

BARNSELY FORUM EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th January, 2003

in the Town Hall, Barnsley

Present:

Derek Stafford	Barnsley Chamber of Commerce and Industry (in the Chair)
Frank Carter	Barnsley Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Denise Casbolt	Barnsley Community Safety Partnership
Ailsa Claire	Barnsley Primary Care Trust
Phil Coppard	Barnsley MBC
Terry Dixon	Barnsley MBC
Bob Dyson*	South Yorkshire Police
Graham Gatehouse	Safer and Healthier Communities Goal Group
Pat Howarth	Barnsley Learning Partnership
David Kennedy*	Environment, Housing and Accessibility Goal Group
Vanessa Marshall	Voluntary and Community Sector Network
Jean Potter	Lifelong Learning Goal Group
Graham Sadler	Yorkshire Forward
Alan Sheldon (for Ian Harris)	Job Centre Plus
Joe West*	Barnsley College
Trenton Wiggan	Barnsley Black and Ethnic Minority Initiative
Sylvia Yates	Objective 1

** Denotes attended for part of meeting only*

Supporting:-

John Woodside	Barnsley MBC, Community Planning and Regeneration
Joe Micheli	Barnsley MBC, Community Planning and Regeneration
Gary Salter	Barnsley MBC, Finance Directorate
Eddie Street	Voluntary and Community Sector Network
Ian Turner	Barnsley MBC, Cabinet Support Unit
Sarah Wainwright	Barnsley MBC, Community Planning and Regeneration
Graeme Johnson	Environment, Housing and Accessibility Goal Group

In Attendance:-

Graham Elliott	Barnsley Participation Process Service Users and Carers Development Worker (for item 2)
Diane Wall	Community Empowerment Team (for item 2)
Tony Reeves	Executive Director Housing and Property Services, Barnsley MBC (for item 3)
Graham Riding	Arts Development Manager (for item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Ian Harris, Stephen Houghton and Tom Sheard.

1. **Minutes**

Trenton Wiggan referred to the need to amend minute 9 to reflect the Forum Executive's agreement to consider representation for ethnic minority interests in the forthcoming review of Goal Groups.

With this amendment to minute 9, the minutes of the meeting held on 18th December, 2002 were agreed as a correct record.

2. **Matters Arising**

Matters arising from the minutes were reported as follows:-

Minute 6 – John Woodside confirmed that he had written to those groups which had submitted registrations of interest in relation to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for 2003/04 to explain the process to be used for developing the NRF Programme.

Minute 4 – John Woodside reported that members of the Forum Executive would receive copies of the draft Community Plan by 10th February, 2003 with a request for comments by 7th March, 2003. The draft would then be considered for approval by the Forum Executive on the 19th March, 2003 and be launched formally at the Barnsley Forum meeting on 17th May, 2003.

3. **Social Inclusion Presentation**

Joe Micheli presented a report outlining the role of the Social Inclusion Group, its structures and a networking process which had been developed to support the Social Inclusion process.

Graham Elliott and Diane Wall gave a presentation on the detail of the networking process. Key issues were devising mechanisms so that the agenda of socially excluded groups gained recognition and that the groups were given feedback on the action taken as a result. It was also important to shift the focus of consultation away from presenting the groups with virtually completed documents, in the misplaced expectation that this would result in those groups taking ownership of those documents.

The meeting noted the importance of providing ways in which socially excluded groups could access and influence existing decision making structures, rather than superimposing new structures on top of those which already existed. The Community Summits were considered a useful start in providing links for groups to influence the community planning process, but this needed to be just one component of a network of access arrangements.

The meeting discussed the opportunities which the framework would provide for emphasising the focus on citizenship, in particular the need for citizens to take on responsibility for improving their own well being rather than relying on the statutory agencies. The need to develop an evidence based approach to assessing the value of community development and capacity building work also should not be overlooked. The raw data produced by the networking process undertaken so far would also be of great use to partner agencies.

AGREED:-

- (i) that the role and structures of the Social Inclusion Group as set out in the report be noted;
- (ii) that the Social Inclusion Networking process as described in the presentation be endorsed as a model of good practice for partners to apply in addressing social exclusion;
- (iii) that the raw data gained from the Networking process so far be made available to partner agencies as appropriate.

4. Housing Renewal Pathfinder Presentation

Tony Reeves attended the meeting to give a presentation on the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder project which was part of a national initiative to achieve radical transformation to the housing market across all tenures.

It was expected that in the region of £50m would be available in South Yorkshire over the three year period to undertake a range of interventions in the housing market. The South Yorkshire project was the largest of nine in the Country, with 140,000 properties in North and East Sheffield, North and Central Rotherham and the Dearne Valley. Whilst it was expected that investment would be concentrated in these areas, it was expected that the lessons learned could be applied throughout the whole of South Yorkshire.

The presentation went on to identify particular issues in the area of the Borough covered by the project and set out four early win projects using the initial investment. The meeting noted the progress in developing the structure to run the project and to develop a strategy for South Yorkshire by December, 2003 and a Pathfinder Delivery Plan by April, 2004.

The meeting noted the important links of the project to other strategies and initiatives, not least the Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy, Unitary Development Plan and Regional Economic Strategy. Indeed, it was important that the housing market anticipated the needs of the local economy if the local economy was to thrive. For this reason, there were concerns that the amount of change in the housing market needed to sustain economic growth would not be achievable, given the amount of upheaval this would mean for local people. However, local towns and villages would not be sustainable without this change.

AGREED:-

- (i) that the presentation be received and the Forum Executive receive regular updates as the initiative progresses;
- (ii) that Derek Stafford represent the Local Strategic Partnership on the Housing Market Renewal Board.

