

Report of the Chief Executive to the meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee to be held on 30th October 2015.

Subject:

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Bradford District Partnership Governance

Summary statement:

This report sets out the context and background to the evaluation of the BDP governance arrangements which was carried out from July – October 2015 and provides a summary of the key findings. The report also summarises the subsequent role and governance arrangements of the Bradford District Partnership and identifies the key changes and actions to be progressed as a result of the evaluation process.

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**Overview &
Scrutiny Area:
Corporate**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the context and background to the review of the BDP governance arrangements which was carried out July – October 2015 and provides a summary of the key findings.
- 1.2 The report also summarises the subsequent role and governance arrangements of the Bradford District Partnership and identifies the key changes and actions to be progressed as a result of the reviews process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 22 May 2015, the BDP Board asked for a fundamental review of the Bradford District Partnership governance arrangements, to ensure it can be more effective in securing outcomes for the district, reflect a changing financial and policy landscape and support the co-production and redesign of services and interventions where required.
- 2.2 Bradford's Local Strategic Partnership has been in existence since 2001, and during that time a number of reviews have been undertaken in a bid to ensure that the LSP continues to add value and improve the quality of life for residents and communities throughout the District.
- 2.3 The current Bradford LSP governance structures were initially set in place to deliver the Council and partners statutory responsibility against the Community Strategy outcomes. The structure was last reviewed in 2013 when minor changes were made to how the Board and Strategic Delivery Partnerships operated.
- 2.4 The significant public sector budget reductions that have taken place and are expected in the coming years coupled with the projected growth in service demand, means it is imperative that the partnership infrastructure in the Bradford District is affordable, sustainable and continues to impact on delivering positive outcomes for its citizens.
- 2.5 The reduction in funding and the increase in service demand will require the Council and partners to work collaboratively, to innovate, and to change expectations, and behaviours and develop new relationships with people to emphasise the role, which they themselves can play in improving the wellbeing of the District.
- 2.6 In response to these pressures the Council is working with partners to develop new priority outcomes, known as the New Deal outcomes, for the district which will provide a clear direction of travel for the next 5-10 years. The key element of the New Deal approach is that the Council role in securing a better future for the District will shift to providing leadership, building and brokering positive relationships and helping to facilitate outcomes and be less about service delivery or direct investment compared to previous.
- 2.7 It is therefore appropriate to take stock and ensure that BDP governance structures are fit for purpose and can take ownership of the development and delivery of the New Deal outcomes and related priority delivery actions.

3. REVIEW

3.1 METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

- 3.1.1 The scope of the governance review agreed by the BDP Board on 22 May 2015 included consideration of the following:

- **Governance Structures:** Build upon the existing commitment to partnership working and partner relationships and use lessons learnt from recent or ongoing partnership review work to ensure the governance arrangements deliver ND outcomes.
- **Benchmarking/Best Practice:** Incorporate lessons of best practice from other districts to ensure we consider relevant approaches while conducting the review and improving our governance arrangements. For example looking at relationships between LSPs and Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- **Affordability and Accountability:** Explore extent to which partners are willing to contribute to the pooling of joint resources to support the partnership governance arrangements, and ensure appropriate accountability via own reporting mechanisms.

3.1.2 Consultation with stakeholder was undertaken during June – September 2015, which focused on the following key questions:

- Which elements of the current BDP arrangements work well and need to be retained?
- Which elements of the current arrangements need to be improved, decommissioned or streamlined?
- What arrangements could be put in place to strengthen the strategic partnership to deliver improved outcomes for the District's citizens and to address new policies and financial pressures?
- Clarifying the role and remit of the partnerships.
- How the partnership structures could be aligned to the New Deal Outcomes?

3.1.3 Regular reports on progress have been submitted to BDP Board, partnerships and partners for comment/feedback throughout the period of the review culminating in the recommendations outlined in this report.

