

Community Budgets Group

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 17th May 2011

Those present	Apologies
<u>Members</u> Lord Michael Bichard (Chair) Chris Guest, DWP (for Mark Fisher) Clive Senior, Allen Review (for Angela Donkin) Dan Gascoyne, Essex (for Jo Killian) David Behan, DH David Prout, DCLG Edward Twiddy, HMT Gareth Davies, OCS Geoff Little, G.Manchester (for Joyce Redfearn) Jonathan Slater, MoJ Justin Partridge, Lincolnshire Police (for Richard Crompton) Lucy Makinson, DCLG Mandie Campbell, HO Matthew Nicholas, JCP Nick Dexter, DCLG Nick Lawrence, DfE Rob Whiteman, LG Group Robyn Fairman, Westminster (for Mike More) Tom Jeffery, DfE <u>Others</u> Jeanette Pugh, DfE Philip Mind, LG Group Justin Vetta, DCLG Secretariat Dorothy Dray, DCLG Secretariat	 Angela Donkin, Allen Review Anne Marie Carrie, Barnardos Jo Killian, Essex John Sinnott, Leicestershire Joyce Redfearn, Wigan Kim Bromley-Derry, NFISB Laura Roberts, Manchester PCT Mark Fisher, DWP Mike Farrar, NHS Confederation Mike More, Westminster Richard Crompton, Lincolnshire Police Sir Bob Kerslake, DCLG Stephen Rimmer, HO Steve Wyler, Locality

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Lord Bichard welcomed those present, including Nick Dexter who succeeds Elizabeth Whatmore and Mandie Campbell who will represent HO until further notice.

1.2 A number of apologies had been received (see above).

2. Actions from meeting on 5 April 2011

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2.2 All the actions from the last meeting were either completed, actively ongoing or on the agenda. Updates on actions were received from DCLG, HO, DH and DfE.

2.3 Lord Victor Adebawale has confirmed that he will attend the next meeting for a discussion on the wider role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Community Budgets. Cabinet Office and DCLG will prepare a paper including an update on the LIS and neighbourhoods work.

ACTION: CO and DCLG to provide a paper to support discussion on the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Community Budgets at the next meeting.

2.4 HO has been following up on police engagement in CB. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) had offered their assistance. HO had engaged with two areas where police were reported as contributing effectively and sitting on relevant boards. HO will continue to tackle incidents of misunderstanding on police engagement in CBs on a case by case basis.

ACTION: HO to liaise with ACPO on highlighting the importance of police engagement in CB. Whitehall champions to report back by next meeting on the extent of police engagement in CB areas.

2.5 DH confirmed that a date in June (13th) had been identified for its workshop for first phase areas. The workshop to explore CBs and how clusters sit together would be run jointly by DH and NHS.

ACTION: DH to notify first phase areas of the June workshop.

2.6 Discussions on the court proceedings project had been held with the London judiciary and HM Courts and Tribunals Service. Further detailed project planning is underway and DfE is looking at how it can support this work.

2.6 The evaluation working group had so far received only 5 responses from the 16 areas to its request for details on areas local evaluation plans in order to aid co-design, support and ensure the overarching element of the evaluation fits and complements local work.

3. Discussion of radical possibilities

3.1 Nick Dexter introduced a discussion of the prospects for taking a new, radical approach to the development of community budgets. Potentially this could cover all public funding in an area. The Group considered the possibility of taking a collaborative co-design approach in one or two areas to develop outcomes, service solutions and a Community Budget comprising all public funding in these areas. Senior officials from agencies in the area and Whitehall might work intensively, over a sustained period, as part of a single team to work this through on a tightly defined timetable. Communities, VCS and private sector would need to be fully engaged and opportunities to devolve and to open up services integral. The output could be an Operational Plan describing how a single budget could be implemented in each place – what would need to happen locally and what would need to be changed centrally – and the outcomes etc.

