

Minutes of a meeting of the Warwickshire Public Service Board held on 12 March 2008 at Chesford Grange, Kenilworth

Present:

Members of the Public Service Board

Council Leaders:

Alan Farnell - Warwickshire County Council (Chair of Board)
Michael Coker -Warwick District Council
Dennis Harvey – Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Colin Hayfield – North Warwickshire Borough Council
Les Topham– Stratford on Avon District Council

Warwickshire Association of Local Councils – Councillor Vaughan Owen

Learning and Skills Council (C&W) – Kim Thorneywork

CWIC - William Clemmey

Warwickshire Police Authority – Ian Francis

Observers

Chief Superintendent Richard Walton – Metropolitan Police Service
County Councillor Peter Fowler

Officers

District/Borough Council Chief Executives:

Chris Elliott – Warwick District Council
Christine Kerr – Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Paul Lankester – Stratford on Avon District Council
Simon Warren -Rugby Borough Council
John Bird – substitute for Jerry Hutchinson, North
Warwickshire Borough Council

Warwickshire Police Andy Parker representing Keith Bristow)

Warwickshire PCT/ WCC -Tim Davies

County Council Jim Graham – Chief Executive
Graeme Betts – Strategic Director of Adults, Health and
Community,

Marion Davis – Strategic Director Of Children,Young People and Families
Chris Blundell – Resources Directorate
Nick Gower-Johnson – County Partnerships Manager
Julie Sullivan – Corporate Community Safety Manager
Janet Purcell – Member Services Manager
Oliver Winters- Head of Finance
Virginia Rennie- Group Accountant

The Chair welcomed members and in particular welcomed Kim Thorneywork, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council, to her first Meeting.

1	Apologies	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Members of the Board – Louise Bennett (Chamber of Commerce), Craig Humphrey(-Rugby Borough Council) and Bryan Stoten, (Chair of Warwickshire PCT).</p> <p>Apologies were also received from Jacqui Aucott (CWIC), Keith Bristow, (Chief Constable), Alison Hodge (WALC), Jerry Hutchinson (Chief Executive, North Warwickshire BC) David Rose,(Chief Executive, Warwickshire PCT) and Sharon Shattock (GOWM).</p>	
2	Minutes of meeting held on 20 February 2008	
	<p>Resolved</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2008 be agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3.	Allocation of Area Based Grant 2008/09	
	<p>The Chair reminded the Board that the tight timescales this year meant that the Board were faced with the difficult task of recommending allocations of the ABG without the time for studied consideration of bids and without proper alignment with councils' budget setting processes. This was regrettable but unavoidable for this year. The Chair gave assurance that there would be an earlier process for following years, starting in the Autumn.</p> <p>Oliver Winters explained that the majority of the ABG funding is</p>	

comprised of grants the County Council has been receiving for many years and most have significant existing commitments and service plans for how the grant will be used in line with previous spending patterns. These allocations may not necessarily match LAA targets (as they were not designed for this purpose) but the purpose of the ABG is to encourage delivery to local, regional and national priorities, including those of the LAA. There is therefore a need to be mindful of the 35 LAA targets in allocating the funding.

Oliver emphasised that the lateness of funding information from the Government, coupled with the current move between old and new LAA, and old and new indicators, added to the difficulty in allocating the funding. He reminded the board that they had agreed to confirm funding for just one year, so this was a transitional year.

The Board noted that there was £22.063m to allocate in 2008/09 but, if the Board accepted the 'committed' elements, then there was £1.886m remaining as uncommitted funding to allocate in 2008/9.

The Board was invited to consider the allocations, presented in the following categories:

- Existing County Council identified commitments (listed in appendix A and totalling £13.053m).
- Commitments against LAA Pooled Grant elements, listed in Appendix B (totalling £5.260m).
- Uncommitted pooled grant elements –'Safer and Stronger Communities' and 'other' (totalling £0.426m).
- New mandatory commitments in Appendix C (totalling £493m) and previous decisions using uncommitted ABG in Appendix D (totalling £945m).
- Proposals for continuation of existing funding in Appendix E. This totals £1.886 m (as explained above) and relates to grants the County council currently receives and much of it has formed part of service plans before it became part of the ABG.
- Proposals to support delivery of the priorities in the new LAA in Appendix F (totalling £2.907m).

