

Supporting People

Minutes of the Supporting People Strategic Core Group Meeting held on Tuesday, 13 January 2009 2 - 4pm, Conference Room, 1st Floor Olicana House

Present:

David Shepherd (Chair)	Assistant Director Housing Service, CBMDC
Peter Hart	Probation Service (Deputy Chair)
Guy Van Dichele	SP Accountable Officer & Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance & Business Support (Adult Services)
Jayne Hellowell	Supporting People Lead Officer (missed out)
Rachel Lorimer	SP Service Development & Research Manager
Sheila Bamford	Executive Director-Horton HA (Provider Rep)
Graham Mynott	Keyhouse Project – Manager (Provider rep)
Mike Harney	City Homes in Mind (Provider rep)
Denis Gale	Children & Young People Services
Neal Heard	Service User Involvement Worker (Bradford Alliance on Community Care (BACC))
John Howarth	Strategic Commissioning Manger - Service Improvement (CBMDC) also representing Older People
John Hill	Foundation Housing (Provider rep)
Simon Welch	Service Improvement Officer (CBMDC)
John Brown	SP Service User
Emmerson Walgrove	SP Service User
Nina Smith	Safer Communities (CBMDC)
Jennifer Moran-Whitehead	Bradford District Care Trust (Provider rep)
Gary Furze	SP Finance Manager
Melvina Black	SP Senior Administration Officer
Sheena McDonnell	Audit Commission Lead Inspector
Pam James	Service User Advocate
Paul O'Hara	Youth Offending Manager (CBMDC)
Sarah Possingham	Principal Officer (Access to Housing)

1. Apologies / Introductions

Ruth Ingram	Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator
Anne Kaye	Service User
Tony Moore	Strategic Commissioning Manager –Learning Disabilities (CBMDC)

David welcomed everyone to the meeting, followed by introductions around the table. He also explained that Sheena McDonnell, Audit Commission Lead Inspector was present to observe the operation of the meeting.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Item 6, sector review – Graham Mynott and Sheila Bamford, Paul O'Hara

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2008 and matters arising

Page 2, item 3 – the use of jargon. David commented that the group recognises the need to minimise jargon.

Page 2, item 3 – Approved Provider List – this is an ongoing process.

Page 3, item 4.5 Bids to commit SP Grant – this is an ongoing action which Guy will present to the Council Executive in February.

Page 5-6, item 6 – steady state contracts, recommendations from the SP Strategic Core Group (SCG) were agreed by the Supporting People Commissioning Body (SPCB) in November. All providers now issued steady state contracts.

Page 6, item 7 – Guy confirmed that the Executive Committee has agreed that the SP Grant is ring-fenced until March 2011.

Page 7, item 9 – Supported housing review went to SPCB in November. The Commissioning Body noted the discussion that took place at SCG. David confirmed that the SCG will request a further report from InCommunities on the impact of the accommodation review once it is fully implemented. In particular the SCG is interested in the availability of accommodation, the rent book, choice of accommodation and successful move on. This item has been placed on the forward plan for 18 August 2009.

4. Lead Officer Update – Jayne Hellowell

4.1 Service Plan

The service plan continues to be used as a management tool that is focused on achieving the priorities as laid down in the 5 year strategy and any future work that arises.

Graham also queried action under Governance and Partnership section where SPCB is to commission SCG to set outcomes for contracts and why this progress is marked red. Jayne agreed that this should now be changed to amber since the sub group has been formed and is taking this piece of work forward.

4.2 Safeguarding Adults – Briefing regarding “Baby P” –Issues

Jayne said that this item was brought to the meeting in an effort to flag up what SP have done and intends to do in future in terms of safeguarding and what is being done in general by Supporting People in Bradford in both areas of safeguarding for adults and children.

- Rachel SP Service Development and research manager attends the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Policy Review Subgroup
- Safeguarding Adults training was carried out in October for all SP staff
- All SP staff have an enhanced CRB check
- Adult Protection Co-ordinator is represented on the SCG
- Providers have been advised to undertake the training course – 1 day training for staff and 2 days training for managers which will be validated as part of the annual contract review
- All SP staff completed the on-line safeguarding children training
- Providers have been sent the link for the on-line training for safeguarding children although this is not yet validated in the QAF but will be in the future
- There is now a safeguarding children and young people representative on the SCG (Paul O’Hara)
- Safeguarding protocol in development.

