

Membership

Councillors

Joyce Bosnjak (Chair) ●
Chris Barnfather
Michael Bennett ●
Martin Wright
Brian Wombwell

● absent

Officers

Keith Ford – Senior Governance Officer
Matthew Garrard – Senior Scrutiny Officer

Others in attendance

Gillian Blenkinsop) Bassetlaw District Council
Jo Wilson)
Cheryl George – NHS Bassetlaw
John Tizard – Centre for Public Service Partnership

1. Appointment of Chair

In the absence of Councillor Bosnjak, Councillor Wright was appointed Chair of the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2010 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting, subject to recording the apologies for absence received from Councillor Barnfather, who was on other Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) business.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2010 were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bennett (who was ill) and Councillor Bosnjak, who was on other NCC business.

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interests were made.

5. Bassetlaw Local Strategic Partnership (BLSP)

Gillian Blenkinsop, Corporate Policy Development and Policy Manager for Bassetlaw District Council gave a presentation on the BLSP and circulated copies of an information pack, including details about structure, constitution membership, achievements, engagement activity, NCC involvement with the LSP, priorities, a recent review of costs, external funding, outcomes, evaluation and performance management. Cheryl George, Health Improvement Principal for NHS Bassetlaw and Jo Wilson, Policy and Scrutiny Co-ordinator for Bassetlaw District Council inputted into the presentation where relevant. The following key points were highlighted during the presentation: -

- a tool which had been developed for the Employers Organisation for Local Government was used by BLSP to measure the degree of partnership working, with 63% of current activity assessed at the highest possible level;
- achievements were categorised as follows: -
 - direct project delivery with community benefits – for example, the Learning Champions and the Community Transport projects;
 - influencing attitudes and behaviour – for example, the Healthy Living Centre project, the Alcohol Task Group and intergenerational activity;
 - infrastructure – for example, the Idle Valley Rural Learning Centre and the Innovation / Enterprise Centres;
 - advice and guidance (helping people to resolve their own issues) – for example, the Family Project, the Life Guide signposting tool, a skills fair and celebration events;
 - integrated service delivery – for example, the Manton Community Alliance;
- democratic engagement was assisted by BLSP being led by the Leader of Bassetlaw District Council (BDC), Councillor Mike Quigley MBE, who was also the NCC representative on the Partnership. BDC Cabinet Members were also assigned to each of the theme groups. BLSP and the Sustainable Community Strategy was included in BDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme. Quarterly updates on the work of the LSP were provided through the Members' Information bulletin;
- ongoing community engagement included wide-scale consultation to determine community priorities; links with relevant community networks such as the Bassetlaw Over Fifties Forum and the Safer Neighbourhoods Groups; direct community representation on relevant theme groups; targeted face to face work in key areas such as Harworth / Sandy Lane and increased public information about BLSP (including regular features in Bassetlaw News and a showcase event planned for the future);

- BLSP's membership included David Pearson, Strategic Director of Adult Social Care and Health at NCC, who attended Board and Executive meetings and was felt to be a positive link and a supporter of the BLSP's work;
- funding was received from a number of sources including BDC (posts and projects), NCC (£9K towards partnership development and running costs), Local Area Agreement (LAA) cohesion funding, LAA reward grant (£349K was received at the end of June 2010), partner funding from NHS Bassetlaw (in the form of posts and projects) and North Nottinghamshire College (in the form of a post). Funding for Community Safety elements was also received from the Police, the Fire Service, NHS Bassetlaw and NCC;
- BLSP would seek to evaluate its effectiveness in order to continuously improve and ensure an evidence-based approach. It also aimed to build on the good will and appetite for partnership working in the area that had led to shared resources and intelligence amongst partners. The unique contributions that each partner made were valued equally by BLSP. The previous Peer Review had assessed BLSP as "meeting partnership challenges with enthusiasm, commitment, a willingness to innovate and a high degree of professionalism".

Members commended Ms Blenkinsop for a comprehensive and enthusiastic presentation. In response to issues raised by Members, the following points were clarified: -

- the vital services and contribution of community and voluntary groups was valued in Bassetlaw and such groups were supported indirectly via BLSP funding to umbrella organisations and directly through Service Level Agreements for specific services. The Director of Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service (CVS) was a member of the Board and the Executive (whilst the previous Director had been Vice-Chair of the LSP at one point). A previous campaign to encourage volunteering in the area had proven very successful, resulting in several hundred new volunteers. The input of local volunteers into the BLSP's work in Harworth was recognised as crucial and inspirational;
- BLSP assessed its priorities to ensure that they were adding value and making a difference through partnership working. The evaluation tool sought to recognise the LSP's achievements without over-playing its role. It was felt that the shared agenda of the partners was best met by shared intelligence and funding and that the LSP was not a talking shop (the number and length of meetings had been purposefully reduced). Part of Ms Wilson's role involved providing an overview across the different theme groups, including receiving minutes of the groups (which were succinct and action-focused) in order to raise any potential areas of duplicated activity and effort. These minutes would be published in future on the LSP's refreshed website to ensure transparency and consistency;
- existing representation on the Board and the Executive was felt to be at an appropriate level to ensure considered input and action as appropriate.

