

Project Steering Group Meeting

12th June 2008 10.00 am – 1:00pm
Worcester County Council, Room F2-11



Present: Carole Brown (Worcester City) Cllr. David Clarke (Worcester City), Kevin Dicks (Bromsgrove DC), Helen Dolloway (Worcester City) Glyn Edwards (WCC), Cllr Philip Gretton (WCC), Angie Heighway (Redditch BC) Lin Hunt (WCC), Peter Jones (Wyre Forest DC), Cllr Robin King (Redditch BC), Rukhsana Koser (WCC), Fiona Scott (Bromsgrove DC) Cllr. Audrey Steel (Wychavon DC), John Waring (Malvern Hills DC) Ted Wood (WM CofE) and Waqa Azmi (Waterhouse Consultants)

Apologies: Richard Keble (Worcestershire County Council), Robin Mace (Wychavon DC), and Cllr Nathan Desmond (Wyre Forest DC), Bev Houghton Redditch BC, Tina Clark (Malvern Hills DC), Rachael Gill (Wyre Forest DC)

Item No	Item and Summary of Discussion	Decision	Action By and When	✓ x
1.	Welcome and Introductions	AS welcomed everyone to the meeting		
2.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st April 2008 Matters arising	Agreed as a true record None		✓
3.	Waterhouse Consultants Progress Report			
	<p>Waqa Azmi provided an update on the Project.</p> <p>March – April - planning April – May - primary research / focus groups / on line surveys and training needs May – June - responding to primary research / chase up key people not interviewed yet.</p> <p>June – July - write up report with first draft available 25th June. July – Final report including graphics to be presented 25th July.</p> <p>AS asked if the report would include a breakdown of all groups contacted. WA advised it would be in the appendix.</p> <p>KD asked if results of survey would be anonymous (he had promised those taking part that it would be). WA stated that RK would have the full details but the information would be not published. RK advised that the interview transcripts would also not be made public.</p>			



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	<p>AS thanked WA for his progress report and look forward to receiving the full report on the 25th July.</p> <p>WA also expressed his thanks to all Cllrs and officers who were involved in this exercise.</p>	<p>Full report to be presented on 25th July 2007</p> <p>Noted</p>		<p>✓</p>
4.	Highlight Report			
	<p>Launch Event Primary Research completed Appointed Administrator – Claire Mee (previous job was with the Highways Agency)</p> <p>Completed Deliverables Launch Event – Keynote speakers, performance from Blessed Edward, photographs on web however press release has not as yet been picked up. May be released again at a later date.</p> <p>Milestones Completed Launch Completed Primary Research First Newsletter released Administrator position filled</p> <p>70 people attended the launch. Evaluation sheets show positive feedback. 41 Commitment sheets returned. These will be circulated to each delegate.</p> <p>It was noted that the Speakers, Angela Mason and Paul Goodman MP were both impressed with the way in which the County and the Districts were working well together.</p> <p>KD stated it was good to see that the key players were in attendance from each of the Councils as he felt that this was important.</p> <p>JW apologised for the low turnout from his District and he requested Commitment sheets be sent which he will circulate to the appropriate people for them to complete and return.</p>	<p>Press released to be re-released</p> <p>Commitments to be circulated. Contact in 3 months to follow up that pledges made are being acted upon.</p> <p>Powerpoint to be circulated</p> <p>RK/LH</p>	<p>LH RK Sept 08</p> <p>LH</p>	<p>✓</p>



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	<p>A graph was produced which showed “How people Felt” about the launch. 20 felt positive, 20 were motivated. 1 was frustrated and 1 was confused. No-one left dissatisfied or bored.</p> <p>On reflection PG thought the whole event generated high enthusiasm however too many elements were being discussed. For example, 6 strands of equality or Angela Mason’s 10 dimensions. PG felt this could cause people to lose focus. In everything we do we are trying to “iron out” any inequality in our services.</p> <p>It was suggested that RK issue a one page reminder of what Equality and Diversity is all about. There is no national focussed approach. What is available is confusing – could it be adapted to put a local emphasis on it.</p> <p>Mapping Exercise may give focus / key actions.</p>	<p>RK to contact Waterhouse and ask WA to write report which defines terminology (2 pages – easy read) to help move this forward.</p>	<p>RK July 08</p>	
5	Project Plans			
	Mapping			
	<p>Background – mapping exercise across Worcestershire to understand ethnic and gender geo-density and create a benchmark to move forward from.</p> <p>To evaluate equality and diversity structures in all councils, include an analysis of managers / employees’ understanding.</p> <p>The findings of this exercise to be presented to the PMT by Waterhouse on 7th July and will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal structures and practices within partner organisations - Detailed GAP analysis with recommendations to support Race, Disability and Gender requirements - Partner by partner implementation plan (including timescales) - Training needs analysis - Creation of a sustainability 	<p>The draft report circulated to the PMT by 25th June. 7th July – check report has met the tender specification</p>	<p>RK 25.7.08 ALL 7.6.08</p>	



