

Minutes of Management Group Meeting

Friday 14th May 2010

10am, Hereford Room, Plough Lane, Hereford

Present

Chris Bull – Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire (Chair)
Lynda Wilcox – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
Natalia Silver – Economic Development Partnership
Chris Baird – Children’s Trust
Peter Brown – Stronger Communities
Bill Bloxsome – Environment Partnership
Gabrielle Wright – West Mercia Police
Richard Quallington – Third Sector
Gwen Ellison – Health and Well-being Partnership

In attendance

Julie Gethin - Herefordshire Partnership Support Team
Chris Bucknell – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team
Philippa Lydford – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team
Maxine Basset – Herefordshire Council Research Team (for Agenda item 4)
Rachel Jones – Herefordshire Council Chief Executive’s office (Job shadowing)
Steve Hodges – Herefordshire Council Directorate Services (for Agenda item 4)
Oliver Goode – Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands (for Agenda item 6)

Apologies

Councilor Roger Phillips – Leader of Herefordshire Council
Mark July – Environment Partnership
Lucy Phillips – Fire and Rescue Service
Jean Cole – Fire and Rescue Service
Ian Edwards – Advantage West Midlands
Sarah Aitken – Health and Well-being Partnership
Susan Roberts – Government Office West Midlands

1. Introduction and Welcome and apologies noted

The Chair (Chris Bull chaired the meeting as Cllr Phillips was unable to attend) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked people to introduce themselves. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of last meeting – 8th March 2010

The minutes were agreed for accuracy.

3. Action sheet from last meeting and Matters Arising not on the agenda

Gabrielle Wright asked if the representation of Safer Herefordshire had been confirmed for this group. Julie Gethin said that confirmation had been received that Liz Smith, from Probation was the Safer Herefordshire representative for the Management Group.

Bill Bloxsome gave an update on work to progress the CO2 target; an event was held 19th March, a new development plan has been produced, which will go to the Herefordshire Environment Partnership’s meeting next week, the Partnership Board meeting 24th May and to

Herefordshire Council Scrutiny Committee. The plan needs contributions from all partners to succeed.

Richard Quallington explained that the Interim Third Sector Board met with Mary-Ann Bruce from the Audit Commission a week ago, to engage in the Comprehensive Area Assessment review.

4. Localities presentation – Steve Hodges

Steve referred to the report and maps circulated in advance of the meeting. Steve explained the starting point was to look at wards, GP practices, school catchments etc. Herefordshire is 100% parished, there are 240 civil parish boundaries, which feed into Lower Super Output areas. The map shows nine provisional service areas, of which three are rural areas, there are the areas covering the Market Towns and then Hereford City. This suggests three tiers, to which you would link the services that as a resident you would expect to see there. For instance, in each rural area you would expect to have a secondary school and GP surgery, the Market Town areas would also provide services to surrounding areas, the City would have this and provide services to the county as a whole i.e. the County Hospital.

A cross organisational group including public bodies and the Third Sector will be formed to undertake total place reviews for each locality area. This will involve mapping of buildings, land, services and costs. It will look to further develop the evidence base using information such as travel patterns and look at what you would expect to see in each tier. This will build on the current work looking at sharing buildings / assets. Steve stressed that this was about places, the lines are fluid but teams in service area could reflect these in their structures, pulling areas together to suit, where there is a link and shared understanding. Steve invited suggestions for members for the cross organisational group.

Chris Bull explained that this work builds on the discussion about the Community Strategy being a story of places, rather than just individual services. In order to do this we need to define places and think what people naturally feel is their community. Whether these are the right areas is up for debate, they will structure how we have conversations with people in these areas, how we provide services, but they will not divide services between them. It is different services in different sizes, we can't impose them on service development, but respect boundaries and work within them. In the next few months we will look at how public assets are used in each locality, not just remove assets, also how to get best value for the public in these areas, improve assets. First we need the partnership to sign up to the approach.

