

Community Budgets Group

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 17 March 2011

Those present:	Apologies:
<p><u>Members</u></p> <p>Sir Bob Kerslake DCLG (Acting Chair)</p> <p>David Behan DH</p> <p>James Binks HMT (for Edward Twiddy)</p> <p>David Clarke HO (for Peter Makeham)</p> <p>Mark Fisher DWP</p> <p>Tom Jeffery DfE</p> <p>Joanna Killian Essex CC</p> <p>Nick Lawrence DfE</p> <p>Lucy Makinson DCLG</p> <p>Mike More Westminster</p> <p>Matthew Nicholas JCP</p> <p>David Prout DCLG</p> <p>Joyce Redfearn Wigan</p> <p>Clive Senior CO (for Angela Donkin)</p> <p>John Sinnott Leicestershire</p> <p>Jonathan Slater MoJ</p> <p>Rob Whiteman LG Group</p> <p>Steve Wyler Development Trusts Association</p> <p><u>Other</u></p> <p>Rachel Lundy DCLG Secretariat</p> <p>Philip Mind LG Group</p> <p>Justin Vetta DCLG Secretariat</p> <p>Elizabeth Whatmore DCLG</p>	<p>Lord Michael Bichard</p> <p>Kim Bromley-Derry NFISB</p> <p>Anne-Marie Carrie Barnardos</p> <p>Richard Crompton Lincolnshire Police</p> <p>Gareth Davies OCS</p> <p>Angela Donkin CO (Allen Review team)</p> <p>Mike Farrar SHA</p> <p>Peter Makeham HO</p> <p>Laura Roberts Manchester PCT</p> <p>Edward Twiddy HM Treasury</p>

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Sir Bob Kerslake, Acting Chair, welcomed those present, particularly Joanna Killian and Joyce Redfearn, both attending their first Community Budgets Group meeting.

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

Item 2: Actions from meeting on 28 February 2011

2.1 All the actions from the last meeting were either completed, actively ongoing, or would be discussed at this meeting.

2.2 It had not been possible for the LG Group to convene places in advance of this meeting. However, a series of events were now planned for Leaders, Chief Executives and practitioners. These would primarily aim to raise ambition and discuss the appetite for pooling.

Item 3: Critical matters to be aware of since papers were issued

3.1 Ministers had met with Leaders on 3 March. There would be a further meeting, involving Ministers from across Government, on 24 March. In addition, Baroness Hanham would hold regular meetings with a sub-set of places. The first of these would take place before recess.

3.2 The main issue raised at the meeting was barriers. It would be crucial for the LG Group events to help places articulate the detailed specifics of these.

3.3 The DCLG Secretary of State planned to announce that the 16 1st phase Community Budgets were in place at a conference on 29 March.

Item 4: Places proposals on number of families which will be supported

4.1 The number of families that places planned to support varied. The challenge would be how to identify what would help places reach their ambition.

4.2 In discussion the following points were made -

- Variances between places could be due to issues with identifying families; different starting points; problems with the timeframe; lack of partnership commitment or other;
- Many places predicted an increased trajectory in the future but their initial figures were cautious;

- It would be beneficial to clarify the definitions used to ensure consistency. DfE would take this forward;
- Places needed to set out figures to show what they were going to do and that Community Budgets had potential. Whitehall Champions, supported by the LG Group, should talk to places to help sharpen these up.

ACTION Whitehall Champions, supported by the LG Group, to work with places to clarify the number of families to be supported (initially over the SR period) to encourage ambition and find out what would help places to be more ambitious.

ACTION DfE to work with the LG Group on statistics and definitions linked to the Prime Minister's ambitions.

Item 5: Asks of Whitehall

5.1 Progress had been made in resolving the asks made of Whitehall by places. However, a number of asks were still outstanding and it was essential that these were dealt with positively.

5.2 The Group discussed the asks of each department:

DfE

5.3 DfE confirmed it would work with places and departments on all these issues and would confirm their position before the Ministerial meeting on 24 March.

5.4 There was nothing to prevent schools engaging in Community Budgets in respect of pooling funding and there were clear potential benefits. DfE would report back their Minister's response on how DfE will encourage schools to engage with Community Budgets.

5.5 On common assessment, there was an interface with the recently published Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and the Munro review. DfE was committed to extending the Munro flexibilities and will invite Swindon and other areas asking for additional flexibilities into the pilot to explore this. However, it was unlikely that this would extend to someone other than a social worker conducting an assessment with a child at risk.

5.6 Speeding up care procedures in courts – DfE and MoJ will work with West London boroughs to see what can be done.

ACTION DfE to report back to before 24 March.

DH

5.7 On NHS cluster arrangements, DH explained their purpose was to provide continuity and clarity on responsibility and accountability during the period of transition from PCTs to GP Consortia. DH clarified that PCTs are NHS organisations in respect of governance and legal status.

5.8 Where there were concerns in respect of clustering, DH consider that the local authority should discuss this with the SHA as there are a variety of different legal arrangements which underpin integration and which are best considered locally. If areas were unable to reach a local resolution, DH would consider, as a last resort, to follow this up with them on an individual basis.

