

## Management Group Meeting

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009

9:30 am, Brockington, Hereford

### Minutes

#### Present

Chris Bull – Herefordshire Council/NHS Herefordshire (acting Chair)  
Ian Williams – Health and Well-being Partnership  
Mark July – Environment Partnership  
Peter Brown – Stronger Communities  
Natalia Silver – Economic Development and Enterprise  
Paul Baker – Safer Communities  
Lynda Wilcox – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils  
Richard Quallington – Voluntary Sector  
Mark Turner – West Mercia Police  
Jean Cole – Fire and Rescue Service (for Lucy Phillips)

#### In attendance

Chris Bucknell – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team  
Philippa Lydford – Herefordshire Partnership Support Team  
Mary-Ann Bruce – Audit Commission (for agenda item 4)  
Oliver Goode – Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership  
Josie Smith – Resources, Herefordshire Council

#### Apologies

Councilor Roger Phillips – Leader of Herefordshire Council  
Chris Baird – Children and Young People  
Lucy Phillips - Fire and Rescue Service (Jean Cole attended in her place)

#### 1. Introduction and Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked people to introduce themselves.

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting (22<sup>nd</sup> June)

The minutes were agreed for accuracy.

Mark Turner asked that the notes of the ABG meeting, held on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, (Chairs of Policy and Delivery Groups), be attached to the minutes.

#### 3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda

#### 4. Presentation by Mary-Ann Bruce - CAA Lead

Mary-Ann Bruce, the Herefordshire CAA lead with the Audit Commission, presented the key findings. The draft report will be available next week with the final report appearing on the One Place website. The text is being drafted using plain English and the report reflects the six priority areas. Red flags are unlikely for Herefordshire based on current information. Ian Williams whether the information from the Quality Care Commission (CQC) and Ofsted had been received and included. Mary-Ann had not received them but a formal discussion was planned for the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mary-Ann explained that community engagement could be a possible green flag, but for that it needs to be more than just good practice.

Mary-Ann thanked Steve Martin, Chris Bucknell and others for their help with the self assessment.

Mary-Ann went through the slides on the six sections.

### **Health**

**Action:** It was agreed to get to Mary Ann the latest information on Ambulance response times. The reviews on mental health information will go into next year's assessment.

### **Children and Young People**

Ofsted lead this section, so it is not finalised yet. Private fostering survey results were very negative, but it was a small sample of children surveyed. This will possibly be included in a paragraph on looked after children. 2008 figures will be used as the 2009 exam result figures have not been validated and verified, but they can report trends. Key stage 2 results are of more concern.

Chris Bull asked if they were looked at in the context of the overall achievement. The county has small schools in the primary sector, but higher achievement in the secondary sector.

Mary-Ann stated that the issue was whether young people could do better at secondary level if primary school figures improved. She added it needed to be looked at in the context of rural schools, which local communities want to maintain.

### **Safer Communities**

Mary-Ann Bruce mentioned the KSI figures and the impact of rural roads. Domestic abuse does not appear to be as good a multi-agency approach as in some other areas but it was felt that Herefordshire was moving in the right direction. The Youth Offending Service is not a concern, but the youth offending rate is higher than in some areas. Paul explained the connection with NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training). There is a decrease in young people entering the criminal justice system, but we need to work out those existing.

### **Stronger Communities**

Mary-Ann recognised the significant improvement by Herefordshire Housing, achieving two stars. She felt this was well deserved and the report will reflect the difference this will make to local residents. There is an issue around heating and insulation, which is compounded in rural areas without mains gas. The project in Newton Farm had been reviewed but would not feature in the report. Housing costs have come down, but are still high. There are high CO2 emissions, the main link being car travel, using the latest information (2005/06).

### **Economic Development**

Compared with other locations, there are high numbers of home workers and small businesses in Herefordshire. The lack of broadband access has an impact but it has to be recognized that this is only one solution. Mary Ann noted that the Higher Education bid was important for the county. The agricultural sector was mentioned as were the low wage levels in the county.

