

Officer Report to meeting of Bradford CLASP held on 7th November 2007

Financial Inclusion Group

Work ongoing:

Group have met with a Housing Partnership sub group (Bradford Housing Association Liaison Group) to look at implementing existing schemes to access basic bank accounts and credit union.

Visit to Leeds CU took place.

Bradford & District CU branches due to open in Keighley & Canterbury.

Their AGM is on the 30th January at 12.30pm in the banqueting suite in City Hall.

Consultant funded by Economic Partnership has concluded work with credit unions & advice sector.

West Yorkshire Trading Standards are going to be involved in group in future.

Illegal Money lending Project

Illegal Money lending Project is now operational in Bradford. Glynis Sharpe is employed by them to map provision in areas where loan sharks may target and to work with victims to put solutions in place.

Community Strategy

Partnership event held on 11th July.

Advice representatives from Building Communities Partnership attended.

Local Area Agreement

Performance indicators for Councils have been published. There are 198 in total and Councils are being asked to choose 35 as their local priorities. You can view these at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/505713>

NRF will be renamed Working Neighbourhoods Fund and will be included in LAA funding. The announcement has yet to be made by Central government about what level of funding individual Council's will receive.

Children & Young People's Partnership, Economic Well-being subgroup

This group has the aim of co-ordinating " the development of a strategy to reduce poverty for children and young people and to support families in maximising their economic well being."

I attend these meetings and have put forward suggestions on advice sessions at antenatal clinics; access to advice sessions, Credit Unions and financial literacy training in Children's Centres.

This group is about to be expanded and has been given a more specific focus with the following priorities:

- Parents into work
- Childcare
- Raising Attainment
- Improving Schools
- Reducing Health Inequalities
- Improving School Transport

They are also looking at linking in more closely with the group looking at work on Infant Mortality.

Domestic Abuse Partnership

Within the Domestic Abuse strategy is included targets on:

- Distributing the Violence Against Women Directory of Services across the Bradford District.
- Developing a one stop shop and drop in services at a local level across the District
- Multi-agency training

CLASP directory

We have sent out questionnaires asking for updates on current information that we have on advice centres and solicitors for the directory.

Lotteries Funding

The Big Lottery Fund's Advice Plus programme re-opens in November. Grants available between £10,000 and £500,000 to fund third sector legal advice services that collaborate with other advice services in their local area, i.e. Bradford & district.

Possible ideas from CLASP strategy and other past work of CLASP:

- Appeals officers – recently funded by Lotteries so unlikely to be successful.
- Domestic abuse post – to ensure all agencies were trained to support women with legal remedies, e.g. non-molestation order. Could also be a bid for a worker to do this work perhaps in conjunction with DA agencies. May be possible to achieve without additional funding with ACSG trainer and DA trainer based in Social Services.
- Community Care post –seems to be primarily a training need. Plans proposed to work on this.
- Advice provision in Children's centres. Possible focus for a district wide bid could be with families with disabled children.
- Education advice – not yet clear whether need for additional provision.
- Advice in antenatal clinics in GP surgeries and hospital. One of major factors from Infant mortality report was poverty particularly in BME communities. Probably a bid would be for an advisor to work on benefits, immigration, maybe childcare and employment rights.
- Sensory impairment – lack of advisors with BSL level 2 or 3.

The Working Neighbourhoods Fund

The Government has decided to establish a new Working Neighbourhoods Fund. The new fund will replace Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and incorporates the Department for Work and Pension's Deprived Areas Fund to create a single fund. The focus will be worklessness.

The document states that "The Government will invite a range of advice organisations in up to 10 localities to work with us in developing a joined up advice service covering issues such as jobs, financial issues, housing, employment rights and childcare issues. We will set aside £2 million in 2008-09 for this purpose. More intensive support will be available to those who need it most including the workless and the low skilled."

Further information can be found via the following we blink:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/workingneighbourhoods>

Community Justice Centre

A Community Justice Centre was set up in Bradford in the summer. It runs on a Wednesday afternoon and covers the wards - Bowling, Barkerend, City and Little Horton. Bradford CAB are providing triage slots at Bdirect if referrals are made by the court.

Be Involved

This is a project, which is being run by the business broker at Bradford Vision. Opportunities for businesses to get involve in social regeneration. Examples that have already happened include: Yorkshire Water working with Newlands Local Enterprise social enterprises to give workshops in areas such as HR, business planning, finances. Mentoring programme in place, training provided, volunteers for clean up days etc. Community organisations can list opportunities for involvement on website

Bdirect are already involved looking at how private sector can support voluntary sector working in there.

Business broker has 2 financial institutions who would like to do some work in the area of Financial Inclusion.