5. Local Cultural Strategy Presentation

Graham Riding attended the meeting to give a presentation on the requirements of the Council to establish, in consultation with local stakeholders, a Cultural Strategy for the Borough. The strategy sought to develop a broad definition of culture within which a wide range of other plans and strategies would fit. The strategy identified its relevance to local and regional groups and individuals and set out the objectives of the strategy in terms of providing a framework to develop and co-ordinate culture across the Borough, placing it at the heart of regeneration in the community and releasing the efforts, enthusiasm and aspirations of local people.

The draft Cultural Strategy included a section identifying its relationship to other strategies and plans and particularly to the Community Plan, Local Area Plans and Rethinking Barnsley. The overarching aim for the Strategy was to develop a sustainable inclusive and vibrant cultural life benefiting the whole Borough its citizens and visitors alike.

Following a review of the number of plans and strategies which Local Authorities were required to prepare, a Cultural Strategy would in due course be merged with the Community Plan. In this context, it was all the more important that the objectives in the Plan were taken on board within the Goal Group structure.

Members commented on the importance that the Cultural Strategy reflected the tradition of ethnic minority groups. Indeed, surprise was expressed that the Strategy did not make specific reference to issues of ethnicity. Graham Riding agreed that this should be made more explicit in the document. It also needed to reflect the work which was going on to establish a Multi Cultural Centre for the Borough.

AGREED:-

- (i) that the presentation be received and the item be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting so that members of the Forum Executive can make detailed comments on the strategy;
- (ii) that, in the meantime, members of the Forum Executive make comments to Graham Riding on the strategy.

6. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund 2003/04

Phil Coppard presented a report consulting the Forum Executive on the Council's proposals for use of the unallocated balance of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources in 2003/04, also taking account of an expected underspending on the current year's programme. In line with the Forum Executive's previous discussion, the proposals sought to make a shift in expenditure towards health improvement and proposed continuing to increase the share of resources going to that objective in future years.

The meeting noted that sufficient flexibility had been retained at this stage to meet changing circumstances. Concern was expressed at the proposal within the report to review allocations under the programme in June when the funding for a number of community and voluntary sector projects, which could utilise those resources, came out of funding in March. It was noted that the underspending of £125,000 in 2002/03 was the minimum underspending expected so that the allocations indicated in the report were considered secure.

AGREED:-

- (i) that, as far as the Forum Executive is concerned, the proposed Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Strategy for 2003/04 as contained in the report be approved;
- (ii) that the commitment to increase the proportion of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources devoted to health improvement in 2004/05 and 2005/06 be reaffirmed, with a minimum additional allocation of £500,000 in 2004/05;
- (iii) that review of the programme be undertaken as early as possible, preferably before the end of March, 2003.

7. Objective 1 Progress Report

The meeting received a report giving a brief update on headline points on the Objective 1 Programme and Sylvia Yates commented on recent developments. In particular, expenditure in 2002 had been well on target and it was considered that the spending target for 2003 of £4.5m per month was achievable. Work had now begun on the mid-term evaluation, with the appointment of a consultant to hold stakeholder meetings, but it was too early to predict the likely outcome of the review at this stage. 2003 was considered a critical year, however, with a number of key performance indicators to be achieved.

Tony Kildare had now taken up his post as Director of the South Yorkshire Delivery Vehicle, with an early task for the establishment of a more appropriate name for the organisation. The meeting noted that 23 Community Action Plans were still outstanding across South Yorkshire (6 in Barnsley) but that the Directorate had moved resources across with the aim of hitting the submission deadline of 30th April.

There was more concern about Yorkshire Forward's intention not to match fund three of the priorities 4b Integrated Development Plan including North Barnsley, although it was anticipated that the difficulties being experienced would be ironed out with Yorkshire Forward in the near future. It was also noted that Pioneer Status for the Central area of Barnsley had now been approved.

Trenton Wiggan referred to discussions following on from the last meeting of the Forum Executive about involvement of the voluntary and community sector in task groups, with a need for further discussion between the Local Strategic Partnership, Open Forum and voluntary and community sector on how this could be taken forward. Sylvia Yates commented that she would be presenting a paper to the next Performance Management Board on the task group arrangements which would address these concerns, although she stressed the task orientated, rather than strategic, nature of those groups. Sylvia Yates agreed to meet with voluntary and community sector groups to discuss involvement in the task groups in the context of this paper.

Concern was expressed at the arrangements being put in place by the Learning and Skills Council for tendering of some contracts, despite limitations in the specification as to who could bid. Sylvia Yates commented that this was difficult to avoid if the requirements of the EU Commission and LSC National Office were to be met if projects already appraised were not applicable.

Phil Coppard commented that, as part of their regular meetings, the South Yorkshire Local Authority Chief Executives would be undertaking a detailed review of Priority 1, with particular reference to the area of clusters.

AGREED that the report be noted and regular updates continue to be submitted to the Forum Executive.

8. Community Summits – Update

John Woodside presented a report indicating that the five Community Summits held so far were considered to have been successful. An average number of 75 people had attended each of the Summits, and were generally different people from those who had attended the Area Forums. The biggest benefit seemed to be the bringing together of services and agencies working in the local area and feedback so far had been very positive. John Woodside encouraged members of the Forum Executive to attend for at least part of one of the Summits if at all possible.

AGREED that the progress of the Summits so far be noted.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

Special Meeting (Community Plan and Community Summits) – 19th February, 2003 in the Town Hall

Next ordinary Meeting – 19th March, 2003 at Hilder House.