Gabrielle Wright said she supports the approach, good work has been done, we can bring easy wins through the Police, it might be more difficult for some organisations to sign up to. The Police are already in these areas and welcome bringing organisations together.

Natalia Silver said that from a rural perspective, it is useful to have a framework rather than just activity.

Lynda Wilcox said this is an obvious way of going about things. A lot of parish councils already group. HALC is interested in the correlation of the nine areas and ward areas, thinking of how ward councillors could work with this.

Chris Bull said that we have to draw the line somewhere, if we respect the civil boundaries there would be an impact on ward boundaries. Ward councillors are used to working across. It is about public engagement and what their place looks like, as much as service delivery.

Chris Baird said that with Children and Young People there is much work and engagement around organisational delivery, for example there is an exciting multi agency partnership in Bromyard within the GP area. These localities can build on this work. There are Children's Centres, opportunities to provide local centres, seeing what we can do collectively, and some work has been done around travel.

Julie Gethin said that this presents opportunities to work across areas and shape stories of place when talking to parishes.

Richard Quallington said that he was very supportive. The Third sector focuses on localities. If it is about community engagement he suggested consultation with communities to feed in, before areas are finalised. The Third sector has 140 plus community buildings that can broaden the delivery of local services. Lynda Wilcox said that churches as community buildings should be included.

Chris Bull checked that people were committing agencies to take this forward and take part in the debate of localities and total place.

Oliver Goode said that people need to recognise loss as well as gain. The win is the fact that the community is better served.

Steve Hodges circulated example maps showing the work done in Ledbury. Steve suggested that the work be conducted over the next twelve months in all areas. Chris Bull suggested that this work starts with Ledbury.

Steve Hodges suggested that representatives from finance, properties and the GIS team (mapping) in the Council and NHS Herefordshire be part of the group. Lynda asked if the group would include community people and if not, Lynda would like to be included.

Richard Quallington agreed with Lynda's approach and suggested Third sector involvement. Richard will take this back to the Interim Third Sector Board for a representative. Chris Bull said we need key public agencies, parish councils and the Third sector. The Partnership Support team will pull together a group.

When we do place reviews, it should not just be buildings looked at but how communities engage, which might be different in different places. Lynda Wilcox suggested that it is cost saving as well, but to remember that parish councils are now empowered (locally through precepts) to fill some of the gaps.

Gabrielle Wright said that support needs different approaches and the Police can bring mosaic mapping to this.

The group agreed the recommendations as detailed in the report.

Action: Partnership Support team to help pull the cross sector task group together, using suggestions made at the meeting as a starting point.

5. Performance – a) Local Area Agreement Performance – Chris Bucknell b) Verbal exception reports – Policy and Delivery group representatives

Chris Bucknell presented the group with a performance report which reflected the position at the end of the second year of the LAA. As data has become available more indicators have moved to either green or red although there are still a number where data is not yet available and performance can only be judged on adherence to the action plan. As this is the last year of the LAA Policy and Delivery groups need to do as much as possible to ensure targets are met, factoring in the final data collection dates. The Local Area Agreement reward grant available will be approximately £1,000,000.

Although it is not possible to do anything other than give a rough estimate, based on current performance it would be expected that around 13%, approximately £132,000 of reward grant would be realised. There is clearly a need to improve on this figure and Policy and Delivery Groups are asked to focus on this over the coming months.

Chris Bull asked representatives from the Policy and Delivery groups to provide verbal exception reports.

Peter Brown - Stronger Communities

NI 9 (Use of Libraries). The Stronger Communities Group had agreed to allocate £50,000 to new books, but the group stressed that this investment should be supported by enhanced marketing and awareness rising around what constitutes participation and use of library

facilities. Peter Brown said that in the future we need to think about which targets we use as the current ones do not reflect the true position and cannot be influenced. Chris Bull said that the reality of public spending cuts could mean that libraries may become more community based, supported by volunteers. He added that they are a community resource and need to be taken forward on that basis. Lynda Wilcox agreed that libraries could be developed as part of a Community Hub.