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	<p>recommendation report.</p> <p>Full report presented to PSG/PMT 25th July. Each partner to action recommendations to ensure timescales and resources are available.</p> <p>KD suggested involving those who had been part of the external consultations.</p> <p>AH stated each Council carry out an impact assessment regarding resource implications.</p> <p>CB said it was imperative that all partners work to similar timescales – this would ensure fitting into the wider scheme.</p> <p>AH suggested a report template be created to ensure consistency.</p> <p>Community Engagement Participation strategy developed (referred to in the Equality standard) Community engagement events (already covered by Waterhouse) Establish 3 community advisory groups within the Districts. Annual consultation events – October Organise process for targeted work experience.</p> <p>Events have previously been held in Worcester, Redditch and Wyre Forest. Partnership approach involving other public sectors – MHDC/BDC/WDC to advise on how they wish to proceed. County and Districts to work together to set up these events.</p> <p>KD stated that the communities in Redditch and Bromsgrove are very different therefore brief needs to be very clear.</p> <p>He confirmed he would like to hold an event, however, did it have to be in October. RK advised they could be flexible and they could leave it until early</p>	<p>Each organisation to implement report's findings.</p> <p>PSG/PMT members to work through next stage plans and their implementation.</p> <p>Template to be developed.</p> <p>Malvern Hills DC, Bromsgrove DC and Wychavon District Council to confirm how they wish to proceed.</p> <p>RK to put schedule together to show when the events will be.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>HD/RK</p> <p>JW/KD/AS</p>	



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	<p>next year. It was suggested that perhaps 3 events were held in October and 3 a few months later. Worcester and Wyre Forest confirmed at this point that they would like theirs in October 08.</p> <p>In April 08 it was suggested we approach Waterhouse regarding the participation strategy, however this has not been done and the Group were asked how they wish to proceed. Should it go out to tender? £8K budget available.</p> <p>It was asked how the group are going to be involved in the delivery of the standards. HD advised she has a set of the strategies and will circulate.</p> <p>PJ mentioned the SES draft scheme. Do we wish to use this to get a flavour of whether we are doing the right things? PSG to let their PMT member know what they think the objectives will be.</p>	<p>HD/RK to investigate what strategies are in place prior to going to tender.</p> <p>If suitable to our County's adapt instead of going to tender.</p>	<p>RK</p> <p>HD/RK July 08</p>	
	<p>Capacity Building Stage Plan</p>			
	<p>FS reported that there are two elements to the plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work out a plan for each of the partners to validate their achievements against the LGES. - Complete an equality assessment for the Labour market covering all Districts. <p>From the evidence so far only the County has attained Level 3.</p> <p>There are 2 ways in which to obtain validation, one is through Dialogue (part of iDEA – a more formal report) or alternatively through a Peer Assessment (this is for Level 3 only).</p> <p>The question was asked what is the difference between the two. FS advised that there is no difference, other than cost – Dialogue being more expensive, as both are equally valid. This validation would only last 3 years. She added that the Levels could go down as well as up.</p>	<p>Each partner to confirm what level they are currently at.</p>	<p>ALL asap</p>	

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	<p>With the new standards due to be approved by April 09 it was asked whether we are validated under the old scheme or whether we should wait until the new (and perhaps more easier to achieve) standards came into force. HD stated that she would like WC to be validated using the new levels.</p> <p>JW asked what was the likelihood of the introduction of the new standards being delayed. FS advised that although she could not confirm one way or the other she did believe they would be.</p> <p>KD advised he would like to endorse the Dialogue route. He believed that if levels were not attained then report would show what was needed to achieve the level. CB asked if there would be a difference in cost between obtaining the old or new standard.</p> <p>RK Advised that the budget had allowed £20K for validations and £10K for the peer review.</p> <p>AS requested this item be put on the Agenda – Dialogue, additional cost.</p> <p>FS reported that the second element would be implementation of equality assessment of local labour market.</p> <p>Bromsgrove/Redditch/Worcestershire and Wyre Forest completed.</p> <p>Key assessment in place to support validation. Obtain one for whole of the county that benefits everyone. CB asked if other counties had a template in place that could be utilised. FS advised that there is no standard template as those she has seen have all been different.</p> <p>EW suggested group obtain an interpretation of this standard. FS thought a Dialogue member is</p>	<p>RK to review contents of new Equality Standard and report back to PSG/PMT</p> <p>RK add as Agenda item</p>		