4.3 Bids to commit unallocated SP Grant

Jayne reported that the total unallocated fund stands at around £3 million. To date, 30 bids have been received by SP of which 13 have been approved by Moira Wilson as Chair of SPCB and Guy Van Dichele as SP Accountable Officer. These will account for just over £500K of the unallocated funds. A further 7 bids have been approved subject to further clarification and 2 have been rejected.

Once discussions have taken place with providers, a further £500K could be committed bringing the total committed allocation to £1 million. Assessment of outstanding bids is due to be carried out and this is expected to bring the total commitment to £2 million by March 2009.

Bids approved to date include:

- Move on Co-ordinator, Link Worker – (for pre tenancy, sign posting queries/requests will be directed to this worker), Tenancy Bond Support Worker and Supported Housing Coordinator – all funded to enhance move on
- Support service for Gypsy and traveller
- Mental health discharge workers
- Service user involvement projects to assist in support planning, these will help achieve outcomes and a training DVD on support work and online interactive web portal for service users, which will improve access and diversity.

Providers have been advised to continue bidding for the £2m unallocated funding. For some services a new contract will be drawn up. In all cases providers will be asked to submit a report to say how they will use this additional funding.

Graham queried whether these bids are long-term or short-term. Jayne said some bids are one off bids going beyond this year end. The bids have been checked by AC and CLG and are therefore viable for funding.

It was also commented that SCG needs to look at the nature of the bids that are coming through and this will give more consideration at the next meeting.

Action: To bring a list of all the groups that have made bids to the next SCG meeting.
(Action: JH)

4.4 Information Sharing Protocol

This document was developed by the North West Supporting People Group and the Yorkshire and Humberside Support Group, which Jayne now chairs, is looking to adopt a similar protocol. The protocol will be used to share information with regional SP teams when there are concerns with a contract or a decommissioning process is underway. Appendix 1 shows the type of information to be shared and Appendix 2 is the format of the form that will be completed by the neighbouring LA.

There were a few queries and comments around the use of the protocol and also the appropriateness. For example, Nina pointed out that some providers operate under a different name in their LA but that may not necessarily be the registered name of the organisation, this could be misleading for another LA when information is shared.

Graham queried whether there is an appeals process. The explanation to this was that if there are concerns/complaints these would be directed back to the originating LA.

Sheila felt that providers should have an opportunity to view the information to be shared before it is passed on and asked that this concern be communicated back to the regional group.

John Hill suggested that in order to minimise anxieties for providers, clarification should be communicated to them that any concern around sharing of information between LAs is about very serious breach of contract.

Action: Jayne to feedback to the next regional group meeting in March the concerns regarding the opportunity for providers to view information before it is passed on to another LA and also to include the comments of this meeting.

Decision: Subject to feedback being communicated the SCG will agree to adopt the protocol.

4.5 Attendance Monitoring

The monitoring statistics presented represents the current financial year. It shows the percentage of each member's attendance at those meetings. David commented that he is pleased with the attendance. He reiterated that he would like members to keep up this standard of attendance.

5. Performance Report – Jayne

This report sets out the performance being reported, analysis against benchmark and the steps taken to address poor performance. The data relates to quarter 2 of the current financial year. The report was brought to the meeting for members to note the data and to allow for comment and action on poor performance.

5.1 Analysis of QAF and Performance Indicators

The target for QAF scores is to achieve at least 33% of QAFs at level B. As at the end of quarter 2, 24% of QAFs are at level B with the 33% year end target expected to be met.

KPI2 (or NI141) – percentage of service users that have moved on in a planned way - improved in quarter 2 to above the 70% benchmark target.

5.2 Performance linked to move on

The throughput (SPI2) indicator for 2005 – 2008 was used to analyse whether service users are moving out of temporary accommodation and not kept on in services. Throughput shows total movements and should be looked at in conjunction with NI 141 (planned moves). The Move on Strategy should help to address move-on issues, to ensure that people are moved on in a planned way and performance is addressed via risk validation to be followed up with an action plan.

It was mentioned that some provider's benchmarks are too high, however there may be some good reasons why this is the case. For example, it may be a small service; or a service for clients with complex needs.

Action: NI141 analysis to be brought back to the meeting in the summer to challenge the level of benchmarks set

There was a suggestion for SP Team to recognise what other LAs have done in terms of benchmark and compare this to how Bradford is performing.