NI 6 (Participation in Volunteering). The data is not yet available as it will be gathered via the Place Survey, there is some concern over confidence in the performance rating and the outcome.

NI 155 and NI 156 (Affordable Housing and Households in Temporary Accommodation). There has been significant improvement in meeting both the housing targets, the affordable housing target was re-negotiated at refresh.

Gwen Ellison - Health and Well-being Partnership

NI 39 (Alcohol Harm Hospital Admission Rates). The database has been set up to identify and follow up people, leading to a more preventative role in the future.

NI 123 (Stopping Smoking). There has been an improvement through the Stub Buddy initiative. A graph was circulated showing the projected outturn. There have been initiatives at GP surgeries and pharmacies. The actions are on schedule, but there is more to be done. Julie Gethin questioned why the projection did not match the report. Gwen explained that when people quit smoking there is a wait of six weeks for data.

Chris Bull said that we need clear action plans implemented for indicators that are red.

NI 136 (People supported to live independently). Chris Bucknell said that although NI 136 was amber; she understood that not all data had been collected from Third Sector providers and that this indicator had the potential to be blue. Richard Quallington asked for clarification around data collection, was it the Sector not feeding in or the Council/NHS not recording it?

Action: Clarify why data is not being collected for NI 136.

Chris Baird – Children’s Trust

NI 51 (CAMHs). There is a clear action plan in place and the target is expected to be met.

NI 110 (Positive Activities). There are ongoing issues with the 2008/9 survey returning a particularly high baseline.

NI 117 (NEETs). Progress on NEETs is encouraging; with provisional data showing performance is improving, but not on target.

NI 56 (Obesity at Year 6). The data needs to be checked with Sarah Aitken. Julie Gethin asked if the target was likely to be met. Chris Baird said not the 5% but it is improving.

Environment Partnership – Bill Bloxsome

NI 186 (CO2 reduction). It is unlikely the target will be achieved.

Safer Herefordshire – Gaby Wright fed in on behalf of the group

NI 40 (Drug Users in Effective Treatment). This is causing concern as the number of people is very small, meaning that small fluctuations can make a massive impact on achievement. A more detailed update could come from Adrian Turton.

NI 47 (Killed and seriously injured). Although blue the direction of travel is down and there are some concerns over future funding of the Safer Roads Partnership and terms of the contract. It was suggested that this be taken up through the Safer Herefordshire Partnership.

Natalia Silver – Economic Development Partnership

NI 152 (Out of Work Benefits). Currently we are 2.9% below the national average; it is a very small margin and just a few people can make a big impact on the figures. 38 people have been assigned jobs through Future Jobs Fund, plus there are other programmes, including Connections to Opportunities, some short-term, some long-term.

Peter Brown queried whether the LAA and Reward Grant would continue under the new Government. Chris Bull said he would be surprised if the LAA survived in their present format but as it is the current regime, everything possible needed to be done to ensure targets are met.

Oliver Goode said that it seems likely we will have fewer performance indicators in the future, but with this may come increased responsibility and accountability. Chris Bull said headline policies of the new Government talk of devolution to the local level, through Local Authorities and other public bodies.

6. Partnership development Plan presentation – Oliver Goode

Oliver talked to his PowerPoint presentation. Oliver asked the group how they felt the Partnership was progressing.

Chris Baird said we have had only a few meetings since re-structuring the governance of the Partnership and we are beginning to make progress. Oliver said with talk around total place you are moving in the right direction, but need to strip out what doesn't work.

Gabrielle Wright said that it would help if we could assess how much is achieved as a partnership as opposed to what we would do anyway, thereby discerning how we contribute to outcomes. Gut reaction is that we need to be more light on our feet and responsive. Oliver questioned benefits achieved on cross cutting across themes, suggesting that we need to do more work.

