

# MINUTES OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

11<sup>th</sup> December 2008  
Kindle Centre, Hereford

## List of Attendees:

Chris Bull – Herefordshire Council & Herefordshire Primary Care Trust  
Cllr. Roger Phillips – Leader, Herefordshire Council (Chair)  
Paul Baker – Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership  
Cllr. Brian Wilcox – Transport Partnership  
Angela Smith – Economic Development Partnership  
Richard Gething – HALC  
Joanna Newton – Primary Care Trust  
Will Lindesay – Voluntary Sector Assembly  
Bill Bloxsome – Environment Partnership  
Brian Atherton – Chamber of Commerce  
Sharon Menghini – Children's Trust  
Mike Ashton – Chamber of Commerce  
Helen Braithwaite – Government Office West Midlands  
Geoffrey Elliott – Learning Partnership  
Cllr Peter Jones – Hfds. & Worcs. Fire & Rescue Authority  
Jane Crysell – Connexions  
Derek Laird – WM Ambulance Service

## In attendance:

Chris Bucknell – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team  
Jane L Jones – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team  
Oliver Goode – Consultant

## Apologies:

Wendy Coombey – Diocese of Hereford  
Sharon Grey – Learning and Skills Council  
Ian Edwards – Advantage West Midlands  
Michael Hainge – Herefordshire Council

## 1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Cllr. Roger Phillips welcomed everyone to the meeting and recorded Apologies.  
It was explained that Item 4 (Herefordshire Partnership Governance Structure) would now appear as the last item on the Agenda.

## 2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

### **3. Matters arising not on the Agenda**

#### **Safeguarding**

A review was being undertaken concerning local Safeguarding procedures and the outcome of this would be shared in January 2009.

It was pointed out that Safeguarding procedures involved areas of work other than those directed by the Children's trust, e.g. Adult and Social Care and the Primary Care Trust. The importance of looking at the "whole system" was discussed, and to ensure safeguarding principles are well embedded, not simply to react to a specific crisis. The importance of public reassurance was reiterated.

### **5. Local Area Agreement Review and Refresh**

Chris Bucknell outlined the process and presented the final version of the Review document, which would be submitted to Government Office. During January and February 2009 work would be done to develop targets for indicators which currently had no baselines, and to re-negotiate existing targets which may be adversely affected by the economic downturn. Where this was the case, robust evidence would be required to show how the locality had been affected by the current situation.

Helen Braithwaite reported that she was comfortable with Herefordshire's direction of travel. Central guidance was still awaited around Indicators 152 and 156. In late February the LAA Refresh would need to be agreed with the HP Board. Clarification was needed about the final sign-off process, whether that was with the HP Board or with Cabinet.

**Action:** Chris Bucknell to clarify sign-off process for the LAA Review

### **6. Area Based Grant**

Chris Bucknell reported on the progress to date. Following the last Board meeting, a considerable amount of very positive work had taken place to ensure the most appropriate use of the ABG. However it had become apparent that partnerships had approached the task in different ways and this had led to lack of clarity and an inconclusive outcome.

It had therefore been agreed that the Chief Executive should meet with the Chair of each groups to discuss what activities were currently being funded through ABG and how these contributed to Herefordshire's agreed priorities.

The Chair commented that a sense of urgency would be required, particularly if the result of these discussions led to contractual alterations.

Sharon Menghini commented on the need to meet statutory requirements, and the difficulty of having to do this alongside a possible reallocation of grant funding.

It was made clear that ultimate decisions would rest with the Management Group proposed under the new Governance arrangements.

It was noted that the Economic Partnership had been invited to put forward proposals but had not done so; this would need to be rectified.

Roger Phillips commented on the downturn in the economy, the downward pressure this will exert, and the need to work effectively to minimise the immediate impact and consider the longer term implications for the County.

## **7. Items for information**

### **7.1 Community Engagement Framework**

Chris Bucknell explained that this was a draft strategy which would be presented to the Public Service Trust Steering Group. The question of how this strategy would be delivered needed to be addressed. Community Engagement is a huge agenda, and this is very much work in progress.

### **7.2 Community Strategy refresh**

Chris Bucknell briefed Board members on the need to revisit the Community Strategy, and the proposed timetable to complete the work to be aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan. The Board would be updated on progress as appropriate in 2009.

Outside of the formal meeting Richard Gething volunteered to join the project team as the HP Board representative.

## **8. Any Other Business**

The Chair wished to raise two items:

To notify Board members of the proposed visit to Herefordshire of the Minister for the West Midlands on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

To discuss the role of Herefordshire Partnership during the current economic downturn, and ensure that it (HP) can deal with the issues arising. It is important to share information to ensure awareness of what is happening across the County, to understand local pressures and prepare for the future beyond the downturn.

Will Lindesay commented on Herefordshire Partnership's ability to demonstrate "added value", and the pressures facing the Third Sector which was currently experiencing considerable increased demand.

An "extra" Board meeting was proposed to be held during the first two week of January, specifically to discuss the economic situation and its potential local impact.

**This was subsequently organised for 2.00pm, Thursday January 8<sup>th</sup> in the Hereford Room, Plough Lane.**

## **4. Herefordshire Partnership Governance Structure**

Oliver Goode (Consultant) explained that the Terms of Reference had been discussed at the Chief Executives meeting and their comments and proposals were now being presented to the Board for ratification. They included the principles of being simple, transparent, inclusive and flexible (i.e. able to respond). Terms of Reference should be reviewed in around twelve months time.

The new structure simplifies the process by which the Partnership operates, as it will streamline a currently complex and unwieldy group of partnerships.

It was noted that some work had taken place with the Stronger Communities group, as the most diverse of all the newly proposed groups.

Discussion took place around AWM / GOWM membership/representation. It was agreed that this should be on a co-opted basis as the Board viewed these organisations as having a key part to play in the delivery of outcomes in Herefordshire.

Discussion also took place around Higher Level Skills and where these should be addressed in the new framework. It was agreed that these would be covered through the Economic Development and Enterprise group; the 14 – 19 Agenda would also be engaged with this area of work. There would be considerable cross sector working

It was stated that the Primary Care Trust, as lead local commissioner for health in Herefordshire, would provide representation at Board level. It was felt this role had been worded incorrectly in the Board Report and there needed to be clarification that the PCT were the lead for NHS Herefordshire and as such their representation encompassed the other services.

Jo Newton requested additional wording to clarify accountability and connectivity, particularly regarding reporting procedures between the proposed Management Group and Board.

It was stated that a name need to be agreed upon for what was described as Outcome Groups. It was felt important that the name should clearly describe what the group would be tasked to do, and as such it was agreed that Policy and Delivery (PAD) groups would best suit.

With the exception of additional wording requested by Jo Newton, the Terms of Membership and the proposals for membership were agreed. This new structure would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

The new Board to meet in January 2009 for a meeting specifically to discuss the local impact of the economic downturn, and a proposed timetable of key meetings for 2009 was tabled.

It was therefore concluded that the existing Board had now ceased, and the Chair thanked members for their contribution, and to wish everyone Season's Greetings.

**Action:**

- a. Additional wording to be added to the Terms of Reference to clarify accountability and connectivity.
- b. Organisations and Policy and Delivery Groups who will be members of the Board and Management Group to be contacted to put forward nominations for membership
- c. The Partnership Support Team to continue working with the Policy and Delivery groups to ensure they have appropriate membership.