Decision: The Partnership Board (subject to the approval of those members not present) approved that BSB funding for Little Minds Matter has ended, and that the project has transitioned into the Start for Life programme.

Gill added that the ICB funding for Little Minds Matter of £156k will be coming via BSB for a time, then transitioning to another organisation next year.

11. Follow up from Strategy Day (continued)

Gill gave a Powerpoint presentation and explained that there has been work on how Year 11 of the programme will be managed. A skills audit of the staff team took place in May 2024, then there was the Strategy Day on 8 July, and a Leadership Team away day on 25 July. There were delays over the summer due to lots of annual leave and Vikrant being new in post. A review of the Commissioning Advisory Group and the Programme Management Group

(which will now also cover operations) has taken place, and there are proposals for the Commissioning Advisory Group to have oversight of sustainability and legacy.

A BSB staff restructure is underway and we will discuss the appointment of a legacy consultant under item 13. A celebration event for projects is on 10 October and the final programme event is in February 2025. Gill and Kerry attended Lambeth's celebration event last week and we will do something similar in February.

Gill read out the new key areas and legacy working groups and confirmed there is a template and broad terms of reference for them. The first is Change in Practice and Systems (looking at how we can drive this and consolidate system change we have achieved and where we need to do further work). Gill said the programme extension has allowed us to do this. The second legacy working group is Stakeholder Engagement (ensuring we are working with the right people and ensuring that local parents and community groups are an important part of our legacy).

There is Programme Closure, which Vikrant will be leading but there will be a small group of people also in this legacy working group. There are lots of practical things to do and it will be useful to have that broader voice, including Partnership Board members. The final legacy working group is Embedding Learning and Services, making sure our projects are embedded or at least that the learning from them is embedded. Practitioner support and development and co-production is an essential part of this.

Gill said Partnership Board members are invited to join the four groups and they can have a conversation about it first if needed. Members have no obligation to be part of them, but those who are interested can let BSB know, and we will invite them to meetings, aligning the meetings with their availability and they can help to set the right objectives for the rest of the programme. Vipin asked about timescales and Gill asked Partnership Board members to enrol next week, then the groups will start early next month.

Action: BSB to email those Partnership Board members not attending this meeting about joining the legacy working groups, and to circulate the slides.

12. Programme monthly report

Vikrant mentioned the project celebration event at Bradford Cathedral on 10 October (2 to 4pm). This will be a time to meet up, celebrate together and acknowledge all the hard work within and surrounding our amazing projects.

A date has been agreed for the BSB programme closing event which is late February 2025. Gill clarified that there will also be an A Better Start online closing event in early February 2025.

We attended a meeting with Richard Padwell, the police Divisional Commander and his colleagues working in the Early Action and Community fields. When reporting on the programme's achievements, we highlighted several shared themes like domestic abuse and support for parents, which align well with the police ambition to build strong community relationships aimed at preventing crime. Further collaborative work with the police is to be pursued.

Vikrant confirmed the appointment of the new Workforce and Learning Manager from 1 October and added that one of the Programme Administrators has gone on maternity leave and had a baby girl last week. Gill added that one of our Contract & Implementation Officers has gone on maternity leave too.

Vikrant said that several BSB Start for Life projects are doing well and exceeding targets. He noted that most Breastfeeding Support service users are in IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) groups 1-5. For Better Place, Bradford Trident is in the process of a funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for 5 years of additional funding.

Vikrant then mentioned Kerry's recent presentation to the Institute of Health Visiting conference about Baby Week, which received very good feedback. BSB's Comms team have continued their good work and he displayed posters they recently designed and flyers about Virtual Live Learning sessions and a Baby Week family facing flyer.

Vikrant then read out the summer events that took place this year in the Family and Community Engagement part of the report and noted their support for Play Streets in the district. He mentioned that a link is now live to a recording of the ABS Annual Conference which took place on 10 June.

Kerry put a link to the Baby Week Workforce Event on 18 November in the Chat and said it is open for bookings. The keynote speaker is Anne Longfield, formerly the Children's Commissioner, who is very influential about the Play agenda. Bradford is a frontrunner in the development of Baby Week and several other districts are learning from us. Our learning will be essential in the next Baby Week Best Practice event which is also in November. Also in November, linked to Baby Week, are three Innovation Hub webinars.

Josie said that one of the summer events that Vikrant mentioned, the BiBBS Families Celebration /Teddy Bears' Picnic at Grange Interlink, was a fantastic day and it was a long time since they last did anything similar and there are some great photos from it.

Josie shared that she and colleagues attended a Wellcome Trust interview in London for future BiBBS funding, with over 20 people on their panel. The Innovation Fund will find out the result in mid to late-October. She wished to recognise the work of the CRAG (Community Research Advisory Group) with this bid, who have been really supportive.

13.Any other business

Gill said that a panel (Carlton, Jo Medd and herself) met on 16 September to consider nine bids to become BSB's legacy consultant. Their decision was relatively clear-cut and she displayed the scoring grid. One criterion was experience, which was a Pass/Fail question, and the other measures were how to do it and ideas which she stated are standard for a commissioning process. A word count was also used which one bidder exceeded throughout.

Out of the nine bids, Community Action Bradford and District were top. One of the bids failed and was not scored. Gill said a proper paper trail exists for the panel's discussions and decisions and they scored the bids together. There needs to be a short deadline for the Partnership Board's decision (24 September). Gill explained that no interviews of the bidders took place because is a clear gap between the top bid and the next ones in the panel's scoring.

Decision: The Partnership Board (subject to the consent of those members not present) agreed that a legitimate commissioning process had been followed and to appoint CABAD.

Action: Guy to email this meeting's non-attendees asking them to ratify the decision by 24 September while declaring any conflicts of interest, offering to share the scoring grid with them individually as it is too confidential to email.

Guy referred to the draft schedule for Partnership Board meetings during 2025 in the meeting pack and confirmed he had tried to avoid religious holidays and school half terms. There will be a morning meeting scheduled during Ramadan.

It was agreed that we may not always need a monthly Partnership Board meeting going forward, but it is important to get dates in peoples' diaries and the meetings could be cancelled nearer the time as necessary.

Decision: To accept the suggested Partnership Board meeting dates for 2025.

Action: Guy will send out Calendar invitations for the meeting dates, including Zoom links.

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

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on Thursday 17 October 2024, via Zoom, starting at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.