Julie Gethin said that in her perspective we don't have collective partnership priorities, only group priorities. We are working towards being transparent and more accountable. Do we need a Management group as well as a Board, maybe we need a different structure?

Natalia Silver said there are positives and negatives. We can be more flexible and respond to things and share priorities through the Facilitators meeting. The negative side of a partnership is being inclusive makes a partnership big.

Chris Bull said there is a tendency to see each bit of Herefordshire Partnership as a separate group, we need to see it as a whole, with all groups coming together at events. We sometimes lose connections, we need to look at the whole partnership.

Oliver asked are the LAA targets right and meaningful to the public? Are the targets challenging enough? The maximum reward grant of £1,000,000 could be very useful next year.

Chris Bull said that we are already in pursuit of the targets through expenditure of resources. We've talked of the need to do marketing, i.e. in the context of a service like libraries, which could suffer in the future and the need to balance targets against future services.

Oliver Goode said that the debate about place was encouraging and the urgency behind the work. The Partnership has approved a set of priorities in the Development Plan, there has been engagement of a Local Improvement Advisor (LIA) working with the Partnership. Up until now there has been focus on Hearts of Herefordshire. We need to incorporate all that is best, high level themes, look at real issues that are important for the whole of Herefordshire and how to address with cross agency task forces. It's form and function, we need to ensure we refine the process focused on outcomes and benefits to local people.

Gabrielle Wright sought clarification, don't we have priorities within the themes / groups?

Julie Gethin said looking forward we need to look at them for the whole county, what we currently have for example are the crime reduction plan priorities, whereas we need to identify joint priorities and collective support.

Oliver Goode said we need to recognise what we will achieve only in partnership.

Chris Bull said we need to do more to identify what partnership commitments there are i.e. committed to rationalising public assets, a joint process for public engagement and avoid duplication. We need to assess what are partnership activities and what will different agencies

do. It is key to get the connection between what individual agencies do every day and what we do together. The Community Strategy identifies the area's priorities.

Julie Gethin said the partnership structure and function needs to embrace places looking forward.

Oliver Goode said that the partnership has moved on a lot, but it needs to develop.

Gabrielle Wright said we need to look at how we share ownership of priorities.

Chris Bull said historically the partnership operates around the edges, I'm not sure this is sustainable in the future, the reality is that we need to protect services to local people by doing things more closely together.

7. Third Sector Interim Strategic Board – Richard Quallington

Richard referred to the paper circulated in advance of the meeting. The Partnership commissioned a review last year and was supportive of the direction of travel. A Strategic Board has been set up and is meeting. It is more inclusive. They survived last financial year with support from the Voluntary Sector Assembly (VSA). The Board now has no dedicated resources. Key activity is assessing needs, in relation to testing out models coming forward.

They had a productive meeting with Mary-Ann Bruce and are keen to continue working with her. The outcome of the paper is how to move forward. Third sector organisations have put resources in and the Board is asking the public sector to also put in funding, less than previously. The total cost is £20,000, of which, £14,000 is sought through Public sector partners.

Chris Bull said we ought to acknowledge this piece of work, all agree it needs to be done and it will not happen without funding. We need to find a way forward.

Julie Gethin said there was a possibility of utilising some of the funding detailed in Agenda item 12.

8. Herefordshire Partnership's approach to Child Poverty – Chris Baird

A recent meeting was held involving Natalia Silver and Julie Gethin. With the Act as it currently stands an assessment and strategy need to be in place by April 2011. There are commitments from the new Government around child poverty, so there is still an expectation to do something and consider impacts across all sectors. One in seven children in Herefordshire is deemed to be in poverty, which includes rural isolation. The Act requires a dedicated lead, with a group that works on this area and reports to the Partnership.

