

BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



promoting prosperity, tackling inequalities

Minutes

BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

MINUTES OF THE BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2009, IN HAZLEMERE ROOM 2, UPLANDS CONFERENCE CENTRE, FOUR ASHES ROAD, CRYERS HILL, HIGH WYCOMBE, HP15 6LB, COMMENCING AT 2.35 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 5.06 PM.

Members Present

Ms T Aldworth
Ms L Blue
Mr J Booth

Mr A Busby

Mrs L Clarke

Mr S George

Mr K Grimble

Ms J Hunt

Mr P O'Hare

Mr A Pratt OBE

Mr W Ralls

Mr D Schofield

Mr D Shakespeare OBE

Chief Superintendent Paul Tinnion

Mr J Warder

Assistant Chief Executive, AVDC
BALC

Chief Executive, Thames Valley
Police Authority

Chairman of South Bucks
LSP/Leader of SBDC

Chairman of Wycombe
LSP/Leader of WDC

Chair, Buckinghamshire PCT Trust
Board

Assistant Director of Business
Development and Marketing,
Bucks Hospitals Trust

Voluntary Impact

Buckinghamshire Community
Action

Chair, Bucks Economic and
Learning Partnership

Area Director, SEEDA

Buckinghamshire and Milton
Keynes Fire Authority

Leader of BCC

Chairman of the Safer and
Stronger Bucks Partnership Board

Leader of CDC / Chairman,
Chiltern LSP

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 K Satterford, Observer - Chief Executive, WDC

Officers

Mrs S Ashmead, Corporate Manager, Policy, Performance and Communications

Mr T Boyd, Divisional Director for Safeguarding

Mrs J Fisk, Policy Officer (Local Area Agreement)

Ms H Wailling, Democratic Services Officer

Guests

Alison Bond, Halo Works

Ms S Davy, Guest - BSPIG

Mr R Douglas, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Mr G Grover, Guest - BSPIG / BELP

Ms T Ironmonger, Guest - BSPIG / Buckinghamshire Primary Care Trust

Mr C Meakings, Guest - BSPIG / Wycombe District Council

Trevor Millard, Halo Works

Ms A Rowland, Guest - BSPIG / SBDC

Mr J Streeter, Guest - BSPIG / Chiltern District Council

Ms S Yapp, Guest - BSPIG / DAAT

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from John Cartwright, Julia Clarke, Michael Hunt, Sue Imbriano, Sam Knollys, Rita Lally, David Rowlands, Warren Whyte, Chris Williams.

The following were in attendance as substitutes:

Tracey Aldworth for John Cartwright

Paul O'Hare for Michael Hunt

Kingsley Grimble for Sam Knollys

David Schofield for David Rowlands

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29 JULY 2009

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2009 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4 BSP IMPLEMENTATION GROUP UPDATE REPORT

The Board received the Update Report from the BSP Implementation Group (BSPIG).

Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer, told Members the following:

- The feedback from the Audit Commission showed a good picture overall. Some areas had been highlighted as being points of focus in the next year, and these were listed under point 2.
- Points 3 and 4 covered the Improvement Programme.
- The Sustainable Community Strategies were now going through various organisations and the planned date for publication was October 2009.
- LAA Performance was largely on track. BSPIG had delegated authority over the LAA pooled fund and details of this were shown in the Appendix.
- Economic Assessment – this was expected to become a statutory duty in the following year – more information would be brought to the Board as this developed.

RESOLVED

The BSP Board:

- **Considered the implications of the first draft Buckinghamshire Area Assessment judgement,**
- **Noted the development of the Buckinghamshire Improvement Plan.**

- **Noted BSP Implementation Group decisions on allocation of LAA Pooled Fund.**

5 TACKLING DISADVANTAGE IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Trevor Boyd (Head of Commissioning and Service Improvement, Adults and Family Wellbeing) gave a presentation on the Tackling Disadvantage Partnership Programme.