5.9 DH agreed (subject to checking) to circulate a copy of the letters setting out the agreed position reached by NE Lincolnshire to help others consider possible local solutions. DH also agreed to share a policy paper on data / information sharing with places.

5.10 In discussion, the following points were made -

- There was no single answer on clustering. Some areas felt clustering was not necessarily a significant barrier and could be useful as a vehicle for joint commissioning;
- However, other areas were struggling and felt the manifestation of clustering was damaging existing integration;
- Data sharing was recognised as a cross-cutting issue. This would need to be discussed further at the LG events.

ACTION DH to circulate a copy of the agreed position on integrated arrangements reached by NE Lincolnshire.

ACTION If necessary, DH to work with areas unable to reach a local resolution on an individual basis.

ACTION DH to share a policy paper on data / information sharing with places.

DWP

5.11 DWP would continue to work with places. DWP was happy to participate in any workshops about data sharing.

5.12 On the work programme, contractors will be identified in April and in place from Summer. Contractors will be encouraged to engage locally and can pool funds. DWP will engage with contractors if areas are unable to make progress in developing collaborative approaches to services.

5.13 It was confirmed that ESF funding could not be pooled at source (but see position on London below). DWP indicated that they would ensure that

the contract approach would enable integrated service design and delivery at local level. LG would also be involved in identifying the families to be supported through ESF funded services. DWP would engage LG in developing their contract approach. DWP would write to preferred partners in CB areas to set out the expectations that they will collaborate in Community Budgets and to encourage them to work with local agencies.

5.14 In London, elements of ESF goes direct to London Councils and there was an opportunity for the DWP ESF funding around families to be added into this funding stream – effectively delivering pooling at source. DWP agreed to explore with Westminster how this could be done.

ACTION DWP would write to preferred partners in CB areas to set out the expectations on pooling ESF and encourage partnership working with local agencies.

ACTION DWP to engage with contractors on an individual basis in areas where there were problems.

ACTION DWP agreed to work with Westminster to explore how additional ESF funding in London for families can be added into the London Councils ESF funding stream to deliver pooling at source.

JCP

5.15 JCP confirmed that their discretionary funding could be pooled.

5.16 JCP confirmed that they were willing and keen to be partners in delivery and that this would support them in pooling discretionary funding around worklessness outcomes.

ACTION areas to ensure they are engaging JCP in their partnerships

MoJ

5.17 MoJ confirmed that NOMs and Probation could pool budgets. They were also happy for areas to take part in the Financial Incentive Model in future years (2012/13 onwards) based on strong, evidenced, proposals.

HO

5.18 HO undertook to find communication routes to encourage the police to engage with local partners on Community Budgets and to report back.

ACTION – HO to identify how to encourage the police to engage better with Community Budgets.

ACTION MoJ / HO to look into Leicestershire's request to de-ringfence funding for drugs & alcohol programmes.

Underpinning issues

5.19 The Group agreed that data sharing and innovative financing should form co-design workstreams going on beyond April.

Summary

5.20 DCLG would create a single list of all outstanding asks for Whitehall Champions to support them in driving progress. The outcome of this work would be included in letters to each area summarising progress on their Community Budget.

ACTION DCLG to compile a list of all outstanding asks from areas.

ACTION Whitehall Champions to send responses about asks to DCLG by 24 March (for those issues discussed above). For any new issues, responses should be returned as soon as possible thereafter.

Item 6: ESF Funding

6.1 ESF funding had been discussed under the previous item on Asks of Whitehall.

Item 7: DfE Exemplar project and investment funding proposals and timeline

7.1 Five applications for the investment fund had been received. The Group agreed that DfE should recommend to Ministers that these should be approved. The LG Group offered to convene a working group to support these areas. DfE would provide analytical support.

7.2 The Group discussed the prioritisation of applications from areas to run exemplar projects -

- Generally, the Group agreed with the suggested approach to exemplar funding and the prioritisation put forward by DfE;
- Queries were raised about the possible inclusion of a late bid from Greater Manchester, and the possibility of funding some elements of the Lewisham bid. Subject to further consideration of these points, DfE

would put these recommendations to Ministers;

- The importance of encouraging the involvement of the voluntary sector was noted.

ACTION DfE to recommend to Ministers that five applications for the investment fund should be approved.

ACTION LG Group to convene working group to support areas receiving investment funding.

ACTION DfE to provide analytical support to LG Group supporting areas receiving investment funding.

ACTION DfE to seek Ministerial approval for exemplar projects.

Item 8: Future work programme of Community Budgets Group

8.1 Due to time constraints, it was agreed that this item would be discussed at the next meeting.

Item 9: Future Meetings

9.1 The next meeting would take place at **9.30am on Tuesday 5 April**.

Item 10: Any Other Business

10.1 It was agreed that the DCLG Secretary of State should sign off proposals from areas.

ACTION DCLG SoS to sign off proposals from areas.