

ITEM 6

Minutes of the Camden Local Strategic Partnership Thursday 10 December 2009, 10:30am, Camden Town Hall

Present:

- Cllr Keith Moffitt (Chair of LSP), London Borough of Camden, Leader
- Stephen Jordan, London & Continental Stations and Property, Managing Director
- Mick Hickey, Job Centre Plus, External Relations Manager – Central London District
- Simone Hensby, Camden Community Empowerment Network (Chair) and Voluntary Action Camden
- Sarah Elie, Camden Community Empowerment Network and Somerstown Community Association
- Moira Gibb, London Borough of Camden, Chief Executive
- Dr Quentin Sandifer, NHS Camden and London Borough of Camden, Director of Public Health
- Chris Shaw, Camden Town Unlimited, Chair
- Kevin Munslow, The Holborn Partnership, Vice Chair
- Peter Ward, Camden Community and Police Consultative Group (CCPCG) – deputising for Shelagh O'Connor and Pat Stack

Also in attendance:

- Jackie Barry-Purssell, Audit Commission, CAA Lead for Camden
- Omar Ralph, Government Office for London, Locality Manager – North London
- Sarah Mullen, London Borough of Camden, Assistant Chief Executive
- Finneguala O'Brien, London Borough of Camden, head of Strategy and Performance
- Jonathan Mills, London Borough of Camden, Interim Head of Performance
- Mary Burguieres, London Borough of Camden, Head of Policy
- Yoav Gordon, London Borough of Camden, Senior Policy Officer

1. Introduction and Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Andrew Marshall, Dr Mark Atkinson, Dominic Clout, Karen Wilson, Professor David Latchman, Pat Stack, Shelagh O'Connor and Ann Baxter.
- 1.2 The Chair informed the LSP that Richard Bell from the Learning and Skills Council has now stood down from the LSP. Richard is taking up a new role in the new Skills Funding Agency, leading the team responsible for City and East London. The Chair thanked Richard for his contributions over the last few years to the work of the LSP.
- 1.3 The Chair then took the opportunity to reflect on what has been a very busy and successful year for the LSP. In early 2009 a recession seminar was held which was a strong example of the LSP working at its best and which provided a robust analysis of the impact of the recession and where further support could have the greatest effect. The seminar was a firm foundation which the Council drew on in committing £6m to Camden's Recession Recovery Fund.
- 1.4 The LSP also took part in a number of seminars to look at how we can plan collectively to meet the borough's infrastructure needs to 2020 and beyond, and how we can help Camden's culture and creative industries to thrive, and most recently how we are progressing in making Camden a borough of opportunity for all.
- 1.5 In addition to the seminars, the LSP had a number of business meetings which have enabled the partnership to maintain oversight on Camden's LAA and the developments taking place in the thematic partnerships. In addition to this the business meetings have been used to contribute to our outstanding CAA evaluation, supported the new Climate Change Alliance to grow from strength to strength and helped take the Camden Compact forward.

2 CAA National Picture

- 2.1 Jackie Barry-Purssell introduced her presentation by informing the LSP that Camden had received a number of positive results in their CAA assessment including 2 green flags for older people services and community safety. Jackie then proceeded to give an overview of the CAA picture across London.