	<p>Councillors Michael Coker and Les Topham expressed their concern that they had had very little time to consider the papers and that, in any case, it was difficult to evaluate the relative worth of the bids. This view was supported by others on the Board who considered it was difficult to assess the bids without knowing how items supported LAA targets and without a sense of the order of priorities. Graeme Betts commented on the difficulty of trying to align the commitments against LAA targets as these elements related to existing funding streams that had not been designed to meet LAA targets.</p> <p>Jim Graham added that it was difficult to disinvest at this point but he undertook to ensure that the board had performance information in future so that the board could assess whether it was getting value for money and whether money should be reallocated. The Chair suggested that all of the areas be looked at and if they were not directed to meeting LAA targets, then they should be funded by organisation itself not through the PSB (and most of this would be for the County).</p> <p>Councillor Colin Hayfield warned that any loss of the 'Supporting People' element that would become part of the ABG in future years, may damage the progress being made in this area. Jim Graham reminded members that the inspection of the service had referred to other issues aside from resourcing and had identified potential for some decommissioning.</p>	
	<p>The Board looked at the individual items in F and E and noted/commented as set out below.</p>	
	<p><u>Appendix F – comments/annotations</u></p>	
	<p><i>LSP Community Funds</i> – This was a new bid to fund 'stronger communities' and cross cutting priorities.</p>	
	<p><i>Active Communities etc</i> – This was new to plug the gap in funding that would end in March (as mentioned at earlier meetings). Chris Elliott referred to discussion at previous meetings when he had emphasised that without this funding, posts and current activity in support of the Stronger Block would be lost. For this reason he considered this (along with the £200k bid under Safer) should be treated as committed.</p>	

	<i>Heart Disease/Diabetes Nuneaton and Bedworth-</i> This is a current LPSA2 project that is on target to receive reward. (i.e. do the work this year to get reward next)	
	<i>Support for Young Carers</i> – County Council is funding around £400k for early intervention. This bid is for separate funding in response to the Health O&S findings. There is a link to other areas for adults and children and could be added to current tender.	
	<i>Anti-bullying</i> – This will be a new indicator in the LAA	
	<i>Families for Health</i> - childhood obesity. A Council priority for North Warwickshire Borough Council	
	<i>Enabling young people to have a say</i> –to maintain participation arrangements and further develop work.	
	<i>Family nurse partnership</i> – This had developed from discussion between Cllr Seccombe, Marion Davis and Bryan Stoten. It was intended to complement a national bid. Although Warwickshire NHS supported it in principle, it felt unable to commit beyond one year.	
	<i>Alcohol Strategy</i> – advice and support – a new bid.	
	<i>Creating the conditions for growth</i> – a new bid for work with businesses and skilled work forces.	
	<i>Carers</i> – Reducing impact of caring on older carers through early intervention and support. (An extension of the bid in appendix E).	
	<i>Narrowing the Gap</i> – a separate paper had been submitted on this (see comments below)	
	<i>Safer Communities</i> – £200K (currently LPSA2 money) This supports intervention and prevention activities, with funding going to each CDRP, focus on drug abuse, alcohol and drugs. This bid had been omitted from the summary in this appendix (but included in the pack of bids).	
	Christine Kerr referred to the separate document on Narrowing the Gap and explained the areas that had been built on since the earlier version of the document put to the Board in February. Additions included: Section 3 Working Across	