3.2 **KEY FINDINGS**

3.2.1 In the initial evidence gathering phase, the approaches adopted by other districts was considered, which highlighted the following:

- Some districts, like Ealing and Barnsley have significantly streamlined arrangements with only a couple of thematic partnerships.
- Others run partnership summits, community conferences or strategic forums, held once or twice a year, to inform the work of their thematic delivery groups or board.
- Where strategic partnerships have been weakened or decommissioned, peer reviews of local authorities suggest that it results in a relationship gap, reducing the opportunity for dialogue and engagement over key strategic issues at a point of fundamental challenge for Councils and partners as they manage significant changes to their roles.

3.2.2 The consultation with stakeholders highlighted a number of areas of broad consensus alongside some issues which needed further consideration. It was agreed that these issues should underpin any changes made to the BDP governance arrangement:

- Clear consensus to rationalise the Board and supporting partnerships, so that they are aligned to the New Deal outcomes.

- Clarifying the roles and relationships of supporting task and engagement groups.
- Decommissioning of groups that will not be essential to the delivery of the New Deal outcomes.
- BDP structures need to enable dialogue and engagement with partners across the region, within the district and at neighbourhood level.
- Maintaining the BDP structures in their current form would be unsustainable. It would not address silo working, inefficiencies in practice, and lack of clarity on role and relationships.
- Decommissioning all aspects of the BDP structure apart from those that have a statutory requirement (Community Safety Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board) would result in a loss of strategic accountability, policy direction and coordination of shared service delivery.
- Development of a Bradford district plan would articulate our shared ambitions on New Deal, set out policy direction, ambitions and success measures for the district and direct the work of the BDP family of partnerships.

3.3 **PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

3.3.1 In response to the key findings of the review outlined in Section 3.1 and 3.2, the following changes are proposed and an update on progress relating to each of the changes is given.

3.3.2 **Alignment of structures with New Deal outcomes**

There has been absolute agreement for the partnership structures to be aligned with New Deal outcomes and the diagram outlined in appendix 1 illustrates a more streamlined governance structure that is focused on providing a clear line of accountability for the development and delivery of the New Deal outcomes and related activity.

The key changes include:

- Main strategic delivery partnerships to align themselves to the New Deal outcomes.
- Clarification of role of BDP Board.
- Merger between safer and stronger partnerships.
- Decommissioning of the Health Improvement Partnership.
- Agreement to set up a fairness and inclusion task and finish board to bring together support activity for vulnerable individuals and communities.
- Clear description and alignment of Consultation and engagement structures
- Clarity of relationships between regional and local structures

3.3.5 **BDP Board focus and approach**

Detailed terms of reference will be developed once structures are agreed. However, in broad terms:

The Board will be responsible for:

- Providing strategic policy direction
- Overseeing New Deal delivery, and resolving barriers and blockages
- Focusing on issues that cut across New Deal outcomes

Strategic partnerships will be responsible for:

- Developing and delivering approaches to achieve New Deal outcomes
- Involving relevant engagement networks to gain input on policy and delivery.

3.3.6 Better skills, more good jobs and a growing economy – Producer City

There is a clear agreement for the Producer City Board to take ownership of the New Deal outcomes. However from a practical point of view it was felt that due to the strategic nature and make up of the Producer City Board, the development and delivery oversight of the New Deal outcome should be delegated to the producer city sub boards. This will enable clear lines of accountability, better communication flow and also strengthen relationships with other BDP structures.

There is an acceptance that this could require some minor adjustments in the terms of reference of the sub boards to align and clarify relationships with the New Deal outcomes and the other BDP structures. This work will take place over the next few months to ensure revised arrangements are in place for the start of the new year.

3.3.7 Decent Homes that People can Afford to live in – Producer City Place Board

Discussions between key stakeholders have resulted in a provisional agreement that the delivery of the outcome is embedded into the work of the Producer City Place Board and their delivery plans. We are aiming to firm up proposals at the December Place Board meeting.

This proposal embeds the outcome in the area where it is most relevant and removes the need for the creation of additional partnership structures. However there is recognition that the size and scale of the current workload of the Place Board would mean some further work to ensure the board has the appropriate support arrangements to take ownership of the activity.