- 2.2 The CAA provides a new framework that is significantly different from the preceding framework with the Oneplace website now providing data on a range of local services and their level of performance. On its first day over 50,000 people accessed the site.
- 2.3 The new site consider both the performance of the council and the wider place, providing red flags as indicators of which areas need further support of possible interventions and green flags for areas of outstanding and innovative practice.
- 2.4 Nationally most of the green flags are located in London and most of the reds are located in the North West of England. Within London, 22 green flags have been awarded this year with the majority (6) around community engagement and cohesion as well as in the areas of environment and climate change, children and young people and crime. A number of boroughs have received green flags for their work around reducing levels of crime including Camden, Kensington and Chelsea and Kingston.
- 2.5 Within London, 5 red flags have been issued in the areas of meeting housing need (2) which has been seen as both a local and national challenge. Health inequalities have also resulted in one red flag being issued and reflect how the inequalities are being addressed rather than that they exist at all.
- 2.6 Nationally there has been some exceptional work around sustainability, crime and regeneration as well as access to key services. Camden's organisational assessment has achieved a level 4 compared to the majority of councils only receiving a level two or three.
- 2.7 The Chair thanked Jackie for her presentation and noted that the final announcement of the CAA result seemed a fitting subject for the final LSP business meeting of the year. The Chair thanked partners for their contribution and noted that the two green flags could only have been achieved by strong partnership working. The Chair then invited Mora Gibb to address the LSP on the CAA process.
- 2.8 Moira informed the LSP that it had been pleasing to achieve the result which Camden had now received, particularly the two green flags and recognition of the levels of innovation that exist in the delivery of services in Camden.
- 2.9 Moira also made reference to her recently published article in the Local Government Chronicle which suggested that the Audit Commission needs to give further consideration to the burden of inspection that is posed by CAA

and that a number of other councils had already indicated their plans to withdraw from the CAA process in 2010 due to its excessive burdens.

- 2.10 The CAA process needs to be less demanding on the time of services; the current perception is that this has yet to be achieved. Unlike its CPA predecessor the CAA process feels like an ongoing activity and in light of the savings and resources that will need to be recognised in future years the issue of proportionality needs to be addressed.

3 Responding to the recession in Camden

- 3.1 Sarah Mullen introduced the recession dashboard, and informed the LSP that key data provided in the report covers the period for October and November 2009.
- 3.2 Reviewing activity over the last 12 months, the major impact of the recession has been on levels of unemployment particularly amongst young adults (16-24). This group has seen a significant increase in JSA claims during 2009, although from a very low base at the start of the recession. The data also indicates reductions in planning applications and search fees, an indication of less development activity in the borough and reduced council income.
- 3.3 There has not been an overall increase in issues such as crime and levels of free school meals, despite expectations that the recession would have an impact.
- 3.4 The dashboard has proven useful in testing expectations about the impacts of the recession and helping to identify areas where intervention was not needed freeing up capacity to focus on other areas. It was proposed that the LSP continue to monitor the consequences of recession and public spending squeeze.
- 3.5 The Leader thanked Sarah for her presentation and raised the issue of business rates, which had recently been reset by national government. He informed the LSP that local Camden businesses are now getting new business rate notifications with some 33% of them paying more. In the current economic climate, many companies are saying that they are currently doing their best just to survive and higher rates are likely to lead to further cuts and job losses during these difficult times.
- 3.6 Peter Ward raised the issue of police weeks of action particularly in the area of St Silas where business is putting considerable effort into improving the

- local area. However much of this can be undone by the existence of a few empty shops. Can the council offset this by reducing rents in certain areas to support start up businesses? The Chair recognised this issue and reminded the LSP that a lot of work had been done to support pop up shops.
- 3.7 Angela McKeever informed the LSP that a new town strategy is currently being developed with the principle of coordinating council services and how local businesses can communicate with them. The council will also be running a series of initiatives across smaller town centres.
- 3.8 Chris Shaw agreed that the dashboard was a useful document and that Camden was one of the first boroughs to collect and analyse such data. CTU and the Council are working well together including supporting pop up business places. Press coverage has been very positive and we should continue to support the initiative, rolling pop ups out more widely in Camden. There has been some good practice already underway in the USA in reviving run down areas.
- 3.9 Stephen Jordan raised the issue of how public finances have been used to ameliorate the impact of recession, filling the gap left by the collapse of banks and private financing. But the time is coming when that will need to be paid back, made more difficult by a much lower tax base.
- 3.10 Simone Hensby informed the LSP that there was some anecdotal evidence to suggest that youth unemployment was having an impact on local services and consideration might be given to whether this would warrant allocation of recovery fund resources.
- 3.11 The Chair suggested that the forthcoming LSP seminar in March might be used to revisit our approach to the recession and refocus our efforts for the future on responding to the consequences of the recession.

