

Supporting People

**Minutes of the Bradford Supporting People Commissioning Body Meeting
11am to 1pm on Monday, 19th September 2011
Conference Room, Olicana House**

Present:

CB Members:

Moira Wilson	Strategic Director Adult and Community Services, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (Chair)
Maggie Smallridge	West Yorkshire Probation Service
Ali Jan Haider	Bradford & Airedale PCT (Substituting for Matt Neligan & Liz Barry)

CB Officers in attendance:

Guy Van Dichele	Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance & Business Support, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (Accountable Officer)
Jayne Hellowell	SP Lead Officer, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
David Shepherd	Assistant Director, Climate, Housing, Employment & Skills, CBMDC
EW	Supporting People Service User
Pam James	Service User Advocate Representative
Jen White	Partnerships Services, CBMDC
Neal Heard	Support to SU, BACC
Hannah Hatchman	Contract & Quality Assurance Officer, CBMDC
Rominder Dhothar	Contract & Quality Assurance Officer, CBMDC
Maggie Colwill	Quality Assurance Manager, CBMDC

1. Apologies:

Matt Neligan Bradford & Airedale PCT

2. Declarations of interest

Item 6 – Neal Heard & EW

3. Minutes & matters arising from the joint special meeting held on 13th July 2011

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

4. Lead Officer Update

1. Procurement

Jayne highlighted the current issue around procurement & commissioning. It was noted that SP contracts come under part b of the European rules. Jayne spoke about the current exemptions that SP contracts have through the Strategy which was written in 2008. There may still be exceptions based on whether or not the council thinks that the contract may not be of interest to the member states but she asked all to bear in mind that in future all SP contracts could be subject to competitive tendering.

Guy spoke about maintaining a right balance between the council and providers i.e. the council acting properly and doing things within the law and having the right providers delivering good quality services to the people of the district. He highlighted the nervousness providers may feel about this process as they feel it has become more commercialized.

David added that a lot of work has gone on in getting an established set of partners that can deliver the provider organisations. He spoke about current quality and relationships with providers. He suggested coming up with some sort of process / framework that allows the

Authority to continue working with good providers and not having to go through the European commissioning arrangements every time a contract requires setting up.

Jayne summarised that in the future, the approach whether it's exemption or tendering will be brought to the CB who will decide which is the best way forward. After the decision from CB it will then be taken to corporate for final approval.

It was noted that the exact same rules apply to Probation and PCT.

2. Housing Benefit Reform – Supported Housing

Jayne gave some background information on the consultation being carried out at the moment on the HB Reform. SP & HB department have done a joint piece of work to co ordinate one response on behalf of the Authority to the consultation. Jayne informed members that the SP team will be doing a bit more work on this as the last one was a bit rushed. They will be speaking with colleagues from HB and will be putting a response back to the DWP. Jayne will also be looking at this on a regional level as the implications of it going through could be quite profound for the sector.

3. Attendance Monitoring

To note.

5. Langley House Trust (LHT) Improvement progress report.

Rominder presented the progress report for Langley House Trust (LHT). This report was requested by the SCG to monitor the progress of LHT services in the Bradford District. Rominder summarised the key points and informed members that this report gives the final recommendation for approval which is to award a 24 month contract to LHT services from 31st December 2011 in line with the offender Sector Services funded by the SP Programme.

A discussion took place. Key points highlighted were:

- Value of contract is in the region of £300k. This is an example of where procurement changes come into place. Anything over the value of 10/12k has to go to the leader of the council for approval.
- Concern expressed about the strategic relevance of this service. It was pointed out that the EIA has established that the closure of this service would result in moves out of West Yorkshire into approved premises that already have waiting lists as there is no alternative provision in the Bradford area.
- Concern expressed about the improvement of quality for this service and whether the same approach been used for Salvation Army (SA) & Gingerbread Housing Project (GHP). It was explained that when LHT was failing they were consistently allowed time to improve which they did do and within the given timescale. Same approach was used for SA & GHP. They were failing and were given time to improve but after that timescale they were still failing. GHP and SA were given 12 months to improve and LHT improved within 6 months. LHT are now achieving the minimum level that is expected and they have been put in line with the other contracts. It was stressed that the same processes have been used for both SA & GHP, LHT have significantly improved on quality and clearly has a strategic relevance.
- The feedback from SU was extremely positive and the changes implemented by LHT were noticeable.
- Separate investigation undertaken by probation which showed that the services have definitely improved. The investigation was very thorough and robust and LHT responded very well to the investigation.
- Capital investment of £17,590 is to be picked up by provider in order to keep the scheme in operation over the next 5 years. LHT are aware of this.

Actions

- As per the new procurement process Rominder & Kerry to complete the "Approval to Award form" and submit to leader of the council for approval. CB members to be updated on the outcome.