During the presentation, Trevor Boyd made the following points:

- Tackling disadvantage in Buckinghamshire was a priority in the Sustainable Communities Strategies and in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).
- Eight neighbourhoods in Buckinghamshire fell into the lowest 30% of deprivation nationally. Four localities had been defined which covered these eight areas (Oakridge and Castlefield, Disraeli, Quarrendon and Southcourt). Projects were being carried out in these areas to tackle disadvantage, and this was monitored by a Programme Board. The aim was to engage a community organisation or local residents to take ownership of work carried out.
- There was no single cause for deprivation, and the best approach was a partnership approach, as the causes were multi-faceted.
- Tackling disadvantage should be about empowering and raising aspirations, rather than developing dependency. A Partnership Programme had been set up to tackle the problem of disadvantage in Buckinghamshire. The programme had two workstreams, the first of which included a Community-led approach; the creation of a Vulnerable Localities Index (being produced by the Fire and Rescue Service); and a Childhood Poverty Programme (which would be linked to the work of the Children's Trust).

Members then asked questions, and these are summarised below.

You mentioned a Community-led approach – do you include local Councillors (County, District and Parish)?

Yes – this is crucial to the work. We have already engaged with Local Members and we will continue to do so.

Can you give more details about the projects being carried out in the four identified areas?

Examples of short-term projects: Providing an Adaction Outreach Worker; providing an additional Youth Worker to the Youth Offending Service for the Oakridge and Castlefield area; Community Fun days.

Examples of medium-term and long-term projects: Play activity; Cardio-vascular screening programmes; addressing take-up of quality childcare places.

Not all the above are new schemes, - some of the work is about intensifying existing schemes.

By the next meeting of the Programme Board local indicators need to be defined for the four identified areas, as well as National Indicators. This will be discussed with the High Wycombe Local Community Partnership.

Are there examples of areas which have moved out of disadvantage?

Some Unitary Councils in the Midlands have done this, such as Coventry City Council. However they had large financial investments, which we do not have. The challenge is to unlock investment already made, in a creative way. There is not much new funding available.

Is there an approach which is transferrable through different communities?

Acorn data is being used to break down information almost by individual streets. However this is a test approach.

Trevor Millard and Alison Bond (Halo Works) then gave a presentation on the feedback from consultation with seldom-heard groups.

During the presentation, the following points were made:

- By their very nature, seldom-heard groups were difficult to reach for consultations.
- The Sustainable Community Strategies were the theme of the Consultation. The groups identified by the local authorities commissioning the Consultation were: BME, the elderly, disability groups and young people. Focus groups were used.
- In the main, the Strategy had come through the Consultation unscathed and was seen to have the right messages and priorities for local people.
- The people involved felt they had suffered a lot from financial cuts and efficiency savings.
- Those questioned felt that the Strategy had been written for Central Government, and not for them.
- Voluntary organisations provided extremely important support, and when these services were cut, it could be devastating for people, especially the disabled and elderly.
- Targets in the strategy needed to be 'win-win' and should not rely on the failure of another area or body.
- The Strategy had to develop at a very local level.
- Milestones needed to be placed between now and 2026, and targets should be absolutely focused on residents.
- Practical everyday issues for the people consulted were not necessarily included in the Strategy, e.g. the issue of overhanging vegetation on pavements for residents with sight impairment.
- People are 'slipping through the net', and many of those consulted were not aware of schemes such as the Age Concern Befriending Scheme or the prescription delivery scheme.
- Isolation was a huge issue, and was driven by a number of factors including economic hardship (which was found to include people living in large houses on fixed incomes, perhaps whose children had moved away); and death of a partner (service provision was needed for when this occurred, to support the bereaved person and help them to re-integrate into the Community).
- There was no criticism of one organisation – those consulted tended to see public services as one large body.
- Regular phone-calls were seen to be a very effective way of reducing isolation, such as those made by befriending schemes.

