

MINUTES OF TPT GROUP MEETING

County Hall, Bedford

8th March 2007

Present:

Len Simkins (Chair)	Infotrain
Tanya Richardson	Website Consultant
Mark Smith	CVS Mid & North Bedfordshire
Sue Walmsley	Infotrain
Peter Doyle	Bedford Credit Union
Sutish Mahrra	Jobcentre Plus
Steve Nash	Aragon Housing Association
Jayne Bowman	Aragon Housing Association Placement

1. Apologies

Sarah Hughes	Bedfordshire County Council
Philippa Harris	Bedford & District CAB
Steve Hill	Aragon Housing Association
Kim Norris	Bedford Credit Union
Caron Brooks	GO-East
Martin Westerby	Bedfordshire PCT

Action

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting (19th September 2006) were accepted as an accurate record.

2.2 Matters arising:

There were no matters arising from these minutes.

3. Action Plan 2006/2007 - Review & Update

The Group Action Plan 2006/2007 was distributed and the year's actions and targets were reviewed.

3.1 Group Meetings

It was agreed that the success criteria have been met.

3.2 Newsletter

It was agreed that the success criteria have generally been met. Reviewing the distribution list and design/layout is an ongoing process. There has been a drop in the number of paper copies distributed because recipients are requesting email only distribution. The final issue of 2006/07 will be distributed in April.

3.3 TPT Website

It was agreed that the success criteria have been met. The number of visitors to the site has already exceeded the target of 150 for the year - 160 visitors have been recorded, without including the figures for March 2007. Activity had dropped in December/January, which is to be expected, but is now picking up again. A TPT Conference/Event will significantly boost website activity.

Tanya has included a 'watermark' map of Bedfordshire on the home page and a more defined map on each page - feedback would be welcome.

The question was raised as to TPT members including a link from their organisation's website to the Group website. The CVS website has a TPT page containing a link. Mid Beds. CAB is reviewing their website - Mark Smith will ask Jenny Hedges if a link could be added. Mark will also mention the site in Bedspread (CVS Newsletter). Aragon Housing Association will also include details in their newsletter. Tanya reiterated that any links to or from the Group website would be gratefully received. It was noted that the website is not targeted at the general public which should be borne in mind when publicising the site.

3.4 Future Projects / Action

- **Benefits advice and take-up research - follow up** - the success criteria for this action have been met. The research report has been very well used by various groups. Bedford Partnership Board has agreed to fund a benefits take-up campaign in North Beds., a request for 'expressions of interest' to run the campaign has been distributed. As far as Len is aware, 2 bids have been received so far. A decision is expected at the end of March.
- **Development of a credit union in Mid Bedfordshire** - the success criteria for this action have been met. Members of the Focus Group at today's meeting (Bedford Credit Union, Aragon Housing and the CVS) confirmed that they are pleased with the progress made to date. A consultation event is planned for 18th May. Len would welcome suggestions for invitations as soon as possible. Mark Smith is looking into the possibility of setting up an online consultation facility via the CVS website and will liaise with Tanya regarding the TPT website. Publicity will also be included in Poverty News. This event will be aimed at groups/organisations rather than individuals. Much of the work behind this project has come out of TPT action linking other groups who were considering the establishment of a credit union in Mid Beds.
- **Continue to develop links with the LSPs, LSF & LAA** - this action has never really taken off, or been clearly defined. There is some confusion as to whether the LSF still exists. It may be about to be revamped as the "countywide partnership". The TPT Group has encountered difficulties in getting LSPs etc. to put poverty on their agenda. It has proved difficult to get a two-way relationship going and the Group has failed to get representatives from the LSPs etc. to regularly attend meetings.

Sue will update the Action Plan 2006-07 and will forward it to Tanya for inclusion on the Group website.

4. Consider Approach to 2007-08

4.1 Review of TPT Terms of Reference

The current Terms of Reference were distributed and discussed. It was agreed that no email addresses or telephone numbers will be included in the membership list. Sue will update the Terms of Reference and distribute with these minutes. A copy will also be included on the Group website.

