

Minutes of a meeting of the Bradford East Area Committee held on Thursday, 15 February 2018 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 6.00 pm
Concluded 8.50 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT
H Khan	R Ahmed N Pollard Stubbs R Sunderland

Observers: Councillor Val Slater (Portfolio Holder Health and Wellbeing)

Apologies: Councillor Taj Salam, Councillor Mohammed Shafiq and Councillor Talat Sajawal

Councillor R Sunderland in the Chair

45. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

46. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2018 be signed as a correct record.

47. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

48. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions submitted by the public.

49. BETTER START BRADFORD

The Committee was asked to consider **Document “Y”** which provided an update on the progress of the Better Start Bradford programme and the implications for the District.

Document “Y” reported that the Better Start Bradford programme was the result of a successful £49 million Big Lottery Fund bid led by Bradford Trident, for a 10 year early intervention and prevention programme. The programme was currently in the third year of its ten year duration. It was explained that Bradford was one of only five areas nationally to be awarded funding from the Big Lottery Fund’s *A Better Start* programme.

Members were advised that Better Start Bradford was a ‘test and learn’ programme which was being used as a vehicle for reform across the district in early years. The programme had already informed the development of the Integrated Early Years Strategy and the Prevention and Early Help programme. The programme was being ‘tested’ in three wards (Bowling and Barkerend, Bradford Moor and Little Horton) and the ‘learning’ about what successfully improved outcomes for Bradford’s children would be integrated throughout the district.

It was explained that, from a value for money point of view, research had revealed that the best time to invest scarce resources to improve children’s outcomes was in pre-conception, pregnancy and the first three years of life, as that was the time when the improvement in outcomes was greatest.

The key benefits of the BSB approach were outlined and these included “know what you want to change; use what works and create local evidence; joint accountability; cost benefit analysis; community involvement and improve how systems work together”.

A presentation depicting interviews with parents involved in the project and the benefits that they felt, including amongst many other advantages, coping with older children with a baby; recognising anti natal depression; improved parental skills; bonding with babies and an understanding of how babies brains developed in the first three years, was provided.

A monthly newsletter was tabled to Members and they were requested to spread the work of the new programme.

Following the very detailed presentation Members raised a number of questions and concerns as follows:-

- Members had seen many previous schemes which had benefited participants during the time they were involved. It was questioned, however, what the long term benefit of the programme might be following its ten year duration.
- The wards targeted by the project experienced greater levels of



immigration than the district as a whole and movement in and out of the area was high. The parents benefiting from the programme would be likely to move out of the area taking the benefits they had learned out of the constituencies.

- Aspirational parents may take advantage of the programme but hard to reach communities may not access BSB's services.
- Low cost housing in the targeted constituencies attracted more deprived families and the quality of that housing was what impacted on people's health.
- What assessments had been made of the impact the programme had made on early health?
- Given that base level provision would be changing what method had been used to design the programme in Years four and five? What had been identified which had not been known in Year one?
- How would the programme operate with fewer resources available?
- What impact would the proposals for a new model of Prevention and Early Help have on the programme?

In response it was explained that:-

- The outcomes of BSB included improvements in communication; language; nutrition and social development. Services which supported people arriving in the targeted constituencies would have the knowledge, understanding and support so that people would, in the future, arrive in a community of influence. The programme was not only working with people who required support but worked with all communities who contributed to child development. The need to develop community champions to pass on what was being learnt from the programme was stressed.
- Many of the initiatives were undertaken in the home. In addition BSB workers opened up marquees; knocked on doors and encouraged community participation in the target areas and had engaged with over 200 and children. Universal services such as health visitors were also used to reach hard to reach families.
- It was acknowledged that housing had a clear impact on health. BSB's remit was not to address housing issues but the initiatives were targeted in areas with poor housing.
- As soon as an assessment of the impact of the programmes was completed it would be shared with Members. Changes to Children's Centres; reductions in universal support would have an impact on BSB and a response to the consultation on a proposed new Prevention and



Early Help model had been provided. It was agreed that a copy of that response would be provided to Bradford East Area Members.

- BSB was resilient to change. Initiatives were developed in three year contracts, some of which could be extended whilst some may cease. An innovation fund would be introduced which would be open to suggestions of innovation and in response to changing needs. There were 22 projects currently being operated and their impact would be tested.
- All partners affected by the proposed model of Prevention and Early Help were members of the BSB Board and could consider the impact of those proposals jointly. As a research based programme BSB was able to take risks which other projects may not be able to do.

Resolved –

- 1) **That the report be noted.**
- 2) **That the Strategic Director, Children’s Services, be requested to provide the Committee with regular updates on the Better Start Bradford programme.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children’s Services

(Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

50. PREVENTION AND EARLY HELP

The Strategic Director Children’s Services presented a report (**Document “X”**) which highlighted the progress that the Council and partners had made in bringing together existing arrangements for early help and early years services.