Chris Bull said it is unlikely that it will change with the new government, although this is a product of the last Government. In terms of how the partnership works, this cuts across groups and the Children's Trust should lead on our behalf.

Chris Baird explained that at the launch the emphasis was worklessness (moving away from just benefit take-up). If parents are engaged in work and are well paid that can impact, so it is not specifically the Children's Trust, it is influenced by a range of services, not regularly a part of the Children's Trust.

Natalia Silver said they were specifically looking at the Local Economic assessment and Economic Strategy this year and child poverty is a link, plus looking at rural poverty.

Chris Baird asked could poverty be a partnership priority. Julie Gethin suggested that it could be.

Chris Bull said we have agreed to work through Policy and Delivery groups and on occasions need to work together, with the Children's Trust as lead and Economic Development as a link. Natalia Silver suggested there are strong links with Health too.

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed, with the Children's Trust retaining a leadership role and ensuring the appropriate level of engagement.

9. Supporting People interim arrangements 2010/11 – Wendy Fabbro

Lydia Bailey attended on Wendy Fabbro's behalf.

The context is that this was previously a stand alone programme. We have looked at how to move to integrate it in to ABG, but not losing the benefits. It has been agreed that Integrated Commissioning will continue to manage contracts, which have all been extended until 31st March 2011. There are a number of challenges; overcommitments and future allocations are likely to be less, plus how to manage this across Policy and Delivery groups.

The proposal is to set up a transitional group, who will look at the commissioning framework and challenges around decreasing funding. The recommended membership is Integrated Commissioning, the Herefordshire Council Director of Resources, Head of Partnership Support and relevant Policy and Delivery group representatives. The draft terms of reference of the group for discussion are in the appendix.

Chris Bull suggested that the approach feels sensible. Chris Baird agreed, but for practicalities it needs the right attendees, not necessarily the Chairs of the policy and delivery groups.

Richard Quallington said from a third sector perspective they had felt a hiatus with the changes being implemented. It is good to see the Alliance represented. In the terms of reference, should there be a role of procurement? Lydia said the group would not procure, that would be separate.

Peter Brown suggested this is a complex and emotive area, needing certainty in the future. We need to plan ahead, is the group tasked with forward planning? Lydia said that currently Health and Well-being has ownership of the planning process.

Chris Bull asked the extent to which the group holds things together, managing the programme during a process of change or also formulating a way forward. Lydia said the idea was not to have Supporting People as a separate entity, a framework is needed to support action.

Peter Brown said that with regard to commissioning we need the right conditions for providers, by planning ahead and avoiding stop / start contracting. Chris Bull agreed. We don't want to preserve Supporting People as a separate programme, we need to be clear about commitment to these services, to better meet needs of people. This should be in the terms of reference, ensuring that we don't accidentally destabilise the market.

Julie Gethin said we need to manage risk. We are committed to support the Provider Forum in looking forward.

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed, subject to the reference to the Policy and Delivery groups in the terms of reference stating "representatives" rather than "chairs".

10. PACT update – Julie Gethin

Julie explained that PACTs are promoted under the Herefordshire Partnership banner, with a partnership working group in place. The current arrangements need to be formalized with a terms of reference (contained in the appendix).

Chris Bull questioned why, as PACTs were set up as a genuine multi-agency way to look at priorities of the community, only one agency is contacted if logistical arrangements change. It was agreed that this should be amended to say all relevant agencies involved.

Gabrielle said she welcomed the review and asked why representatives of Safer Herefordshire are not mentioned, when other individual organisations such as Amey are listed. Chris Bucknell explained that Amey's attendance is built into their contract. Julie Gethin said it's probably more relevant to include the Community Protection Team (who attend every meeting) as they pick up a range of operational issues.

Richard Quallington said having chaired a number of meetings, people need to talk to the Council and Police, they are the people who work with their community. There is nothing in about communities influencing, should this be added to the terms of reference? Chris Bull said that the PACTs are under review currently and this particular should be picked up.