- The following points to be included in the report before it is submitted to the leader of the council:
 - what the quality improvements are,
 - what the capital investment is
 - the cost of the contract.

6. Homeless Quality Review Outcome

Hannah informed members that this is a report providing members with details on the current position with Homeless/ Rough Sleepers providers in the district as at the 2011 interim quality review. She pointed out that providers have been reviewed on quality whilst performance and cost were not assessed as part of the review. All providers were expected to achieve level b against the new QAF (2009).

She gave the following update:

- All services have been validated by carrying out a full on site validation visit interviewing staff and service users. All services were subject to a peer Review Visit conducted by members of the Supporting People Service User Involvement Group.
- A total of 10 providers who provide, 19 services were assessed.
- 2 providers Incommunities and Fairweather successfully achieved level A within the QAF (2009) which means excellence and is associated with providers striving to be leaders in their field.
- 3 achieved level b.
- 1 provider is expected to achieve level B by the end of August.
- 2 providers requested not to be assessed due to either a take over or service transfer to other providers.
- 2 providers did not achieve the required level and following a full report presented to SCG/CB special meeting on 13th July 2011 are subject to de-commissioning

Members congratulated the 2 providers who passed at Level A and commented that this is an excellent achievement for the providers and everyone involved from the Authority.

7. Generic Quality Review outcome

Hannah informed member's that this report provides members with details of the current position with Generic providers in the district as at 2011 interim quality review. These services have been assessed against the new QAF (2009).

She gave the following update:

- 1 provider achieved level A
- 1 provider achieved level b
- 2 providers are a fraction off achieving level b. These providers been given time limited action plans. A lot of evidence has already been submitted and the aim is that those action plans are completed by the end of this month resulting in level b across the board.

A discussion took place about the expiration of four of the Generic Services contracts and the project group that has been set up to look at future commissioning and procurement. After discussion it was agreed that:

- An Approval Award form to be filled in as urgently as possible.
- To extend all contracts up until March 2013.
- In line with the above 2 points a business case to be prepared and brought to CB around options for the future of these contracts – whether we tender out or apply for an exemption to procure.

Moira acknowledged the provider that achieved level A and commented that this is an excellent achievement for the SP programme. She requested for a summary report on the progress and improvements on the QAF standards to be presented to the scrutiny committee.

Action: SP Team to produce a summary report for Moira.

8. Progress Report Bradford Tenancy Ready Standards

Maggie updated members on the progress of the Bradford Tenancy Ready Standards (TRS) initiative. The following points were noted for the minutes:-

- Development stage completed and active promotion activities now in progress.
- Certificates will be provided to SU to verify to prospective landlords that all 9 Bradford standards have been achieved.
- Evidence of implementation of the 9 standards will be sought through regular contract and quality reviews.
- Building links with training providers and Bradford College so that SU are able to gain a recognised qualification (City & Guild "Employability and Personal Development" 7546). This can lead to work experience, apprenticeships or further learning etc.. This also has links to the worklessness agenda.
- Negotiations in progress to link the TRS to Choice Based Lettings, and to assess whether direct housing benefit payment can be made to private sector landlords to encourage them to offer more of their properties to clients moving on from housing related support services.
- On going negotiations for those with TRS certificates assessed at band c under choice based lettings to be upgraded to band b.
- Paul Fennley from Black Shaw Holdings, one of the big private sector landlords is really keen on engaging with Supporting People with the progression of this initiative. Reference was made to the Move On strategy 2008 that one of the reasons identified why people are not moving on to private sector tenancy's is because of the perception that vulnerable people are unable to hold onto their tenancy's, so this initiative boosts a lot of confidence to the private sector landlords.
- Neal currently producing a bid which works with homelessness projects around developing people's skills and creativity. This is closely linked with the TR standards, education/training and what's going on in the community.

Congratulations expressed by members to all those involved in setting up this excellent scheme.

Actions:

- Moira requested for an update report in 6 months time.
- Maggie Colwill to update this report to show the 9 Tenancy Ready Standards instead of 8.

9. Any other business

- Jayne reported that on a national level concerns have been expressed by top civil servants re the status of the SP Programme. Majority of Authorities have an SP programme with a SCG & CB in operation but there are a couple of Authorities that don't. CLG are potentially looking at relaunching SP programme. Jayne will be contributing to a national steering group on this.
- It was proposed to cancel the next cycle of meetings as there is not a lot to report. After discussion it was decided to:
 - Action**
 - To cancel next cycle of meetings (SCG 11.10.11 & CB 14.11.11) - Jayne
 - Next SCG meeting to take place 06.12.11 and to arrange for the next CB meeting for early January. – Jayne & Admin
- It was agreed to send a letter out on behalf of CB to all providers who have achieved level A on the QAF.
 - Action:** Jayne to draft letter and Moira to send out on behalf of CB.

Date, time, venue for next meeting

To be confirmed.