**Infotrain
TR**

4.1 Draft Action Plan for 2007-08

- **Group Meetings** - Len suggested that the Group may consider meeting 3 times a year as opposed to 4, though he had not yet discussed this with Sarah Hughes. Sub-groups could be formed to deal with specific projects e.g. Mid Beds. Credit Union, TPT conference/event. Reducing the number of meetings could result in a loss of momentum especially if one misses a meeting. Len will discuss this with Sarah. It was agreed that meetings should continue to have a specific focus/theme. The LAA 'refresh' and an update on Investing in Communities has been suggested as the theme for the next meeting. Sue will liaise with Sarah Hughes. There will be no membership review during 2007-08.
- **Newsletter** - the Group will continue to produce *Poverty News*. It was generally felt that *Poverty News* should continue as a quarterly newsletter even if the Group meets 3 times a year. Those at the meeting again confirmed how useful the newsletter is. The success criteria of distributing 450 hard copies will be dropped from the Action Plan as more organisations are requesting email copies only.
- **Group Website** - the visitor target will increase to 200 for 2007-08 if the website is used for conference/event bookings and the credit union consultation process. Tanya will continue to report on website activity to the Group meetings and will update the site after each meeting. The style and design of the website will be an ongoing development e.g. a consultations page will be added if necessary.
- **Future projects/action**
 - Links with LSPs etc. - this will remain on the Action Plan, however, the success criteria will be to define and confirm the relationship.
 - Benefits advice and take-up campaign - the Group will monitor the progress and review the success of Bedford Partnership Board's take-up campaign.
 - Mid Beds. Credit Union - the Group will continue to play a part in the process of setting up a credit union in Mid Bedfordshire, being part of the consultation and decision-making process.
 - Plan and organise a series of anti-poverty events in Bedfordshire will be added to the Action Plan for 2007-08.

LS/SH

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Sue will produce a draft Action Plan 2007-08 for discussion/adoption at the next meeting.

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5. Future TPT Group Conference / Event

5.1 Len Simkins and Sarah Hughes met in January to discuss a future TPT Group conference/event. A report on this meeting was distributed.

The outcome of the meeting was the recommendation that, rather than a single conference, the Group should hold a series of smaller events. The meeting discussed this recommendation.

- It was generally agreed that 4 events in one year may be a little too ambitious. It was suggested that the Group commit to organising 2 events with the possibility of repeating one if successful.
- The location, subject matter and structure of the events need to be confirmed. The same subject matter, e.g. child poverty in Bedfordshire, could be held in different locations, e.g. one in Bedford and one in

Sandy (CFC's Family Centre was suggested as a possible venue). Alternatively different topics e.g. migrant workers, health etc. could be addressed in one or several locations.

- It was agreed that it would be preferable not to attempt to organise an event in May/June as the lead in time was now too short.

Len will discuss this further with Sarah and it will be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

**LS/SH
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6. Activity Update / Poverty News

6.1 Activity update details will appear in the next edition of **Poverty News** which will be distributed in January. Please forward any items for inclusion to Sue (sue.walmsley@infotrain.co.uk) before end of March

All

6.2 Bedford Credit Union - Kim Norris will shortly be leaving BCU after 4½ years to work as a community development officer at BPHA. BCU will take some time to reassess Kim's role before replacing her. A third school savers club has been set up at Queens Park Lower School. BCU is hopeful that this will open up communication with the wider Queens Park communities. A new Money Management tutor has been appointed to replace David Sparks. Peter Doyle will send full details through for Poverty News.

PD

6.3 Jobcentre Plus is organising a conference on 27th March 2007 aimed at the voluntary sector. Child poverty and migrant workers will be amongst the topics considered. Beds. and Herts. LAA and Investing in Communities teams will be invited. 102 invitations have been taken up so far.

6.4 Mark Smith will be the new Information Officer at **CVS Mid & North Beds.** as of 1st April. Mark and Sue will liaise on an article for *Poverty News* on activity and developments at the CVS.

**MS/
Infotrain**

6.5 Infotrain has developed its own website including a link to the TPT Group. The website address is www.infotrain.co.uk

6.6 Bedfordshire Child Poverty Action Group has recently undertaken a membership/activity review. Beds CPAG will now 'meet' electronically and is currently offering free membership to interested individuals. Its main aim is to keep child poverty issues on the local agenda. For more information contact Len Simkins on 01234 360607 or email len.simkins@infotrain.co.uk

7. Any Other Business

7.1 There was no other business to discuss

8. Next Meeting

The next Group meeting will be held on **Tuesday 5th June** at 10.00am at County Hall, Bedford.

Documents discussed at this meeting can be found at www.tacklingpoverty-beds.org.uk

Tackling Poverty together Group meetings are facilitated by Infotrain (Contact: Sue Walmsley on 01234 360607) Please contact Sue for further information or copies of any documents discussed at the meeting