Gabrielle Wright said it would be helpful to make the point explicit, about what is done with the information gathered from the meetings and how it influences decision making and resourcing.

The group agreed the recommendations with these few additions to the terms of reference, as a holding position, pending review.

11. Area Based Grant 2009/10 performance – Philippa Lydford

Philippa explained the end of year financial position for Area Based Grant, referring to the report sent in advance of the meeting. The table on page two of the report shows what groups spent against profile, with most groups showing an under spend, of relatively small proportion against the total. All groups had the flexibility in-year to move allocations of resources to activities as needed. With the Children's Trust's agreed under spend on healthy schools of £52,000 carried over, £53,100 is left remaining in the account. The recommendation was that the Support team, following discussion with groups, bring suggestions of how this under spend could be utilised to the July meeting. It was explained that it is within our gift to carry this funding over until it is required, without risk of loss.

The recommendations in the report were agreed, with options for allocations of under spend to come back to a future meeting.

Action: Suggestions for utilisation of unallocated funding to be developed with Policy and Delivery groups and brought back to the Management group.

12. LPSA2 Reward Grant – Chris Bucknell

Chris Bucknell circulated a report outlining how the LPSA2 programme had been set up and how it had moved to Herefordshire Partnership late 2006. There had been considerable issues resulting from how the programme had been set up and the lack of ownership from some delivery areas. There had been some data collection issues and credit should be given to West Mercia Police and the PCT for employing data specialists who had ensured that funding that would otherwise have been lost was retained.

There was potential reward grant of £4.3 million. Herefordshire received £2.9 million (67%).

The reward grant from LPSA1 had been reinvested in LPSA2 and at the end of the programme £43k remains unallocated. Of the Reward Grant £473k capital and £223k revenue remains unallocated.

The group agreed that £14,000 of this underspend should be allocated to supporting the Third Sector board (see agenda item 7) with the remainder of the funding being kept back for allocation at a later date, with suggestions on a process for utilisation coming back to a future meeting, as with item 11 above.

Action: £14,000 to be provided to support the Third Sector Board.

13. LAA Reward Grant (verbal report) – Chris Bucknell

This had been covered under agenda item 5.

14. Commissioning process for 2010/11 (verbal report) – Chris Bucknell

Chris Bucknell explained that all the offer letters for funding 2010/11 had gone out to the groups for signing. The first signed copy back had been received from Natalia Silver, for the Economic Group.

15. Compact update – Lynda Wilcox

Lynda Wilcox explained that with regard to Compact they are concentrating on membership currently, which has improved as organisations have come on board and groups have fielded representatives. The group is scheduled to meet again next week.

Richard Quallington asked if when things are not going so well, this would come back to the group. Lynda said yes, that would happen.

Richard Quallington said that it was good that the group was driving forward, this needs to sit alongside how individual organizations work with the Compact, moving forward.

16. Comprehensive Area Assessment – Julie Gethin

Julie Gethin explained progress, following the round table discussion in March. In the report, paragraph 4 there is amended timescale, which will ensure maximum input from the groups and Third Sector. We need to reflect on last year and progress, and look forward. It is crucial that there is evidence and case studies. The end date in the timescale is still the same. We will be sending information to Mary-Ann Bruce as it becomes available.

Oliver Goode said that it was impressive that Mary-Ann Bruce was keen to seek green flags for Herefordshire. We need to think about what is special and has been achieved. We need to embrace this as an opportunity to showcase.

17. Any other business

The Pride of Herefordshire Awards 2010 has been launched and we welcome nominations.

Please contact the Partnership Support team if you would like nomination forms and / or posters to promote this through your organisation. Chris Bull encouraged the group to support the awards through nominations.

Date of next meeting 23rd July 2010, 10am in the Hereford Room, Plough Lane, Hereford