

BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



promoting prosperity, tackling inequalities

Minutes

BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

MINUTES OF THE BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD HELD ON TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2008, IN THE LARGE DINING ROOM, JUDGES LODGINGS, COMMENCING AT 10.04 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.22 PM.

Members Present

Mr J Booth	Chief Executive, Thames Valley Police Authority
Ms J Brown	Joint Director of Strategy & System Reform, Buckinghamshire Hospitals Trust
Mr A Busby	Chairman of South Bucks LSP/Leader of SBDC
Mr D Ebdon	Chairman, Chiltern LSP
Mr T Egleton	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority
Ms J Goddard	Economic Development Director, LSC TV
Ms J Hunt	Voluntary Impact
Mr M Hunt	Buckinghamshire Community Action
Superintendent Ismay	Deputy Basic Command Unit Commander, Buckinghamshire, TVP
Mr C Meakings	Wycombe District Council
Mr A Pratt	Chair, Bucks Economic and Learning Partnership
Mr W Ralls	Area Director, SEEDA
Mr J Savage	Wycombe District Council
Mr C Scroggs	Non Executive Director, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
Mr D Shakespeare OBE	Leader of BCC
Mrs I Thompson	Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils
Mr J Wallis	Non Executive Director, Buckinghamshire PCT
Mr W Whyte	Chair, Aylesbury Vale LSP
Mr C Williams	Chairman of Buckinghamshire Children's Trust

Observers

Mr C Furness, Observer - Chief Executive, SBDC

Mr A Goodrum, Observer - Chief Executive, CDC
Mr A Grant, Observer - Chief Executive, AVDC
Mr E Macalister-Smith, Observer - Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire PCT
Ms E Macdonald, Observer - Bucks Locality Manager, GOSE
Ms J Waldron, Observer - Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Officers

Mrs S Ashmead, Corporate Manager, Policy and Performance
Mrs J Fisk, Policy Officer (Local Area Agreement)
Ms H Wailling, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Julia Clarke (The Ridgeway Partnership), Lesley Clarke (Wycombe District Council), Stewart George (Buckinghamshire PCT), Janet Godden (OBMH), David Rowlands (Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority), Karen Satterford (Wycombe District Council), Paul Tinnion (Safer and Stronger Bucks Partnership Board), Linda Walton (Business Representative) and John Warder (Chiltern District Council). Members noted that:

John Savage was substituting for Lesley Clarke, Jon Wallis was substituting for Stewart George, Cedric Scroggs was substituting for Janet Godden, Trevor Egleton was substituting for David Rowlands, Charles Meakings was substituting for Karen Satterford and Tony Ismay was substituting for Paul Tinnion. All substitutions were for the duration of the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Chairmanship

David Shakespeare, Leader of Buckinghamshire County Council, was elected as Chairman of the Bucks Strategic Partnership Board for the ensuing year, until further government guidance was issued.

Terms of Reference

Sarah Ashmead, Corporate Manager, Policy and Performance, took members through the draft Terms of Reference. The Board would work at a high strategic level, adding value to the work of other partnerships and providing a strategic overview for the County. The content of agendas for meetings would be informed by partnership issues feeding through, for example, from the thematic partnerships.

Local Area Forums were discussed and it was agreed that a link to these could be added to the Terms of Reference if necessary, once the Locality Strategy had been to County Council. Members agreed the Terms of Reference.

Robin Douglas from the Leadership Centre for Local Government reported back on key issues from discussions held with some members of the board prior to the meeting, and then facilitated a workshop session to look at the format and shape of the Board. During the session the following points were made:

- The Board should be a place of challenge, and not just a forum for receiving reports.
- The Board would be an opportunity to develop partnerships and build on existing relationships.

- Members should ensure that they did not stick to old patterns of behaviour and thinking. There would also be a need to recognise the complexity and diversity of the membership of the Board.
- Work would need to be kept at an appropriate level, so that it was purposeful, strategic and challenging.
- Meetings should be challenging, but not assertive 'talking shops.'
- Thematic partnerships should be a standing item on the Agenda.
- Meetings could be held with a 'café-style' layout. Two agenda items could be discussed concurrently and then reported back to the full Board.
- Agendas needed to cover a wide range of issues, but not in too much detail.
- There was a need to look at how the Board linked with ground-level work in local areas. A dotted line was needed on the diagram between the thematic partnerships and the LSPs.
- Economy and skills issues differ between north and south Buckinghamshire. There needed to be a mechanism to bring both together. Buckinghamshire is a complex county. However most key decision-makers are on the Board.
- After two meetings the Board would need to review how it was working. A refresh would also be needed after the pilot locality work in High Wycombe.
- The Board should not just be about feeding upwards. It should also take account of organisations which are organised at a countywide level, such as the NHS.
- The Board would need to move quickly to focus on key priorities and to make specific agreements to challenge them.
- There would need to be a balance between content and process.
- The key overall priority is to improve outcomes for residents.

Agenda papers and Minutes

Members agreed that Agenda papers and Minutes should be published on the public website.

4 PREPARING FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

Robin Douglas then told members about the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) which would begin in 2009.

The CAA was the new joint inspection framework, and would replace the current Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

Three significant questions which would be asked by the CAA were:

- How well do you understand your area(s)?
- How well are you delivering on the priorities you have set?
- How well are you working together to deliver these?

