



**BURNLEY PARTNERS WORKLESSNESS GROUP
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30th JUNE 2010
BOARD ROOM CALICO OFFICES CROFT STREET BURNLEY**

Present:

Ann Marie Wrigley	New Era Enterprises
Joey Smith	Lancashire County Development Ltd
Ian Plested	Burnley Borough Council (ERBS)
Pat Bridge	Burnley Borough Council (ERBS)
Steve Rowland	Young People's Service
Beth Gallagher	Calico
Tony Harrison	Burnley Community Network
Lesley Burrows	Vedas
Shufkat Razaq	Pennine Enterprise Trust
Kate Ingram	Burnley Borough Council (ERBS)
Lynda Booth	Project Manager (Lancs) - Achieve North West
Mike Cook	Burnley Borough Council

Apologies

Maureen Kelly	Burnley College
Chris Launder	South West Burnley Community Enterprise
Andy Brennand	Job Centre Plus

Welcome and introductions

Mike welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members then introduced themselves and stated the organisations which they represented.

Latest Worklessness Statistics

Ian circulated a report relating to the latest statistics on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) by ward count (May 2010). The claimant rates have been decreasing gradually since February 2010 and the highest levels of claimant count are evident in Bank Hall, Daneshouse with Stoneyholme, Trinity and Rosehill with Burnley Wood.

The report for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) / Lone Parent Income Support (LPIS) ward count was also circulated. 12% of the working population in Burnley are in receipt of ESA. Highest levels of ESA are evident in Bank Hall, Trinity, Daneshouse with Stoneyholme, Rosehill with Burnley Wood and Rosegrove with Lowerhouse.

Levels of IS for lone parents are highest in Bank Hall, Gawthorpe, Rosegrove with Lowerhouse and Trinity – approx the same as 12 months ago with some fluctuations.

Ian has the full employment briefing which Andrew Powley has produced and will circulate this document to the group.

AP1 Ian to circulate the employment briefing produced by Andrew to the Group

Mike queried group's ability to respond to these reports. Lesley said that it was difficult to make a judgement due to the absence of flow figures from JCP. A discussion ensued regarding claimants who come off ESA and then go into employment – the employment may only be short term and perhaps JCP should do more follow up work – this is something that could be included in the employment strategy as larger employers need to invest in people.

AP2 Ian to acquire JSA on-flow and off-flow figures for recent months; also, Ian to produce group figures of age and gender categories of ESA claimants for future meeting.

Discussion about support for employers

Referring to businesses considering locating to Burnley, Joey asked the group whether they thought:

- a. Would businesses locate to Burnley if they knew there was a skilled workforce in the area, or
- b. Would businesses locate to Burnley for other reasons (eg suitable property) and then look to up-skill their workforce once established?

Joey also asked if there was anyone at Burnley Council who could contact businesses – Alex Hooley undertakes this particular aspect as part of his role in the Business Support Team. Kate stated that Burnley have an active business support team who work with existing businesses and new business interested in investing in Burnley. However, grant assistance is limited compared to other areas as Burnley does not benefit from Assisted Area Status.

Lesley informed the meeting that Bolton Council had been very successful in supporting job seekers through the Licence to Skill programme and then offering job-ready candidates to employers. When this is successful, it works well as it is an 'all-win' situation i.e. the employer has a job ready workforce and the jobs are brought into the town. In addition the employer does not have to foot the recruitment/training costs. This practice needs more investigation and the results presented to a future meeting.

There was some further discussion about this issue but the conclusion was that we should work together to offer a package of support to inward investing businesses. Such a package of support should include recruitment and staff training / development, utilising current programmes (eg such as Licence to Skill, Employer Response Initiative, etc.)

AP3 Ian to develop partnership activities to offer current or inward-investing employers a package of support for recruitment and workforce training

Employment Strategy Review

Ian circulated the minutes of the last meeting and asked for comments from group members. Mike did not want a particularly long consultation process with BAP relating to the strategy review.