3.2 In discussion the following points were made:

- This could provide a new approach for how an area might challenge Government for a different way of doing things – and a different policy making approach;
- This could present an opportunity to test a different, thoroughly localist, approach to operationalising the theory, long held by many, that a single budget for a place, used to deliver locally-defined outcomes, could be a better way to drive transformation in local service delivery;

- It would require strong cross-government support, strong political steer and clear ministerial commitment;
- There were tensions around the ability for financial benefits realised from one activity to be used to offset another;
- Need to have integrated public service commissioning supported by integrated funding;
- Would explore the extent to which money can be spent now to save later and what mechanisms are needed to support that – at the moment this is being done department by department;
- Should aim to pool the money at source and test its workability in one or two areas – not repeat work undertaken in Total Place;
- “Who is the commissioner?” needs to be made clear as not all partners have commissioning powers – not all money in an area can be given to the LA;
- This might chime well with the forthcoming Opening Public Services White Paper, expected to set out a framework for driving further decentralisation of funding and services to local authorities, communities and individuals and the opening up of service delivery.

ACTION: DCLG to produce a paper on widening and deepening Community Budgets for the next meeting.

4. Items 3, 4 and 5: Community Budgets Stocktake, Update on 1st Phase and National implementation of Community Budgets for Families with Multiple Problems

4.1 An update was given on learning from a light-touch stock-take exercise on the creation of first phase CBs. The findings suggest that in taking the work forward it is important to have a strong narrative on what a more radical outcome would look like for those areas who want to adopt a broader focus than FMP, clarity on the “offer”, local flexibility on themes and lead-in times, sharing learning across the LG sector with delivery partners and direct access to champions in Whitehall.

4.2 The Group agreed to take discussion of findings of the stocktake, paper 3 (update on first phase) and paper 4 (national implementation of CBs for FMP) together. The papers were accepted and the following points were made in discussion:

- The Prime Minister had set out his ambition to turn around the lives of the most problematic families. The Group needed to consider how to help realise that;
- Work is still in hand to unlock progress in first phase 16 - Baroness Hanham’s Group was critical;
- Baroness Hanham’s group is working to address issues around data sharing, innovative finance, assessment simplification and governance and leadership. Work leads on each of these work strands aim to identify problems and potential solutions on each of these issues for further consideration and development of proposals for ministers;
- Need to link with Louise Casey’s problem families review;
- Worth remembering (and restating) why Community Budgets and Families with Multiple Problems are linked i.e. the degree of duplication and overlaps;
- Scaling up is about the assistance offered and unlocking new finance. It is not just about mechanisms, but also how other forms of investment take place;

- If the LA is only able to realise savings from its own budgets it will take longer than if savings can be shared across the board;
- Attraction for areas is the associated freedoms and flexibilities that CB might offer to enable them to support Families with Multiple Problems;
- LG Group has been thinking about what sector-led support can be offered by the first phase 16 to help spread good practice and support others in taking this agenda forward;
- A joint DfE and LG Group offer of support to areas should also reflect wider thinking, evidence and build in Allen Review place examples to provide a total picture of key components of the project and prospects for meeting the PMs ambition on Families with Multiple Problems

ACTION DCLG to provide a paper for the next meeting on matters arising in the 4 work strands being taking forward in Baroness Hanham's Group.

ACTION LG Group working with DfE and DCLG to provide for the next meeting a 'joint' offer to areas on rollout for Community Budgets for Families with Multiple Problems.

6. Update on Professor Munro's Review

6.1 DfE outlined the findings from Professor Eileen Munro's review into frontline child protection practice. Professor Munro concludes that a one-size-fits-all approach to child protection is preventing local areas from focusing on the child. The recommendations signal a radical shift from previous reforms that resulted in a tick-box culture and a loss of focus on the needs of the child rather than on what the end result has been for children themselves. It echoes LG Group calls for targets and red tape to be scrapped and frontline social workers to regain the freedom to decide what is best for children. The full report published on 10 May can be downloaded at <http://www.education.gov.uk/munroreview>

7. Any Other Business

7.1 The House of Commons rises for recess on 19 July and the House of Lords rises on 20 July. The next meeting of the group on 20 June will be the last opportunity to raise issues with Baroness Hanham's group before the summer.

7.2 DH considering national NHS reforms and what this means for budget sharing. DH to confirm suitable timing for provision of an update to the group on national NHS reforms and any emerging thinking on what this means for budget sharing, and sharing identified good practice on GP/LA engagement.

20 May
DCLG Secretariat