4. Unemployment among the under 25's in Camden and local employment partnerships

- 4.1 Angela McKeever introduced her presentation with a definition of youth unemployment which refers to issues of unemployment amongst the 16-24 year old population. The phenomenon is growing nationally and due to hit 1m across the UK. It is important to recognise that young people are a key risk group as they are at a critical point in their careers and the development of skills sets. The risk of 'professional scarring' is significant for the current

- generation of young people whose job prospects have been affected by the recession.
- 4.2 A number of initiatives are currently being delivered across the country including the Future Jobs Fund and commitments by government to provide jobs and training for people affected by unemployment. The driving factors affecting youth unemployment are not just the onset of recession but the impact of welfare and educational reforms introduced in recent years that has created a swollen market in demand for jobs and training.
 - 4.3 Current data for Camden shows that 50% of young claimants are recipients of JSA with 17% receiving lone parents' allowances. The recession has seen a sharp rise in the level of JSA which now includes many graduates who would have found work had there not been a recession.
 - 4.4 A comparison of inner London shows Camden trends as being below all claimant levels for inner London authorities especially for JSA and lone parent benefits. In addition to this as of December 2007 Camden had the lowest level of people within inner London with no qualifications as well as the highest number of people with an NVQ4+ qualification.
 - 4.5 A number of services are currently being provided across the Council to support and address the issue of youth unemployment including the 'connexions' service, positive activities for young people and the 'September guarantee'. In addition to this the Kings Cross construction skills centre provides an apprenticeship scheme for 16-19 year olds and 121 young people will be provided with jobs as part of the Future Jobs Fund initiative.
 - 4.6 Some of the key challenges facing youth unemployment in the future include the ongoing impact of welfare reform and a growing labour market and the existence of a group of economically inactive people who are moving away from the support that can be provided.
 - 4.7 Mick Hickey then provided a short presentation to the LSP on Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs) noting that there had been substantial amounts of money provided to support professional skills through Jobcentre Plus and the 'Young Person's guarantee' which will offer young people on JSA a new job created through the Future Job Fund, help with getting an existing job in a key sector or new work focussed training opportunities
 - 4.8 The 'Backing Young Britain' programme will be looking at a number of key actions to determine how employers can help locally to get young people into work.
 - 4.9 The LEPs initiative which was first announced in 2007 looks for new ways of working with employers to provide opportunities for clients to get back into

work and notes the additional challenges faced by those competing with others who are moving between jobs.

- 4.10 LEPs work in a number of ways including the provision of one to one mentoring, guaranteed interviews, flexible working for lone parents, work trials and work placements.
- 4.11 The Chair thanked Angela and Mick for their presentations and asked whether the qualifications map reflects the fact that 50% of the population hold degrees. Angela responded that this reflected the large student population and that it was important to understand in greater detail the proportion of residents who attend local schools and who is educated externally.
- 4.12 Sarah Elie suggested that a number of challenges are posed by targeting only those people claiming JSA as there are significant numbers of people who need support but are on alternatives forms of benefits.

5 Camden's approach to family poverty

- 5.1 Tim Coulson introduced a presentation on Camden's approach to reducing family poverty and suggested that there were five key issues for consideration including poverty and outcomes, approaches, drivers of family poverty and future opportunities. He advised the LSP that he was seeking views on whether the LSP would take ownership of action plans to deliver this key area of service.
- 5.2 Family and child poverty will have a significant impact on health and safety with disadvantaged children more likely to be underweight at birth and at increased risk of being a perpetrator of crime later in life. Additionally, children who grow up in low income homes are more likely to become unemployed and perform less well at school.
- 5.3 Within Camden, family poverty has a significant strategic profile and the new framework currently being developed will incorporate the Community Strategy, Children and Young People's Plan and the Economic Development Framework.
- 5.4 Across the partnership, there are a number of services and interventions in place to tackle family and child poverty including the through the Childcare strategy, children's centres, Job Centre plus and the wider VCS provider community.
- 5.5 Nationally, the Child Poverty Bill 2009 imposes a number of duties on local authorities and their partners including the reduction and mitigation of child