The report also advised that, in November 2017, the Executive was asked to approve a period of consultation on a proposed new Prevention and Early Help model. Bradford East Area Committee was asked to consider and comment on the report as part of the formal consultation.

The report outlined the need for proposed changes to how services were delivered in order to ensure resources were targeted, at a time of increasing demand, to avoid a detrimental impact on outcomes to children. It was explained that unprecedented reductions in Government funding meant that the Department of Children’s Services could not deliver services in the way it previously had. The proposed focus would be on a partnership approach which was more targeted to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities for children and young people across the District.

The Deputy Director, Education, Employment and Skills addressed the meeting and provided a visual depiction, in diagrammatic form, of the proposed changes



to how the children's centre core offer across the District would be provided. Members were advised that the proposals would result in a move from separate services (the seven Children's Centre clusters and five Early Help clusters) to one new Prevention and Early Help Service. The preferred model included a combination of a small group of central services and four new Prevention and Early Help teams. Based on the Families' Needs Assessment it was proposed that the four area based teams would cover Keighley/Shipley combined; Bradford East; Bradford West and Bradford South. There would be two types of teams working in each area dealing with both case management and preventative measures. The proposals would reduce duplication and implement a whole family approach where families would not receive a series of interventions from different services.

Members questioned if the preferred model would still be seen as better than the existing structure if the financial cuts were not required. The Deputy Director, Education, Employment and Skills explained that the eradication of duplication of service and a move to a family based approach would still have been proposed regardless of financial cuts. In response to that statement it was felt that there could not be £13m of duplication in the service and that the new model would result in reductions in provision. It was acknowledged that the service did not have the resources to continue as it had previously operated; however, a core offer provided in Children's Centres would still be a priority.

A Member suggested utilising existing community buildings to provide outreach services rather than opening Children's Centres for only a few hours per week. That Member felt that as well as financial savings additional links would be developed within communities. The Deputy Director, Education, Employment and Skills agreed that, whilst there were no current plans, there may be opportunities in the future to utilise community facilities. A sub group were working on such issues and it was acknowledged that savings may be made that way.

A Member referred to links which had been made following community facilities being made available in schools. Parents taking their children to schools were using rooms in familiar surroundings and benefitting from the relationships being developed.

The report referred to some children and parents in less deprived areas finding it harder to access children's centre services and that this would be addressed by ensuring that there would be increased activities in targeted areas. Members questioned that statement and what would be implemented to ensure the needs of all families were met. In response it was explained that with limited resources it would not be possible to provide services in their current form. Greater flexibility would be required in some areas and a commissioning fund would be available for each area to use according to their needs. Job profiles would also be flexible to respond to changes in demography and demand. All families with the same threshold of need, regardless of their geographical location, would receive the same level of service. Strong relationships with childcare and schools would also be maintained in all areas so that vulnerable children and families in all areas could be provided with additional support when needed.



It was questioned if reduced resources would see the threshold of need, before families could access help, increased. Concerns were expressed that children living in difficult circumstances but not reaching the threshold of need would be neglected. It was also felt that families needing help could slip through the net and it was questioned who would identify those types of families. In response it was explained that a fine balance would be required between support for key works and prevention activities. The Portfolio Holder, Health and Wellbeing, explained that it was essential for all services to identify families in need and stressed the importance of the evidence which could be provided from the Better Start Bradford Programme discussed earlier at the meeting. The Police, Fire Service, Housing Associations and Local Authority must all consider the wider determinants of health.

A Member, acknowledging that the Committee did not set the Council's budget, but that it did consider the effect of the Council's proposals, expressed concern about the impact of the proposals on a district with an increase in population and in young people with needs. He stressed the belief that a 50% reduction in staffing must be detrimental to the most vulnerable people. He referred to a previous meeting which had been told that Key Performance Indicators would be affected and that the level of case loads of case workers would be unmanageable. It was believed that the threshold of need would be raised to the detriment of vulnerable families and that failure to intervene would ultimately have a greater impact on local authorities. He explained that his political group had scrutinised social worker case loads and were aware of increases. Further information on the outcome of that scrutiny process was to follow.

In response it was acknowledged that the preferred model did include a reduction in capacity but it was maintained that the structure could be adapted very quickly should more financial resources become available. Additional posts could be included without amending the infrastructure.

A Member questioned what level of response to the consultation was required before it would be agreed that the service should not lose £13m. It was agreed that it would be wrong not to send the message that the Committee were critical of the reductions which it was felt would impact on vulnerable residents and ultimately cost the Council in the future.

Resolved –

- 1) That it be agreed that the Challenging financial backdrop in which these changes are made raises serious concerns regarding the ever increasing threshold of intervention and the impact on young people in the district.**
- 2) That the loss of universal access be raised as a concern for Members.**
- 3) That the Executive be requested to consider the cost of maintaining**



buildings which will be used for only eight hours per week and that the possibility of utilising community space for such purposes be explored.