The Chair thanked Ms Blenkinsop, Ms George and Ms Wilson for attending the meeting and sharing their enthusiasm.

6. Total Place

John Tizard gave a presentation about the work he had been doing in Worcestershire, which was one of thirteen Total Place pilot areas. Prior to the Total Place pilot, Mr Tizard had already been asked to work with the Local Strategic Partnership to increase its effectiveness, improve engagement and ensure appropriate representation. Mr Tizard's presentation highlighted the following key issues: -

- the aim of the Total Place work was to estimate the total spending by public authorities in a locality and how this might be utilised to get better outcomes at a lower cost. A lot of effort went into calculating the total spend of £4.03 billion, 40% of which was Department of Works and Pensions expenditure and therefore not subject to local determination. Only 25% of the total figure for Worcestershire was related to local government (a County Council and 6 District Councils) and this figure reduced to 10% if schools funding was omitted. Although this percentage was likely to increase under the new Government, the total money available would be reduced;
- the work was assessed by the Worcestershire Partnership and a Board was established to oversee the Worcestershire Total Place Programme, with partner representation at a senior level. The Programme Board involved 27 leaders from across the public, private and community and voluntary sector (including the Bishop of Worcester, 4 leading industrialists, the Chancellor of the local University, the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer) with good attendance at the monthly meetings. Critical friend sessions had been arranged for officers and the challenges from private sector members had been particularly interesting;
- the work included considering the public estate of 1300 properties owned / leased long-term by the various agencies. These properties included specialist buildings (crematoria, hospitals, schools etc), public access buildings (such as libraries and job centres), office accommodation and depots. It was concluded that the existing number could be reduced by approximately 20%, bringing potential revenue savings of at least £50 million. Very strong leadership would be needed to take this rationalisation programme forward, although public expenditure pressures would also have a large influence;
- it was found that 10-15% revenue savings could also be achieved through single commissioning, whereby one agency would commission a service for others, for example, a single mentor could be commissioned to support individuals from any agency to help navigate young people through the job seeking process etc;
- within Worcestershire, Kidderminster had been chosen as a Total Place Neighbourhood, including work undertaken around teenage pregnancies/ education. The importance of looking at the outcomes of joint working

had been highlighted, for example, with a view to maximising community based staff. Projects to address alcohol misuse, children's services and family support had been looked at in Worcestershire;

- the new Government wanted to continue the Total Place programme but was likely to change its name. The aim of achieving more from public expenditure by collaborative working (where this added value) would remain the same. There was a need to focus on people and outcomes without being restricted by current institutions and funding streams. This work would require very strong political leadership.

In response to issues raised by my Members, the following points were clarified: -

- the findings of the pilot schemes were being communicated as appropriate. Communities and Local Government had published some findings, as had the Local Government Leadership Centre which had a co-ordinating role for the 13 pilots, sharing best practice. Councils would also need to link into relevant pilots that had issues in common – for example, the issue of alcohol misuse which was being addressed by Leicestershire. The new Government was unlikely to dictate that local authorities had to undertake similar exercises to Total Place although collaborative working would be encouraged. There was a need for dialogue between Whitehall officials and localities to clarify where changes in legislation/regulation may be needed or possible;
- the pilot schemes were also still running to some extent, with the need to get better value for money of even greater importance in light of reductions in overall funding to public bodies;
- evaluation of the pilots would be undertaken locally and the new Government was unlikely to arrange national evaluation. Evaluation reports were available via the Local Government Association website but it was still too early to know the final outcomes. Guidance would not be produced about how to undertake similar exercises, with local partners left to decide the most appropriate approach. Members felt that the current government was unlikely to seek to micro-manage local authorities, with increased emphasis on localism and devolution. The importance of communication and dialogue between and within partners was underlined;
- restructuring of the Worcestershire Partnership was currently being considered, with plans to make it more business-focussed and to streamline the membership. This body would be responsible for driving the Total Place programme. The District Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in Worcestershire had not really featured in the programme, other than in relation to the Kidderminster work;
- Worcestershire County Council held a database of public sector properties, containing information such as value, current utilisation, leasehold and accessibility.

The Chair thanked Mr Tizard for his attendance and informative presentation.

7. Review Programme

Matthew Garrard introduced the report and highlighted that the discussion with partners planned for 13 September 2010 would include agencies such as the Police and voluntary organisations. The Chairs of the County Council's Members Forums would be contacted about the issue of feedback from LSPs and their views would be reported to the Partnership Review meeting scheduled for 27 September 2010. Members requested further information about the total cost to the County Council of supporting the LSPs so that this could be considered in relation to outcomes in order to clarify added value. Mr Garrard reported that the Localism Bill was expected in November 2010 and that this was likely to cover many of the issues raised in John Tizard's presentation.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm.

CHAIR

Ref: m_12Jul10