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Minutes of a meeting of the Bradford Community Legal Advice Service Partnership Board held on 16 May 2007 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1805

Concluded 1940

PRESENT

Members of the Board

Fiona Hedar	Bradford Law Society	Private Sector
Councillor Imran Hussain	Labour Group	Bradford Council
Lynette Kirk	Manningham Project	Voluntary Sector
Councillor Howard Middleton	Liberal Democrat Group	Bradford Council
Councillor Adrian Naylor	Conservative Group	Bradford Council
Dave Preston	Community Funding Unit	Bradford Council
Liz Reveley	Bradford ACSG	Voluntary Sector
George Scully	Bradford & Airedale tPCT	Health Sector

Also present

Sarah Blow	Bradford Vision	Private Sector
Javed Khan	West Bowling Training and Advice Centre	Voluntary Sector
Julie Robinson-Joyce	Community Funding Unit	Bradford Council
Andy Taylor	Bradford CAB	Voluntary Sector
Claire Tomenson	Secretary	Bradford Council

140. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Zahida Mallard and Sue Williscroft.

141. MINUTES

It was agreed:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2007 be accepted as a correct record.



142. **MATTERS ARISING**

- (i) Julie reported that the work to identify an organisation that may be interested in the case studies was still ongoing. Liz reported that Marsha Singh MP was on a Board that was looking at these issues and agreed to liaise with Julie regarding the matter.

ACTION: *Liz/Julie*

143. **REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN TARGETS TO END OF APRIL 2007 – Update on Progress made with Newly Arrived Workers from the A8 Accession Countries.**

Julie introduced Sarah Blow and Javed Khan and stated that a lot of advice was requested in relation to the A8 Accession Countries.

Sarah began by explaining that she worked for a voluntary partnership that had been established to support new communities and service providers. Networks across the District had been created and consultation with the communities had been undertaken in relation to their basic needs. She confirmed that there was a strain on the voluntary sector, as the advice centres were the first port of call. Therefore a review had been undertaken with the main service providers and work was ongoing with the Council's Policy Unit on how to capture data on these communities. Mapping exercises had been carried out and information on where people were settling in the District had been identified. This information was also supported by data from Education Bradford and other service providers. Sarah reported that the main type of advice sought was in relation to employment, benefits and tax credits. However, language was an issue and meetings had been arranged to try and resolve the problem. Work was also being undertaken with Bradford College in order to provide language courses.

Javed informed the Board that the West Bowling Training and Advice Centre networked with Education Bradford, Bradford Trident and voluntary and statutory bodies. He reported that they had advised 89 clients in a two month period with the help of an interpreter. It was noted that the workers were coming over as a family unit and their first point of call was the advice centre. A limited advice service was still being provided for them, however, the demand on the service would increase as the number of migrant workers and their families that settled in the District grew.

It was acknowledged that there was a shortage of interpreters for these communities and that informal interpreters from within the community were already under pressure. This was a major issue and required a long term solution. Problems in relation to housing and benefits were also identified.

In response to the points raised Dave confirmed that he would contact Frank Hanley in order to progress the matter.

ACTION: *Dave*

144. **ADVISORY SUB-GROUP PROGRESS REPORT**

The notes of the meeting of the Advisory Sub-Group held on 3 April 2007 were tabled (copy attached as Appendix 1).

It was noted that the Advisory Sub-Group had reviewed the Action Plan Targets to the end

of April 2007.

Financial Inclusion

Dave suggested that the report regarding a pilot scheme to deal with illegal money lending, which was presented to the Corporate Management Team, could be circulated to Members. Howard Middleton added that liaison could also be undertaken with the West Yorkshire Joint Services.

ACTION: Julie

Julie then tabled the Financial Inclusion Policy (copy attached as Appendix 2) and the Financial Inclusion Programme Delivery 2006-2011 (copy attached as Appendix 3) and requested that the policy was approved by the Board in order for it to be circulated to Members and senior management of the Council. This was agreed.

ACTION: Julie

With regard to affordable credit and credit unions, Julie confirmed that the work was ongoing.

Finance into Work

Liz reported that the Service Improvement Team was researching the area of worklessness and that the Sub-Group had identified for them the role of the advice groups.

Monitoring

It was noted that work on the common protocol was ongoing.

Community Care

The options of a training course in order to raise the awareness of community care had been identified. Julie confirmed that she had attended a meeting of the Older People's Partnership, where issues regarding community care, benefits and the lack of advice taken up had been recognised.

Out of Hours Session

Liz confirmed that she was looking at the matter and would be following it up with other Advice Bureaus.

Children's Centres

Julie reported that the timeframe for the funding round was 2006-2008. A further meeting of the Economic Wellbeing Sub-Group was to be convened with minority ethnic child poverty to be placed on the agenda.

Training

Lynette indicated that the Advice Centre Support Group training had been a major achievement. The initial training course had been completed by 15 people who had passed all the units and a second course had just commenced. The results were being monitored and research into training for experienced advisors was being undertaken.

Visit to Advice Centres

It had been suggested that a trip be arranged for Councillors to visit a variety of advice centres. In response Howard Middleton proposed that the invite be feed through the Group offices.

ACTION: Liz

145. SOCIAL POLICY REPORT

Julie tabled a briefing note on the Social Policy issues that had been highlighted during January to March 2007 (copy attached as Appendix 4).

It was noted that the meetings held with Job Centre Plus had been successful and the number of case studies were decreasing. With regard to Immigration issues, Julie raised concerns in relation to the fees for to obtain an Indefinite Leave to Remain and acquire an ESOL Skills for Life qualification. In response Liz indicated that the profile could be raised through the Advice Centre Support Group.

ACTION: Liz

146. COMMISSIONING UPDATE

Dave reported that the recommendations had not been finalised as yet and that an additional meeting would need to be convened in order to discuss the proposals.

ACTION: Secretary

Secretary's Note: An additional meeting will take place at 6pm on Thursday 7 June 2007 in Committee Room 5, City Hall.

147. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) George reported that she had attended a meeting regarding Economic Strategy where it had been agreed that the CLASP Strategy, Financial Inclusion and Economic Strategy would be considered together.

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Board.

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