- 4) That reassurances that there will not be a geographical disparity in access to services be welcomed.**
- 5) That the Executive be urged to reject the huge reduction in staffing levels proposed in the new Prevention and Early Help Model which it is believed will only lead to an increase in the costs to the Council in due course.**

Action: Strategic Director Children's Services

(Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

51. ARRANGEMENTS BY THE COUNCIL AND ITS PARTNERS TO TACKLE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The Strategic Director Children's Services presented a report (**Document "Z"**) which provided an update to the report presented to this Committee in 2017 regarding the issue of child sexual exploitation (CSE). The report set out the arrangements that had been put in place, and which continued to be developed to safeguard children from CSE.

The report included a summary of statistics and data prepared by the Bradford CSE Hub Intelligence Officer and Members questioned if rises in referrals of CSE cases depicted that the Bradford East Ward was experiencing increased incidents of CSE or that they more vigilant in reporting. It was explained that the rise was a combination of better reporting but that there were vulnerable children in that Ward. Targeted work had been undertaken with the night time economy in Bradford East and it was agreed to get information on the focus of that work to Members.

A Member referred to discussions with the Police at regular Ward Officer Team meetings and assurances that the Police would allocate extra officers to work with Children's Residential Homes particularly to ensure children met their curfews. It was questioned if that intervention had been successful and, in response, he was advised that there was a police focus on missing looked after children (LAC) and ensuring that whereabouts of LAC were known at all times. A more cohesive response could be provided with the collocation of police and local authority personnel.

The appendices to the report referred to Bradford East Youth Work Team developing work to support young people in identifying behaviours making them vulnerable to exploitation. It was questioned how Members could obtain those services in their own Wards. It was agreed that discussions would be undertaken



with the Area Co-ordinator after the meeting.

Members questioned the effectiveness of ethnicity definitions contained in Document Z as it was felt that classing someone as ‘white-northern European’ was vague and ambiguous. It was explained that the definition was a police term stipulated by the Home Office. It was agreed that the term was unclear but it did help to dispel a myth that Asian men were the main perpetrators.

It was noted that 73% of CSE flagged young people were female but that the ethnicity was not contained in Document “Z”. Members stressed that in order to allow strategies to be developed more detailed information was required depicting the age, gender, ethnicity and location of those people.

A Member referred to two unsuccessful bids for funding to provide online safety sessions in local communities and questioned what funds were available for community centres trying to deliver preventative work. It was stressed that previous bids had failed due to lack of evidence, however, it was felt that the need was evidenced in the statistics and data contained in Document “Z”. It was agreed to discuss possible funding solutions, such as the NSPCC cyber strategy, outside of the meeting.

The Portfolio Holder, Health and Wellbeing reported an event undertaken by Year 10 pupils at Bradford Academy and explained that the school were offering to provide other courses.

The NightWatch Programme engagement data, contained in the report, was discussed and the prevalence of incidents occurring in takeaway food outlets was questioned. Members were advised that places offering free attractions for children and free Wi-Fi, continued to be approached through pro-active and enforcement outreach.

Following discussions about suggestions in the media that perpetrators were middle aged Asian men it was stressed that the statistics and intelligence revealed that the majority of offenders were under 25 years of age and offences occurred in all communities.

Resolved –

That the contents of the report be noted.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children’s Services

(Children’s Service’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

52. PROPOSAL FOR THE RESTRUCTURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS



AND DISABILITIES SPECIALIST TEACHING SUPPORT SERVICES

The Committee was asked to consider Document “AA” which presented the revised proposed model for the restructuring of SEND Specialist Teaching Support Services for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Need and Disabilities) to improve their educational outcomes.

Members were reminded that on 20 June 2017, Executive agreed to a period of consultation until 31 August 2017 with a range of stakeholders on the proposed remodelling of SEND services for children and young people from ages 0-25.

As a result of feedback and responses during that period of consultation, particularly from schools, internal staff teams and national organisations representing children and young people with sensory impairment, the proposals in the previous report to Executive were changed.

The changes took account of the feedback received in order to:

- Ensure that the proposals improved the quality of support and provision for all SEND pupils and met the SEN Improvement Test.
- Ensure that the funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block (HNB) was used effectively and efficiently to meet the full range of SEND needs across the 0-25 years age range;
- Provide an option which both reduced pressure on the High Needs Block and increased specialist places.

As a result of the announcement in September 2017 about the new National Funding Formula (NFF) which the government would introduce from April 2018, providing funding for children and young people with SEND. Bradford should have gained £15m but under the new proposals Bradford would now receive only £7.5m. The impact of that would be significant on the High Needs Block with the HNB spending forecasted to exceed what would be available by approximately £2m per year for the next four years.

Members questioned the timescales for the consultation as the Council budget would be set shortly. In response it was explained that the funding was from the Dedicated Schools Grant and would be considered by the Executive on 3 April 2018. The decision may, however, be deferred as the time scale impinged on the pre-election period.

Resolved –



That the details of Document “AA” be noted.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children’s Services

(Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Bradford East Area Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