### **Environment**

Mary Ann asked for more information on flooding together with a progress report showing actions taken since the 2007 floods. Mark July said that a strategic risk assessment had been completed, linked to the Edgar Street Grid. Natalia Silver said that there was task group working on this.

**Action:** Key information regarding flooding, the resilience task group and the hospital's carbon reduction plan to be sent to Mary-Ann.

Although the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) conditions were improving the area was still one of the worst in the West Midlands. There has been progress in other areas such as the wildlife sites linked to National Indicator 197.

**Action:** Jo Hackman to provide summary information on the wildlife sites initiative

### **General Comments**

Mary-Ann said that the report would consider emerging benefits of the deep partnership (Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire), value for money, sustainability and how Herefordshire was going to improve services in spite of budget cuts. Chris Bull asked if Mary-Ann had seen evidence of the shared services and building assessment work.

**Action:** Mary-Ann to contact Steve Martin for information on Shared Services and Building Assessment.

### **One Place Website and Reporting**

Mary-Ann described the website and how the reporting would be presented. Chris Bull said that many people in Herefordshire would not recognize the West Midlands region and its boundaries, but would see the county in context with neighboring counties. The text for the website would be agreed in advance. Mary Ann cautioned that in order to capture the imagination of readers each paragraph needed to start with something stark.

### **Next Steps**

- 25<sup>th</sup> September - outstanding information to be with Mary-Ann
- 13th October - final opportunity to develop text for reporting
- 19th October - draft Area Assessment and Organisational Assessment narrative and scores
- 19th October-31st October - review process
- 10<sup>th</sup> December - Area Assessment and Organisational Assessments published

**Actions:** Mary Ann to forward copy of presentation to be circulated to the group

## **5. Performance Management**

Chris Bucknell introduced this item by saying that Performance Management was a key function of the Management Group and should be central to everything. Firstly, in order to make a difference for local people and secondly to achieve the reward grant which could then be reinvested into the county. The reward grant would be calculated as an average score across all indicators, meaning that if some indicators failed it would adversely affect others which may have performed well. Policy and Delivery Groups had developed well over the past months and needed to continue to work together to maximise performance.

Mark Turner said that there was a need to know the level of reward grant and how this would be distributed. It was agreed to cover this under item 7.

The latest performance report was circulated (up until June 2009). The group were asked to note the new Green/Blue/Amber/Red rating. Chris asked each group to talk about their performance and encouraged positive challenge from the group and suggestions of where groups could work together.

## **Stronger Communities**

It was felt that at least one of the indicators was amber because there were a number of actions that were not funded. Mark Turner said that resources are tight at the moment, but we need to be clear what we can achieve within available resources. Peter Brown felt that co-ordination between groups could be improved. Natalia Silver, Chair of the Rural Access Partnership, said that they were linking their action plan with the PCT. The resilience indicator was red as there had been no information provided but there may be activity going on and this needed to be followed up. Lynda Wilcox said that the Participatory budgeting pilot in Hampton Bishop is hoping to be launched across all Parish Councils.

**Action:** Chris Bucknell and Lynda Wilcox to feed information on Participatory Budgeting into CAA.

## **Safer Communities**

Paul Baker explained that there had been a change in the way data was collected and reported for NI 19. Chris Bull asked if this was particular to Herefordshire, Paul Baker said that it reflected a national trend. This change had made it appear there was an increase in offending behaviour. It should be noted that this indicator related to young people who continued to offend rather than new entrants to the system and that the numbers were very small.

Anti-social behaviour is decreasing, but it is felt that meeting the target for NI 21 would be a challenge as it was based around people's perceptions about how well local agencies were dealing with the issues.

Drug users in effective treatment (NI 40) is going well, Herefordshire having less of a drugs issue than an alcohol issue. Re-organisation of the drugs services has been a positive move, bringing units together.