There was also a short discussion about feedback received from job seekers about poor standard of service and poor attitudes of some Jobcentre staff. The group agreed to compile some of the feedback received by partners and relay that information back to the Jobcentre.

New Government Welfare to Work Policies

Ian circulated papers and commented on the main issues which would affect Burnley relating to Lone Parents, ESA, DLA (Disability Living Allowance) and the Single Work Programme. In addition there were other new proposals relating to Drug and Alcohol users, Self Employment, Service Academies and Work Clubs.

The Government announced that there will be a pilot programme which will be rolled out in both Burnley and Aberdeen. Claimants in receipt of Incapacity benefit will re-assessed regarding their ability to work and DWP will notify claimants by letter when the assessment will be undertaken. Any claimants found capable of work will be moved from Incapacity benefit to JSA.

The group identified several issues such as how will the sample be constructed, what support will be available to claimants and what exactly will be the process of this assessment.

AP5 Mike and Ian to arrange to meet with a Regional Representative from DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) on behalf of BAP (Burnley Action Partnership) to undertake further discussions on how this pilot project will be delivered.

AP6 Employment Team to monitor further developments via the website and include associated issues in Ian Hoskin's bulletin.

Pennine Lancashire Employment and Skills Board

The Board is dealing with the skills strategy but not worklessness issues. The governance issues which were identified have now been adopted and group meetings are going well. Mike said that he was happy to circulate associated information. (**note** – minutes of meetings can be found on the website www.penninelancsplace.org)

Programmes Currently Under Development

Enhanced Housing Options

Joey delivered a progress report for June 2010.

- The strategic meetings between Pennine Lancs, Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley BC are continuing.
- Help direct may be the delivery partner for the worklessness theme as a first port of call and will maintain monitoring evidence.

- Agreed in principle to implement new pilot in Burnley.
- Blackburn with Darwen EHO Co-Ordinator to draft letter and questionnaire for applicants.
- Meeting to take place provisionally 1st July 2010 between Burnley BC, Calico Homes, LCC and help Direct to agree pilot details.

Financial Inclusion

This item to be carried forward to the next meeting

Travel to Work

This item to be carried forward to the next meeting

AP7 Financial Inclusion and Travel to Work items to be included in the agenda for the next group meeting

Future Jobs Fund

Ann Marie highlighted issues relating to Burnley Borough Council's recruitment process especially the length of time it takes to recruit. Ian said that he works to a 4 week timetable (occasionally this has gone over to 5 weeks) in line with statutory requirements.

Calico continues to deliver well and the organisation tries to ensure that all candidates get the right support at the end of each placement.

Achieve North West NOMS ESF Project – Lynda Booth Lancs Project Manager Achieve North West

The Probation Trusts in the North West as a regional consortium won an £8 million bid to deliver the above project. Lancashire was awarded £1.9 million for the project which is being managed by Lynda on behalf of Lancashire Probation Trust.

The project is designed to improve the employment prospects of offenders and to increase their opportunities to access mainstream provision. Delivery is built around a case management model and operates across both custody and the community.

Each office will have a designated case manager who will identify suitable offenders that are referred to Job Club. They will then co-ordinate the various aspects of employment support, ensuring delivery into mainstream with emphasis on bridging the gap between custody and community for these offenders.

HMP Preston will also have a case manager and HMYOI Lancaster Farms will have an in-reach service.

Case managers will oversee the offender's journey from initial enrolment through to final achievements working on a one to one basis as well as delivering group interventions such as Job Club and GOALS (a tried and tested motivation programme).

The project as a whole is on target in terms of outputs and last month 7 people went into employment.

One of the aims of the project in Burnley is to sign up 5 offenders per month and all progress will be monitored.

Lynda circulated a full project briefing to the group.

AOB

There was no other business to discuss and the date, time and venue of the next meeting is to be arranged.