

# City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

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## Minutes of a meeting of the Bradford Community Legal Advice Service Partnership Board held on 13 September 2006 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1805

Concluded 1940

### PRESENT

#### Members of the Board

Jan Curry	CHAS Housing Aid	Voluntary Sector
Lynette Kirk	Manningham Project	Voluntary Sector
Zahida Mallard	Voting Co-opted Member	Bradford Council
Councillor Adrian Naylor	Conservative Group	Bradford Council
Dave Preston	Community Funding Unit	Bradford Council
Liz Reveley	Bradford CAB	Voluntary Sector
Sue Williscroft	Bradford Law Society	Private Sector

#### Also present

Sheila Farnhill	Secretary	Bradford Council
Sikander Hussain	Key House Project, Keighley	Non-Voting Co-opted Member
Janice Thornton	Head of Service – Neighbourhood Support	Bradford Council

### 108. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Fiona Hedar, Councillor Imran Hussain, Councillor Howard Middleton, Julie Robinson-Joyce and George Scully.

### 109. MINUTES

#### It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2006 be accepted as a correct record.

### 110. MATTERS ARISING

It was noted that Julie had circulated the final version of the Strategy and Action Plan.



## 111. NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

Janice Thornton, the Head of Service for Neighbourhood Support, attended the meeting and gave a presentation in relation to "Narrowing the Gap" a new government initiative with the aim of delivering significant improvements to the most disadvantaged communities. She stressed that measurable improvements must be delivered to access the funding. (A copy of Janice's presentation is attached as Appendix 1).

The areas concerned were:

Allerton and Lower Grange  
Little Horton  
Holmewood  
Keighley - Worth Valley  
Windhill,

She explained that a Service Delivery Team would be established within each area and Neighbourhood Managers had already been appointed in two out of the five.

She outlined the principles of working, which entailed working with local residents, community groups, agencies and service providers to identify the particular issues facing each individual area and to establish the priorities for that area. Work would be undertaken with existing agencies, including the voluntary sector, to develop community partnerships and to ensure that the existing community and its infrastructure were supported. She said that there was a willingness to look at many different ideas/approaches to the issues that needed to be addressed.

Maps, indicating the boundary of each area, were available from the Neighbourhood Support office if Members required them.

Thanks were offered to Janice for her helpful presentation.

## 112. CLASP STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2006 - 2009

It was noted that all the items within the timescale up until the end of November would be discussed at the next meeting.

**It was agreed:**

**That the CLASP Strategy and Action Plan 2006/2009 be formally adopted.**

**ACTION:** *Julie*

## 113. BRIEFING ON THE CARTER REVIEW

Sue Williscroft gave a presentation on the Carter Review; a review that had been requested by the Government in respect of the future funding of legal aid services. The consultation period ran until 12 October 2006 and the implementation date for the new system was 1 April 2007.

Her presentation covered the following points:

- The proposals would introduce sweeping changes and lawyers had expressed concerns about the short timescale for introduction and the inadequacy of the consultation.
- It was anticipated that there would be a substantial impact upon the voluntary advice sector in terms of the use of CLACs and CLANS. Pilot CLAC schemes were being undertaken, details of which were available on the LSC's website, but poor response meant that the adequacy of the pilots to determine the position in reality was doubted.
- It was clear that the end result of the introduction of these proposals would be that many smaller lawyers' firms would either go out of business or have to merge with larger companies.
- One of the aims was to have the same rate of pay, per piece of advice, for the voluntary advice sector and lawyers. Lawyers would have to produce business plans, to include their added costs such as insurance and practice certificates, to establish whether their firm could remain viable.
- Lord Carter had stated that the current system was unsustainable and that it had to be accepted that there was a need to budget and find better ways to deliver the service.
- In undertaking his enquiry Lord Carter had identified hostility between the different sectors.
- The new system would see the introduction of fixed payment rates for stages in casework. She explained that it was impossible to compare the proposed new payment system with the old. Problems would arise for firms if they had a run of cases where the costs exceeded the set rate payable for the case and obviously this was not predictable.
- The national Law Society was working on the issues raised by the proposals.

Sue encouraged Members of the Board to submit their comments on the consultation.

The Chair thanked Sue for her presentation.

#### **114. SOCIAL POLICY**

Lynette tabled a briefing note on the Social Policy issues that had been highlighted during April to June 2006 (Copy attached as Appendix 2). She went through the issues raised and explained that all the cases recorded had been forwarded to the relevant agency. It was noted that a number of the problems that had arisen were associated with the establishment of JobCentre+.

Dave pointed out that the Council was no longer responsible for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

#### **115. ADVISORY SUB-GROUP PROGRESS REPORT**

The notes of the meeting of the Advisory Sub-Group held on 30 August 2006 were tabled. (Copy attached as Appendix 3).

Lynette made an appeal for volunteers to join the Sub-Group.

Liz also requested that she be contacted in relation to any employment discrimination cases, or any with a potential discrimination element, as relevant funding had been received from the DTI for a period of one year.

116. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no additional items of business to be discussed.

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