NI 47 - killed and seriously injured (KSI) indicator is red. Mark Turner commented that whilst figures shown on the report were accurate, there had been considerable progress with the new Amey contract putting an emphasis on road safety. Speed limits had an impact but only with compliance, the real issue being enforcement, education and engineering. Paul Baker expressed concerns over the Safer Roads Partnership which sat outside of the Safer Herefordshire group but things seemed to be improving. Natalia Silver asked whether Herefordshire's age profile had an impact on the figures. Mark Turner said possibly, but this was not a definite trend. Chris Bull questioned the targets as Mary-Ann had said there was an improving trend. Mark Turner said it needed some stretch and was still a clear area for improvement. Chris Bull asked if there was a sense that it was the right strategy and there was some improvement. Mark Turner said yes, but they are not complacent.

## **Health**

Herefordshire is below the West Midlands average for alcohol related hospital admissions (NI 39), but figures were going up in all areas.

Mortality rate (NI 121) is the lowest in the West Midlands, but there is a need to look at blood pressure issues.

Smoking (NI 123) failed to reach its 2008/09 target, and an action plan, looking at new ways to address the stopping smoking issue, has been put in place.

NI 130 is an area of concern which has been identified by the CQC.

NI 135 now has an action plan and an improvement is expected.

NI 136 the CQC again has picked up on, there is an action plan and they expect improvement in data.

NI 142, the latest figures are now available (98.25) so this would be green.

Chris Bull said that in summary, areas with no action plan now have one and all areas are being monitored by the PCT and/or Social Care. We can therefore expect to see an improvement in the ratings for these indicators.

Ian Williams agreed that the way the Health and Wellbeing Partnership operated could be improved upon and he would look into this.

### **Children and Young People**

There were no red indicators in this section and it was reported that the NEET indicator (NI 117 was now benefitting from a range of collaborative activities).

### **Economic Development**

Natalia Silver reported that all indicators were blue. There is concern around unemployment figures (NI 152) which are the same as last month but 100% increase on last year. Meeting the targets will be a challenge, but work with Jobcentre plus and Future Jobs Fund should help.

NI 163, the target is 74.9% and the team are confident they will achieve that.

Identifying businesses that are in a position to grow (NI171) is difficult. A new Business Grant, funded through ABG, will be launched next week

NI178 is related to congestion; the target is static and relates to long-term objectives.

Lynda Wilcox explained that they are working on a regional project with Business Link and parishes.

Chris Bucknell explained that NI152 and NI171 are not locked down and may be adjusted at review and refresh.

### **Environment**

Mark July did not have the latest position on the first two indicators (NI 168 & NI 169 roads maintenance). Chris Bull said that the re-negotiated Amey contract should have a positive impact on this.

NI 186 (CO2) is an indicator which is down both to local actions and national policy. Mark July said it could not move forward as it needed a budget and dedicated staff. Chris Bucknell said that if there was no budget more innovative ways of achieving the target needed to be considered. Philippa Lydford reminded the group that this indicator has been allocated some funding through ABG. All partners needed to give Trish March information about what they are doing regarding carbon management in their area. Oliver Goode said that in another area, each partner (as a condition of membership) had to agree to provide key information on CO2. Mark July said that although the figure does not mention the land sector, there is potential to review best practice in carbon management. Chris Bull said that we need to make sure that all current information was available to Herefordshire Partnership.

NI 191 – residual household waste. The latest figure based on April/May data was 114.33, which would make the indicator green. Chris Bull said that the new recycling bins should aid performance.

NI 197 - local sites are the best places for wildlife and geology outside designated sites. As of May 2009 they had reached and exceeded the target and had welcomed use of a modest grant from ABG for this indicator. There are 32 such sites in Herefordshire Council ownership.

**It was agreed that for better flow items 6 and 7 on the agenda (Capital Funding and Area Based Grant) be swapped.**

## **6. Allocation of Area Based Grant funding from 2010**

There was a need to agree how the Area Based Grant for 2010/11 should be allocated early enough to inform the budget setting and service planning cycle. Recommendations needed to be put forward for Board approval with an aim of identifying final allocations by the end of 2009.