5.3 Risk validation visits

During quarter 2 the data collected was used to form the basis of the risk validation visits, if the SP Team felt that there was a risk a visit is carried out on particular services. This would include risk where there is a low performance or risk relating to safeguarding or complaints. There were 15 visits made relating to 33 services. The results show the series of action that SP will take and what's agreed with providers in order to up their performance.

5.4 Complaints

The SP Team receives very few complaints to date; however the team records all complaints received and investigates where appropriate. Complaints are reported to the service provider in the first instance, and may be resolved at that level; SP Team does not always know the nature of the complaints that go through to the provider. Guy commented that SP Team needs to have an idea of the type of issues coming through to providers and to have a system in place for logging/follow-up where necessary. It was requested that the complaint form also include compliments and a section for comments.

The SP Complaints Procedure is to be linked closer to the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

Sheila also remarked that SCG needs to know that when complaints are reported to providers there are evidence that these are recorded and that these issues are not just left at providers' level. It was also felt that safeguarding needs to be monitored through the complaints procedure.

Jayne proposed that provider's reps raise the issue of improved complaints monitoring at the Provider Forum.

Action: To raise the complaints procedure at the Provider Forum (Sheila) and include this as a standing item on the Provider Forum agenda.

Decision: SCG noted the information within the report and agree to the actions stated above be taken forward.

6. Sector review report – young people/teenage parents (final draft)

Those members with declaration of interest (Graham, Sheila and Paul O'Hara were asked if they wish to leave the room at this point, but they said they would like to remain while this item is being discussed).

The sector review is looking at what the SP provision for young people and teenage parents are for Bradford and what the future needs are and was compiled by SP Team and stakeholders. The background to the sector review was briefly covered for clarification of the report for new attendees. The report sets out detail of the outcome of the final draft which includes the review of current services funded by SP and priorities set out in the 5-year Strategy through consultation with key commissioners and partners. Members were asked to note this report is a final draft and that the final report will be submitted to SCG at the next meeting (28 April 09). It was noted that some of the services are operating at level C within the QAF and needs to meet the targeted level B. SP Team aims to work more closely with key commissioners to ensure future service developments are complimented with wrap around services.

6.1 Services assessed as part of this review

A total of 10 providers were assessed and SP Team is now working with these providers. All of these providers have been assessed for value for money (VFM), further information is outlined in Appendix A of the report presented to the meeting today.

In terms of benchmarking, 9 services fall within the right benchmark, 10 are marginally above and 3 for Bradford City Centre Project (BCCP) are significantly above the high benchmark, 6 have achieved level B of the QAF and 6 are 50%+ off the target standards for level B. The Lighthouse Group and Impact Community Developments (ICD) were also highlighted as not achieving the required QAF standard of level B.

Members were also asked to note that services can be strategically relevant whilst providing poor VFM.

Jayne advised that all the services will be assessed against the Strategic Assessment Matrix. (SAM) to confirm the need for continuing the service before the final report is submitted in April.

Graham queried the use of the SAM, is it a tool for the SP team or is it for Providers use. Jayne explained that the SAM can be used when a provider wants to bid for another service in partnership with a commissioner and it will be used to inform the sector reviews as an ongoing process. He also asked what is meant by wrap around services and what category these fall into; in response Rachel clarified that these are complimentary services such where a service has specialist workers to support the overall service.

6.2 Impact Property Services (IPS)

The Impact Property service (IPS) is part of ICD and the services are located on 3 blocks of flats, these will need to be relocated as the Council is due to terminate the lease of the flats due to regeneration of the area.

Emmerson asked whether Impact Community Development service users have been consulted regarding relocation; in response Jayne said that all service users were consulted and she also confirmed that SP will work with this provider in incorporating floating support.

6.3 Bradford City Centre Project (BCCP)

The accommodation is a hostel service and the flats are unsuitable. BCCP is working in partnership with Incommunities to develop more suitable accommodation in the area.

6.4 Action for Children

This service is failing in terms of PIs for the service. Opportunities are there to remodel to reduce the supported lodgings while increasing pre and post tenancy support.

6.5 MASTS

This is a very small service with staffing problems and therefore experiences difficulties in meeting SP requirements. The provider has been in negotiations with Incommunities and is likely to merge with this larger provider. This will see a remodelling of the service and an improvement plan will be put in place. Guy commented that merging with a bigger provider makes good business sense for this smaller provider.