The CAA would be less-focussed on the details of services or specific organisations themselves, and much more focussed on the outcomes of those services, with an emphasis on partnership working. The CAA was currently being piloted in four authorities, and an additional ten authorities would also be involved in the pilot before the CAA was launched in 2009.

It was not yet clear if other inspection regimes would change following the introduction of the CAA (e.g. the Home Office inspection of Police).

The Audit Commission had promised that the burden of inspections would be lighter with the CAA, and that scores and league tables would be abolished. There would be an emphasis on self-assessment and there would be fewer field assessments, to save money. The stronger an authority was at knowing its area, the less likely it was to have multiple inspections. Satisfaction surveys would become a much bigger budget area for all organisations.

There would be 'naming and shaming' if one part of a partnership was not performing satisfactorily.

A representative from GOSE said that the evaluation of the two-tier pathfinder would also need to be considered.

The LGA had issued a framework which authorities could use to pilot the self-assessment. The intention that was that this would be used in Buckinghamshire at LSP level. The framework would be circulated to all members (attached).

Members discussed the CAA, and identified the following risks:

- Inspections might be very complex
- Inspectorates might not be aligned
- Government may not be focussed on local issues
- Could be over-technical and not sensitive to local needs

Robin Douglas then told the Board about the four parts of the assessment. There were discussions regarding these, and the main issues identified are summarised below.

1. Understanding Local Areas

- There was a large amount of data available.
- Border authorities needed to be considered.
- Local areas were not two-tier, but multi-layer.
- Operationally there is very good joint working, but it could be better at a strategic level.
- People's view of 'place' can be ephemeral and fickle.
- The 6% of residents who answer surveys can affect the 94% who do not.
- A reasonable understanding of area is already there, but still some way to go.
- Personalisation agenda – people will need more choice and a great deal of consultation.
- Place survey will be part of the CAA.

2. Community Leadership and Place-shaping

- Buckinghamshire not bold or brave in terms of collective civic leadership – tendency to blame others. Also a sense of confusion.
- Board can collectively choose to do the unnecessary if it is desirable.
- If an issue can be seen effectively from a local view, there may not be a need to bring it to the Board.
- Serious under-funding – no budget for more aspirational ideas.
- Limited budgets can be a catalyst for joint working.
- How will CAA compare Buckinghamshire with other local authorities who may have more funding? This issue may need to be taken back to central Government.

3. Working in Partnership

- Not always joined-up.
- Varies in perception.
- Political partnership challenge – different to other authorities.

4. Delivering outcomes

- Some issues are difficult to measure (e.g. fear of crime). Challenge to deliver from residents' perspective.
- Inspectors' priorities may be different to priorities of Board or of residents.
- Customer satisfaction surveys important, but imperfect. Mystery shopping might be better.

- Managing customer expectation needs to be improved.
- BSP Implementation Group has rolled out a piece of software which monitors all LAA targets. Exception reports will be brought to BSP Board, as well as a general overview.

5 THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

Chris Williams told members that the 'Story of Place' was a narrative which set out what Buckinghamshire was trying to achieve through the LAA.

There had been extensive consultation with many partner organisations to ensure that the LAA targets reflected the views and priorities of the local community.

The 'Story of Place' and the draft targets had been submitted to the Government. There was an ongoing discussion with the Department for Communities and Local Government as to whether an additional target regarding house completions should be included for the Aylesbury Vale District. The Secretary of State was due to sign off the LAA within the next fortnight.

Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer, said that the indicators had been chosen following discussion with GOSE. Some indicators would be developed further at the first annual review/refresh.

There were a maximum of 35 national indicators, and Buckinghamshire's submission contained 26.

There were also 7 local indicators and 16 statutory education/early years targets.

The owner of each LAA target would co-ordinate a delivery plan overseen by the thematic partnership.

The siting of consultation meetings regarding the LAA south of Aylesbury, and the lack of mention in the 'Story of Place' of rural issues or of landmarks in northern Buckinghamshire were queried. Jackie Fisk commented that the siting of the second consultation event in High Wycombe was in response to feedback from an earlier event regarding space and facilities but agreed that siting of future events would be re-considered. Additions to the narrative could be considered at the refresh. An Equality Impact Assessment would be carried out at the end of July 2008, which would include a 'rural-proofing' exercise.

A member also said that it would be necessary to look at changing demographics, migration issues and the changing environment in Buckinghamshire, and to make projections for the next 25 years. Chris Williams said that at the next meeting a discussion would be held about the process for taking forward the Community Strategy (linked with work carried out by Dr Fosters).

6 FEEDBACK FROM BSP CONFERENCE 'SHAPING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE'

Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer, said that the BSP Conference 'Shaping Buckinghamshire,' had taken a long-term view of future impacts and threats on/to Buckinghamshire.

The Conference had been facilitated by 'Local Futures,' who had looked at the national drivers for change and brought these back to a local level.

Some key issues arising which had been identified were:

Affordable housing

Skills and qualifications

Sustainable economic prosperity

Sustainable communities and community leadership

The Conference had been a starting point for the development of a new Community Strategy. An in-depth report would be produced from the Conference, and this would be made available to the Board.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16 September 2008, 2:30pm – 4:30pm, Main Hall 2, Green Park Conference Centre, Aston Clinton

13 January 2009, 2:30pm – 4:30pm

31 March 2009, 2:30pm – 4:30pm

7 July 2009, 2:30pm – 4:30pm

CHAIRMAN