3.3.8 Better health, better Lives – Health and Wellbeing Board

During 2015-16 the Bradford and Airedale Health and Wellbeing Board has commissioned work to put the district on track to accelerate improvements in health and wellbeing outcomes, and to create a sustainable health and wellbeing economy. Specifically the Board has agreed to work towards the establishment of a total pooled joint commissioning budget and a single prioritisation process for health and social care that reflects the ambitions outlined in the New Deal Outcome. The Board acknowledges that this is a long term objective and aims for this to be the position within five years.

The Board agreed that in the first instance, and with this aim in mind, it would accelerate the development of joint planning and commissioning by scoping a governance framework and developing the necessary financial arrangements to support real, joint prioritisation, planning and commissioning against shared priorities and outcomes. All parties are working to understand the legal and governance framework within which each participant undertakes their commissioning and procurement activities. The aim is that the governance framework will be ready for implementation from the start of the 2016/17 financial year.

As part of the revised governance arrangements, the Health & Wellbeing sector is proposing that the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP) is formally decommissioned and that any activity it oversaw is incorporated into the governance framework review activity for consideration.

3.3.9 Good schools and a great start for all our children – Children's Trust

At its meeting in October 2015, the Children's Trust agreed a revised approach which includes their intent to take ownership of the New Deal outcome. The Children's Trust sees itself as the key platform to oversee the delivery of support activities for children and young people around education improvement, safeguarding and wellbeing. In terms of practical day to day oversight and accountability of the New Deal outcome it has been suggested that this sits with the Education Improvement Board

The Children's Trust also recognises that the relationship with the Health & Wellbeing Board structure will need to be clarified from a Children and Young Peoples perspective as this is developed over the next few months.

The CT has agreed to hold a development session in December to agree and finalise the CT priority areas of work and required delivery arrangements. This will ensure clear lines of accountability for activity related to the delivery of the Children & Young Peoples Plan and New Deal outcomes.

3.3.10 **Safe, clean and active communities – Community Safety Partnership / Stronger Communities Partnership**

The Community Safety Partnership and Stronger Communities Partnership have both agreed for the partnerships to be merged to form a Safe, Clean and Active partnership. This approach will require the incorporation of statutory responsibilities; it provides the potential for the alignment of resources and an approach to commissioning between partners to remove duplication.

The partnerships are now working to finalise their terms of reference and sub structures to ensure there is clarity on roles and responsibilities for the revised governance structures and operational details. These revised arrangements will be finalised and ready for implementation by the start of the new financial year.

3.3.11 **Consultation and Engagement**

There is a clear agreement that the consultation and engagement networks have a crucial role to play in providing the wider partnership with the views of service users to help inform and shape policy direction and service delivery. The consultation and engagement networks view themselves as a single, loosely structured block which is cross cutting in terms of its relationship with the wider partnerships and this is reflected in the governance structure outlined in section 5.1.

The Stronger Communities Partnership has previously had oversight of thematic, place and people¹-based community engagement structures and as part of the revised governance proposals for the Safe, Clean and Active partnership, it has been proposed that the coordination of the Place-related engagement is overseen by the Safe, Clean and Active Partnership, while People and Theme are considered as part of the discussions around the role and remit of the Fairness and Inclusion Board.

There is a broad recognition that our approach to engage with these groups needs to be consistent across the wider partnership and to enable this, we are proposing that as part of the revised terms of reference, each partnership should clarify how they will engage with other partnerships, including engagement networks. The terms of reference will:

- Set out a key named officer for other partnerships to contact in order to coordinate

¹ **Theme** – This is where we organise engagement by partnership and service areas on particular topic or theme

Place – Where we organise engagement by geographic areas such as Wards.

People – This aspect covers engagement with communities of interest and equality groups who are not as involved through Theme and Place. It includes groups who are recognised as sharing a 'protected characteristic' within the Equalities Act 2010.

how other partnerships can be involved in the work of their partnership.

- Be committed to listening to the views of engagement partnerships as well as other partnerships.
- Advertise a forward plan of work for the forthcoming year to enable engagement partnership to work with people to seek their views in a timely manner.
- Make use of the engagement partnerships as a mechanism for finding out the views of people.
- Work with engagement partnerships to take forward issues that are a high priority for these networks and groups in the ethos of New Deal.