Chris Bull explained that the difficulty with ABG is that it is a compilation of existing funding for existing services, including social care grants which have always been part of main stream funding. So any reallocation will affect service delivery.

Ian Williams suggested that part of the process should be dealing with the possibility of not having ABG and the need to look at other areas of funding across the partnership as a whole. There was also potential to be more flexible with the Supporting People Grant moving into the ABG from 2010.

Looking at the lessons learnt from the 2009/10 it was felt that asking people to identify areas where funding could be freed up did not work. The agreed solution of agreeing a 95% guarantee with a 5% flexible allocation had allowed funding to be moved to focus on priorities.

Following discussion the group agreed to work on a percentage which was either the same or larger than 2009/10. Mark Turner queried whether 5% was large enough and whether the group are brave enough to make some unpopular decisions in order to support the priorities, rather than just return funding to where it had originated. Mark Turner suggested that fresh, one-year work should get priority, (with criteria to be considered). Chris Bucknell added that as we were moving into the final year of the LAA we needed to retain the potential to flexibly address underperformance.

Chris Bull said that as part of the reduction in public spend, we can expect ABG to reduce in size. He added that the Partnership should therefore consider other funding streams and non-recurrent expenditure.

It was agreed that a small sub-group consisting of the Chairs of the Policy and Delivery Groups be convened to agree the process. This group would meet either at the end of September or the beginning of October with the aim of reaching agreement in early December. It was agreed that Paul Baker would be included as a representative of the Supporting People Commissioning Board.

**Action:** a meeting to be arranged to discuss the allocation of ABG for 2010/11

**Action:** Chris Bucknell to do a paper to all setting out the implications based on 5% and possibly a slightly higher percentage, but not less.

Richard Quallington said that it would be useful to have information on what has been commissioned to date.

**Action:** Philippa Lydford to provide information on what has been commissioned to Policy and Delivery groups for 2009.

## 7. Capital Funding

Philippa Lydford introduced this item, explaining that it was important to gather the ideas that Policy and Delivery Groups had for the strategic use of the LPSA2 capital funding. A short exercise to gather expressions of interest had been carried out; some groups had not submitted an expression of interest and some projects had come direct to the Partnership Support team rather than being approved through a Policy and Delivery Group. This had resulted in some duplication of projects, for example, several were focused on services and facilities for young people. There was in the region of £1.3 million of capital funding available and it was important to maximise what could be achieved using this funding.

Chris Bull asked the group whether, given a relatively small amount of capital is available, it would be best to invest in one significant project or to split the funding across a range of projects. Proposals needed to be clearly linked with any decisions around ABG and with achievement of the LAA priorities.

It was agreed to discuss the allocation of capital funding at the meeting that was to be arranged to look at ABG. There was concern raised that this may delay the allocation of funding and that some projects may suffer as a result. It was noted that the Grange Court project required £1million match funding if it was to retain its offer of Lottery Funding and a quick decision was required if this funding was not to be lost to the county. This project had been prioritised by the Stronger Communities Group.

**Action:** any projects which were time critical should let Chris Bucknell know.

## 8. Any other business

**Third Sector Review** – The final report had been circulated to the Management Group for approval. There will be a discussion in October about collaboration and co-ordination with a report going to the next Management Group meeting in November.

**Community Engagement Strategy** – this is currently being checked for accuracy by key officers and would then be sent out to the wider partnership for comment.

**Herefordshire Exchange** – An event is being planned for November. Chris Bull said that the principle here was to engage in discussions with organisations that were not part of the Board and Management Group, giving them an opportunity to express their views and influence the way the Partnership worked.

**Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy** – this had been widely circulated for final comments before going to the Board and Cabinet. Everyone is encouraged to comment.

**Police Partnerships Manager** - Mark Turner said that Gaby Wright is now the Police Partnerships Manager, a senior manager in the Police service to help make links with partners.

## 9. Date of next meeting-

27<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30 a.m. Hereford Room, Plough Lane, Hereford