6.6 Commissioning Priorities

As part of the review to identify their strategic commissioning priorities, key commissioners and provider reps have been consulted on the sector review.

Graham asked whether there will be an alignment of these priorities in the final report.

Jayne responded that the SPCB wants to enhance those services and as such will go back and look at specification and collate and line up commissioning priorities with the Commissioning Plan for the next meeting of the SPCB.

Members can refer to Appendix C in the report for a full list of the priorities identified during the consultation.

SP will ensure that the aims of new services are incorporated in order to meet the wider commissioning priorities.

6.7 Outcome-based contracts

During 2009, SP will be aligning contracts closer to the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets. An outcome sub group will carry out a piece of work over the next 12 months with providers to look at outcomes based contracts.

6.8 Contract end dates

All contracts have sufficient life to enable the review to be completed. Members can refer to Appendix C for a list of the contract end dates.

6.9 Improvement plans

Improvement plans will be issued to providers and timeline agreed based on the level of improvement required. Impact assessments will also be carried out on the most poorly performing services, to inform any SCG & SPCB decommissioning decisions. Reconfiguring of costs will be done through negotiations for those services with high benchmark and 3 year steady state contracts issued after the report is presented to SPCB in June. Any issues around the improvement plans should be brought to the April SCG meeting so they can be looked at before SPCB meeting.

Sheila raised concern on behalf of providers performing below level C and asked whether providers understand how they are performing. Jayne confirmed that providers have attended meetings with SP Team to discuss their performance levels and should all be aware of their performance levels.

It was suggested that QAF performance is reiterated at the Provider Forum and in the next SP newsletter as the message needs to get out to those providers who are performing below the required level that they must improve or take the prospect of decommissioning.

Mike asked if the report could be summarised and queried at what stage the equality impact assessment will be done. Gary advised a summary report will be provided and EIAs will be carried out as part of the strategic assessment matrix exercise.

It was commented that some small providers are struggling and larger providers may need to buddy up with those smaller ones to help in improvements and that one to one support and other resources be put in place to help smaller providers including SP team assisting to make the contracts workable.

Action: To reiterate QAF levels at Provider Forum (via Sheila) and in SP newsletter;
A summary Performance report to be presented at the next CB meeting
A full report on commissioning priorities to also come to the March meeting, with a opportunities for further discussion prior to the final report.

Decision: The recommendation in this report identified as an error and new recommendation to be included in the next report taking into consideration discussions and actions of this meeting.
SP to work with providers over the next 3 months on Improvement plans and remodelling and the final report will come to the SCG on 28th April 2008.
The final report should then go back to SPCB on 1st June 2008.

7. Move On Strategy Implementation – for information

The Move-on Strategy became live in 2008 and was developed jointly with Access to Housing with reference to the Homelessness Strategy. The report was brought to the meeting to show progress against the Move On action plan and to give clarity around the steps taken to address move on in Bradford. Certain posts were identified within the strategy and some are hosted by InCommunities. The areas within the action plan highlighted as priorities include access to accommodation, support planning, the number and types of floating support available and access to specialist services as required.

The new posts that will be funded include:-

- The Supported Housing Coordinator who works alongside the Move On Coordinator (both posts are based at Incommunities but funded by SP). These posts are temporary and the Supported Housing Coordinator will give support to providers.
- Move On Coordinator will work across all tenures and will work on the Bradford tenancy framework and look at how providers are accredited.
- The Link Worker is funded by SP and employed via Incommunities and based with SP. This worker is now in place Yvonne Latawec. This post will deal with referrals from access points, general enquiries and signposting service users to ensure they are aware of all relevant support services.

7.1 Move On Action Plan

A traffic light system is used to identify progress in terms of move on. It was noted this paper needs updating as some progress has changed since the time the report was completed.

Action: To invite InCommunities to introduce their proposals to improve the Homehunter scheme. This invite would also offer an opportunity for further discussion on the new posts referred to above.

SP Team to work closely with Incommunities
Sarah and Jayne to work on the updated progress in the action plan and circulate it around the group before the minutes are sent out.

Decision: SCG note the information in this report and the Move On action plan and agreed actions be taken forward.

8. Supporting People Commissioning Body Forward Plan 2008/9

Decision: SCG approved the forward plan in its current state.

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business raised.

Date, time, venue for next meeting: Tuesday, 3 March 2009, Conference Room, 1st Floor Olicana House.