3.3.13 **Voluntary Sector Assembly forums**

The VCS Assembly Steering Group has confirmed that it will be undertaking a review of their VCS assembly forums to ensure they are aligned to the new BDP Governance arrangements.

The VCS assembly forums have been set up to reflect existing strategic partnership structures, with the aim of acting as the primary framework for engagement with the voluntary and community sector. The forums also provide formal VCS representation at the BDP partnerships and act as the main arena where the sector can share policy issues and other opportunities between themselves and other stakeholders.

3.3.14 **Resource costs and savings**

The streamlining of partnership arrangements, moving to a flexible approach focusing on (time limited) task and finish groups with reduced reliance on formal meetings, utilising technology platforms to share information and clarification of priorities, should create resource savings for all partners.

At present, the main partnership support arrangements are resourced by the Council, however as we move to a more flexible approach, with partners taking ownership of key partnership structures, we are expecting that this will change. We are already seeing a shift in support arrangements in a number of areas (e.g. Producer City and Safer, Stronger and Active) and this will continue to change as the partnership terms of reference and delivery plans are firmed up over the coming months.

If a partners wishes to set up a new task and finish group to oversee priority areas of activity, then it will be their responsibility to fund support arrangements.

3.3.15 **Accountability**

There is a clear agreement that the strategic delivery partnerships will be accountable to the BDP Board for the development and implementation of work related to the New Deal outcomes (District Plan) rather than everything else they oversee. This is to acknowledge that some strategic delivery partnerships (e.g. Safer, Stronger and Active Partnership, Health & Wellbeing Board and Producer City) have a much wider remit which requires accountability to other stakeholders.

Elected members will continue to have a lead role in informing the work of the Partnerships, particularly through the relevant Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) committees on a three to six monthly basis and through Area Committees, when specific locality based issues need to be considered. Progress reports on the partnership delivery plans will be submitted and the responsible officer and Chair(s) will give an account of the work of the partnerships to the relevant O&S committee. Where partnership work is being carried out in local communities (wards) and requires member input, issues will be raised with the relevant ward members.

Partnership paperwork and progress reports will be published online to ensure that both members and residents can see progress made against shared outcomes. We are currently working with ICT to explore whether this could be done through modern.gov or whether it should remain on the new internet platform which replaces the current www.bradford.gov.uk

3.4 **ADDITIONAL WORK**

3.4.1 The review has also identified a number of issues that need further work, these include the following:

3.4.1.1 **Fairness and Inclusion Board**

There has been a strong message for the need to improve the capacity of structures to support vulnerable people across the district. This is essential to ensure they have an equal opportunity to be heard, participate fully in activities in their community, have access to employment and services and to ensure that they are not marginalised due to their economic status.

This is a clear priority area for the Council and is reflected in the Council's corporate equality objectives and has also been ratified through the findings from the Corporate Overview Committee Poverty Enquiry.

In response to these issues we are proposing the creation of a fairness and inclusion task group that brings together the work of the Welfare Reform Strategic Coordination Group, Child Poverty Board, Warm Homes Partnership and Financial Inclusion Group, while also clarifying whether the Fairness and Inclusion Board should take oversight of the Theme and People- based engagement activity (e.g. Race and Ethnicity, Equalities Delivery Group and Community Relations Group) which have previously been part of the Safer Communities Partnership.

This will ensure that support for vulnerable people, those who fall within the protected characteristics including low income groups is effectively coordinated across the district and key issues are directed to the most appropriate partnership and partner to address as and when they arise.

There is a general acknowledgment that the set up of the task up will need to be carefully managed to ensure its scope and governance arrangements (timescale and reporting arrangements) are fit for purpose and reflect the demand and support needs of individuals and communities. Once the findings from the Poverty Enquiry are finalised we will hold a scoping session in late October / early November to initiate discussions with the aim to have the new task group in place for the Jan/Feb 2016.