Following the presentation, Members made the following comments on the information:

- Residents wanted to help each other but were not sure how to go about this. One possibility would be to adapt the existing Neighbourhood Watch. Meetings could be held at the home of a resident who felt isolated.
- A balance was needed between state intervention and self-help.
- People needed to be seen as a resource, rather than a problem.
- The responses were very interesting, but the number of people in each group consulted was very low (e.g. one group interviewed was of two people).

Paul Tinnion said that Neighbourhood Watch was originally an American concept. To some extent it had lost momentum in the UK. The Police supported Neighbourhood Watch, but it was a community-led initiative which was separate from the Police.

Alison Bond said that the size of the groups consulted was very small compared to those in the Place Survey. However it was dubious whether quantitative research was the right method for hard-to-reach groups. The feedback from the Consultation was consistent across the County, which showed that it reflected issues of concern.

RESOLVED

The Board:

- Commented on feedback from the Halo Works consultation,
- Agreed the scope of the Tackling Disadvantage Partnership Programme,
- Agreed future input from BSP Board (feedback to be provided to the Board twice a year)

6 BUCKS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - ONE YEAR ON

Robin Douglas (Leadership Centre for Local Government), facilitated this session, and asked Members to discuss and provide answers to the following questions:

- The BSP Board one year on – how has it done (where are we now)?
- What should be improved?

The answers provided by Members are noted below.

The BSP Board one year on – how has it done (where are we now)?

- The Board is an important place for significant players in Buckinghamshire to come together.
- Members have learnt a lot, which has been cascaded to others.
- Resourcing and supporting the Partnership is a real challenge.
- There is greater shared ownership.
- It is a thoughtful, slow Committee.
- Complex – be realistic.
- Not doing detailed work.
- Totality of business is not on the table.
- Too early to be too critical or decisive. Difficult to say yet what difference the Board has made.
- The Board would be missed if it was not here – good interactions and relationships.
- Link between the Board and BSPIG – is the Board providing a great enough steer?
- There is a disconnection between the Board and the Implementation Group.
- Need to consider value for money for the taxpayer.
- Not all County business goes through the BSP Board and its structures – already other structures in place (e.g. CADEX).

What should be improved?

- More bite needed – e.g. the creation of a joint venture company with delegated powers.
- Robust discussions take place on individual tables – this needs to be reproduced in the full Committee.
- Agenda to be planned in advance – how can Board members steer it?
- What are the ‘big alarm bells’ we need to think about? Critical issues need to be identified.
- More time on agenda to be spent on Implementation Group Report – more detailed look at each strand on a regular basis.
- Making space for creative discussions – statutory functions might crowd this out.
- Balance between ‘ideas development’ and ‘policy oversight.’
- Thematic leadership – ‘emotional’ commitment to key priorities.
- Forward plan should be agreed and understood, and be more formal. Board needs to own the Programme.
- Better feed into the Board of key decisions which have been taken (a ‘health check’ role).
- More active steer to BSPIG.
- Ask Thematic Partnerships for an achievable idea/aim and work to achieve it.
- Where do we publish what is delivered by the partnership?

- Focus resources on delivering successes.
- Only full Board Members should be in attendance at meeting (i.e. the decision-makers).

Robin Douglas also distributed the findings of his investigations prior to the meeting (attached), and said that most of the comments were in regard to purpose, rather than process.

AGREED ACTIONS:

- **Thematic Partnerships to be asked to present to the January Board meeting on the top few priorities where the Board could add value (5 minute presentation per thematic partnership).**
- **Board to discuss and agree which of the proposals should be prioritised and form the basis of the Board's future work programme.**

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28 January 2010, 2:30pm, Chartridge Conference Centre, Chartridge Lane Chesham, HP5 2TU

4 May 2010, 2:30pm, Uplands Conference Centre, Four Ashes Road Cryers Hill, High Wycombe, HP15 6LB

13 July 2010, 2:30pm, Main Hall 1, Green Park Training & Conference Centre, Stablebridge Road, Aston Clinton, HP22 5NE

CHAIRMAN