	<p>Warwickshire which brought in references to other areas of the County: paragraph 5.5 – on skills and qualifications; new section 12 on long term strategy (incorporating single sheet circulated at the previous meeting); a possible formula for funding allocation at 15; worklessness at page 5 of table and a match funding proposal.</p> <p>Christine commented that the bid for police officers was in line with a specific need identified in the area. She accepted, however, that there was an argument for this being viewed as mainstream funding as it would deal with the consequences of not narrowing the gap, rather than action to narrow the gap. Andy Parker added that, if police were to be provided, they would need to be long term. It was also preferable to have ways of ensuring positive intervention as this then allows other interventions to work. (For example removing known repeat offenders). He added that police officers were allocated according to a formula, with the Nuneaton and Bedworth area getting a large proportion of attention.</p>	
	<p><u>Appendix E –continuation of existing funding levels</u></p> <p><i>Carers</i> – This is a government initiative and Graeme Betts advised that there would be a serious impact if not funded.</p> <p><i>Adults Social Care workforce</i> – This was to support training and ensure standards do not drop.</p> <p><i>Mental Capacity</i> – New statutory duty.</p> <p><i>Mental health services for adults</i> – Government grants increased in recognition of new requirements.</p> <p><i>Choice Advisors</i> – Bid to support office and running costs.</p> <p><i>Education Health Partnerships</i> – For healthy schools programme –staff and running costs.</p> <p><i>Schools Intervention Grant</i> – To support good practice/successful schools to aid recovery of schools in or near special measures.</p> <p><i>Schools Development Grant</i> - This includes support to improvements in KS2 in small schools, training for support staff and summer schools for gifted/talented children.</p>	

	<p><i>Children's Fund</i> – Marion Davis advised that these commissioned services had been reviewed and assessed as providing value for money.</p> <p><i>14-19 Flexible Funding Pot</i> – Marion advised that this would support the new curriculum and diplomas.</p> <p><i>Teenage Pregnancy</i> – This fund was for office expenses and running costs.</p>	
	<p>Jim Graham advised that one option for the Board, given the difficulty in making decisions without the time or depth of information they would wish, was to only fund items for part year and/or to keep some money in reserve. He added that there was an opportunity to allocate funding to collectively start to narrow the gap.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that funding up to £400k be allocated to the Nuneaton and Bedworth LSP narrowing the gap bid and that each of the other four LSPs receive £100k each for the cross cutting community priorities in 'Stronger Communities'. (first item in Appendix F). The remaining £1.006m could then be considered at the next meeting of the Board, based on further information on the bids in E and F (including the Safer bid of £200k that had been omitted from the schedule) and an analysis of how the bids address narrowing the gap.</p> <p>Simon Warren put an alternative proposal to borrow against expected LPSA2 reward grant. Oliver Winters advised that this could be difficult as the Strategic Director of Resources had already signed off a statement on minimum level of reserves and also borrowing would not be allowed for revenue.</p> <p>The Board concluded that it would support the proposal put forward by the Chair as a recommendation to the Council's Cabinet. The Board also considered there should be scrutiny of work funded by the ABG in time to inform the 2009/10 budget round.</p> <p>The Chair also urged all partners to look at any other possible funding that they could tap into.</p> <p>Board Recommendations to the Warwickshire County Council Cabinet:</p>	

	<p>(1) That the spending proposals outlined in Appendices A to D be allocated as set out in the report for 2008/09.</p> <p>(2) That £400,000 be allocated to Nuneaton and Bedworth LSP for 2008/09 only in respect of their Narrowing the Gap bid.</p> <p>(3) That £100,000 be allocated to each of the following LSPs: North Warwickshire, Rugby, Warwick and Stratford, for 2008/09 only against bid one in Appendix F.</p> <p>(4) That further information be obtained in respect of all remaining bids in Appendices E and F on the service implications of not funding the proposals and how the proposed use of the resources addresses Narrowing the Gap before any further decisions on the allocation of the remaining ABG is made.</p> <p>(5) That the bid for Safer Communities for £200,000 be considered alongside all the other bids in Appendix F.</p> <p>(6) That a rigorous joint scrutiny exercise should be carried out in respect of all work funded by the ABG in readiness for the 2009/10 budget round in order to more clearly identify the outcomes achieved through the deployment of these resources.</p> <p>(7) That the scrutiny remit should include the need to identify resources for redirection in favour of known or emerging priorities and that the ABG should not be viewed as a 'funder of last resort'.</p> <p>(8) That the 2009/10 budget cycle should be aligned to that of the County Council and key partner agencies.</p>	
4	Future Meeting Arrangements	
	<p>The board noted the future programme of meetings:</p> <p>Tuesday 15 April – 2.00 p.m. Thursday 26 June 2008 – 10.00 a.m. Tuesday 19 August 2008 – 10.00 a.m.</p>	

The meeting finished at 4.20 pm

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Chair