It is suggested that the task group reports to the BDP Board, given that issues of fairness and inclusion are essential to the effective work of the whole BDP family of partnerships.

3.4.1.2 **District Plan and delivery planning**

New governance structures will only deliver tangible outcomes if effective partnership working is seen through to accountability and action. We are proposing that a District Plan is prepared that sets the direction, ambition and success measures to deliver the New Deal outcomes.

To ensure that we can establish clear lines of accountability and ownership of delivery activity, the strategic delivery partnerships will be asked to prepare delivery plans that set out planned actions, timescales and responsibility. The delivery plans will be ready for implementation for the start of the 2016-17 financial year.

A partnership performance management framework will oversee the monitoring and reporting of delivery progress and ensure that regular reports are submitted to key stakeholders including Overview and Scrutiny Committees, strategic delivery partnership board's and the BDP Board.

3.4.1.3 Relationship between local and regional governance structures

There is a strong message that relationships between the district partnerships and sub regional structures and partnerships are clearly articulated to ensure there is better connectivity and information flow between them to articulate a collective position and maximise outcomes for Bradford.

Terms of reference, developed as part of an overall partnership handbook once structures are agreed, will provide a detailed diagram illustrating key relationships and areas of synergy. Work is also being progressed to develop a membership register to ensure we have a clear understanding of membership of different groups so they can be adequately briefed on relevant issues of importance for Bradford.

3.4.1.4 Smarter ways of doing business

There is a clear message for the partnerships to move away from more traditional way of doing business and sharing information with stakeholders. The use of SharePoint and modern.gov are potential platforms to enable partnership working, consultation and engagement with stakeholders on a virtual basis. The technology is being piloted at the moment with the intention of rolling this out to the wider partnerships in the coming months.

We have initiated discussions with the CCG and VCS partners to explore how we align and streamline our consultation and engagement structures, and as part of this approach we are exploring the development of a shared Consultation Calendar and Repository. We are hoping that this could be made available to BDP partners to align approach and enable greater coordination of consultation and engagement activity.

3.4.1.5 Sustainability and wider environment issues

Although we have an agreement for the newly formed Safer and Stronger Partnership to take oversight of the clean agenda, we still need to address how we respond to the sustainability and wider environment issues and implications for the District. It has been suggested that this needs to be considered as part of the development process for the District Plan and reflected within the partnership delivery plans as a key principle.

4. NEXT STEPS

The revised arrangement outlined above will be considered by the BDP Board on 23rd October 2015 and the Council's Executive on 1 December 2015 for formal approval

We are aiming to complete the additional activity and formal implementation of the revised governance structures by the start of the new financial year. This would ensure that the governance arrangements are ready to be used to oversee the delivery of the District Plan, which will be presented to the BDP Board and Council's political leadership for sign off by March/April 2016.

5. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

N/A

6. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The arrangements outlined in this report will support the Council's community leadership and place-shaper role through effective partnership working and delivery of joined up services to the people of the District. The risk will be managed through the performance management arrangements for the District Plan.

7 LEGAL APPRAISAL

The proposed amendments to the governance arrangements will need to take account of the existing and proposed legislative requirements. Legal Services will work with officers to ensure that in implementing the approved proposals such requirements are met.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The work of the partnerships around the delivery of the New Deal outcomes will include the promoting equality for all communities and individuals. The proposed set up of the fairness and inclusion Board will take ownership and coordinate activity related to promoting equality for all communities and individuals and will ensure that this work is embedded in the work of the partnerships.

8.2 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The set up of the Safe, Clean and Active Communities partnership will bring streamline support arrangements relating around Community Safety, Safeguarding, Tension and resilience related work

8.3 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The work of the Bradford District Partnership has a strong localities focus. The implementation work for the New Deal Outcomes will have implications for all Wards in Bradford District.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members consider the findings from the governance review and the associated changes to the Bradford District Partnership governance arrangements outlined in section 3 of this report

9.2 Members make any observation or comment on the content of the report and that these are referred to the Executive.

Appendix 1:

BRADFORD DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP (BDP) – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