- poverty in the area, carrying out a child poverty needs assessment, preparing a joint local child poverty strategy and the consideration of child poverty when reviewing the community strategy.
- 5.6 This agenda poses opportunities and challenges for the all members of the LSP. There is strong partnership working in Camden already, and existing initiatives and interventions such as the recession recovery fund which can be built upon. In terms of challenges, the impact of rising unemployment alongside pockets of generational worklessness will add to current issues of family poverty; the decrease in public sector spending from 2011 will also put pressures on those services that mitigate the effects of poverty.
- 5.7 The Leader thanked Tim for his presentation and suggested to the LSP that work to address family poverty is critical but often invisible. A critical point is that this issue is built around families and has a much wider context and he looked forward to seeing some further proposals being brought back to a future LSP meeting.
- 5.8 Stephen Jordan responded to the presentation by stating that the Government had a long standing priority to eradicate child poverty and wondered what could be done differently now that hasn't been tried in the last 10 years?
- 5.9 Tim Coulson responded by stating that this issue mirrors the discussion around national drivers for top down solutions. Feedback has suggested that current processes are too rigid and need to focus on local intelligence and addressing wider issues such as getting people back into work and smarter levers of implementation. This would allow for a better understanding of where fresh approaches could be used to better address the underlying factors influencing family poverty.
- 5.10 Finneguela O'Brien suggested that many of the next steps have a logical crossover with the work of the thematic partnerships and it may be appropriate to get them engaged in this process.

6 LAA 6 monthly report

- 6.1 Jonathan Mills provided an overview of the 6 monthly LAA report to the LSP outlining those key measures which were currently underperforming and plans in place to address those issues of underperformance where appropriate.

- 6.2 Simone Hensby raised the issue of childcare and participation in sport noting that the figures may be influenced by the number of people losing their jobs and therefore no longer needing childcare. In addition it is possible that demand for municipal sport centres will increase as people are less likely to afford membership of private institutions.
- 6.3 The Chair thanked Jonathan for his presentation and reminded the LSP that they would continue to keep a close watch on the LAA indicators over the coming months.
- 6.4 Omar Ralph provided a short overview of the refresh and review process for the LAA and reminded the LSP that Camden was in the process of negotiation around NI 154 and 136.

7 Feedback from November LSP seminar

- 7.1 Sarah Mullen provided some initial feedback from the November seminar which reviewed progress against the delivery of the Community Strategy. The seminar had been very successful and participants were able to take stock of the work undertaken to review the strategy.
- 7.2 A detailed note of the seminar has been circulated with the minutes for the LSP and features amongst other things the importance of individuals taking responsibility and the LSP's role as a partnership in supporting that.
- 7.3 The seminar also gave some further consideration to how we might work more closely together as a partnership in terms of asset management. There was recognition of the range of challenges facing the partnership and how these issues are addressed and further embedded, particularly around differences in governance and accountability, incentivisation and pooling of resources.
- 7.4 There was also a key challenge of engaging with our community and how resources are allocated. There is a proposal to do more work on this with a more detailed discussion with extended PPG in January and the intention to come back to the LSP in February 2010 with further thoughts and possible next steps.

8 Updates from the thematic partnerships

- 8.1 Quentin Sandifer provided a brief update on the current swine flu situation in Camden. The vaccination process as outlined recently in the media has broken down with local GPs and active local negotiations are now underway to resolve this. It is intended to agree a local deal with GP's by 11 December

to get individual GP's to sign up to the vaccination process in early January 2010.

9 Minutes from previous meetings

- 9.1 The minutes from the November LSP seminar and October business meeting were agreed by the LSP.

DRAFT