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	<p>approached to explain the standard to ensure the right outcome. HD explained from her experience in attempting to contact a Dialogue member this may prove difficult.</p> <p>AS requested the Group gather as much information as possible regarding this standard to enable us to go forward from there.</p>			
	Training Element			
	<p>PJ advised their remit was to devise a diversity training programme. He stated that from WFDC perspective this was not only important within the organisation but outside too.</p> <p>The budget had set aside £49K for training however this was now less £6K as the training needs analysis had been completed.</p> <p>WFDC were tasked with producing a training strategy by October 2008. A train the trainer programme would play a key part of this to ensure training continues. This to be consistent across all authorities – compare notes / share resources.</p> <p>TNA – this will be based on Waterhouse’s report.</p> <p>Training Materials – a tender exercise has been carried out which resulted in 51 enquiries from multi media producers.</p> <p>The training programme will run alongside Safeguarding children as they are complementary. There will be more targeted training – individual element for one off training events.</p> <p>At the launch it was mentioned that equality and diversity training should be mandatory for all councillors. JW advised that in order to do this the constitution would need to be changed – only through group leaders can training be enforced. It</p>			



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	<p>was suggested that perhaps this could be done as part of the induction process – explain to Cllrs the “bigger picture” and why we are doing this. Raise awareness prior to more detailed practice.</p> <p>CB stated that specific training does not appeal to Cllrs therefore could it be incorporated into something else – start meeting half hour earlier to include E&D training for example. AS stated a theatre Group attracted more attendees and has proved effective, however it was expensive.</p> <p>Training programme has to be practical and realistic – fit into the wider view. RK advised there would be a wide of training materials.</p> <p>EW explained that although money has to be spent by March 09, the project can continue. Why not start activities that can be started and plan those that cannot as yet.</p>			
	<p>Communication Plan</p>			
	<p>The main element would be to produce a DVD. RK requested that interviews from each District’s representative be included.</p> <p>TW stated that from the plan provided by RM it was not clear what the contents of the DVD would be and how it would be delivered.</p> <p>AH stated that RBC had commissioned a DVD (BBC actually produced it). From their experience it was necessary to plan the DVD second by second, carefully consider the opening shots. In fact the entire DVD script needed very careful planning if it was to be effective in getting the message across.</p> <p>County and Districts’ involvement extremely important as different from each authority’s perspective.</p>	<p>AS to speak to RM and ask him to expand on this element.</p>	<p>AS 12.6.08</p>	



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	<p>PG suggested that the opening 5 minutes relate to the County then 5 minutes for each District (6 different DVDs).</p> <p>KD requested in depth specification needed for DVD. CB pointed out that DVD was due to go out to tender within the next few days. EW requested this was not done until specification had been agreed.</p> <p>It was requested that the specification also be sent to each authority's communications team for their input.</p>	<p>RM to provide in depth specification and circulate to PSG/PMT members for their approval of content prior to going out to tender (note procurement rules will apply in this instance).</p>	<p>RM July 08</p>	
	<p>Risk Management</p>			
	<p>GE advised that currently there were 2 reds, 4 ambers and 15 greens using the traffic method of reporting.</p> <p>The first red involved changes to the PSG/PMT which would cause loss of momentum.</p> <p>JW explained that a temporary replacement on the PMT had been recruited to cover sick leave. AH advised that a temporary replacement had also been found who would be available for a period of 16 weeks to cover RBC element of the project.</p> <p>The second was the change in the equality standard itself – how would it affect the sustainability of the project. Was there any possibility of holding some of the funding back as a reserve to revise something later on should this prove necessary.</p> <p>The 4 ambers were Progress slipping – capacity issues PSGT not fully represented at meetings Partnership involvement decreasing Lack of admin support.</p> <p>GE reported that the project was on target although he was aware the money had to be spent by March 2009. It is important</p>	<p>EW to advise on whether this would be acceptable.</p>	<p>EW asap</p>	

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	<p>that the Red risks are resolved sufficiently to become amber.</p> <p>EW stated that plans that can be achieved need to be in place and show end as March 09.</p>			
6	Next Key Steps			
	<p>RK reported that project quality assurance had no issues.</p> <p>Time spent on project has increased as people are now doing a lot more than first envisaged, therefore this risk had increased to amber although this would not affect the overall achievability.</p> <p>Change request. Further discussions necessary therefore no decision made today.</p>	To be added to next PSG / PMT meeting Agenda	7 th /25 th July 08	
7	Any Other Business			
	None			
	<p>Date of next meetings</p> <p>Project Management Team - 7th July 08 Wyre Forest District Council 10am – 2pm</p> <p>Joint PSG/PMT – 25th July 2008 WCC – Redditch Room 10am – 1pm</p> <p>Project Steering Group – 14th August 08 WCC Room F2-11,</p>			

