



## **Oldham's local area agreement and sustainable community strategy**

Oldham's new sustainable community strategy (SCS) and local area agreement (LAA) provide Oldham Partnership's vision for the borough and the plan for how we make the vision into a reality for the people who live and work here. Through the SCS and LAA we hope to make Oldham

A place where everyone is proud to belong by increasing life opportunities for all

### **The sustainable community strategy**

The sustainable community strategy sets out our shared long-term vision for Oldham. The SCS is a description of what the borough is like now, what its strengths and challenges are, and how we want it to be in 2020.

### **The local area agreement**

Each area in England has to produce an LAA - a plan of what we aim to do between now and 2011 to make progress towards realising the vision.

The LAA is now the only place where central government will agree targets with local authorities and their partners on what is delivered by local government on its own or in partnership with others. The local area agreement is - as the name implies - a combination of government's aims for the country as a whole, and our local priorities as identified in the SCS.

LAAs have been introduced to give local partners and communities more power to decide what activities will make the most impact on quality of life in their area, and to be a clear expression of those priorities.

### **What this means for funding**

The LAA has implications for some of the funding we receive. Historically government would allocate many different funds to Oldham with guidelines on how each should be spent. However Oldham now receives a single pot of money that we can decide how to spend based on our LAA priorities: the area based grant (ABG). The ABG contains what were previously over 40 separate funds.

This gives us more flexibility and allows us to use our funding to fit local circumstances and make the biggest impact. Oldham Partnership commissions the money through a commissioning framework, which ensures the cash drives delivery in the borough.

### **What are we trying to achieve through Oldham's SCS and LAA?**

The partnership want to make Oldham conspicuous for its strong and engaged communities, cultural and educational strengths, increased life opportunities and growing economic prosperity and quality of life. Oldham will make a full contribution to the city region. It will realise its full potential not only because the gap within the borough on issues such as crime, economic performance, health and education will

have been reduced, but also because there will be less of a gap between Oldham and the most prosperous districts in Greater Manchester and national averages.

### **Our 3 themes**

To achieve our vision for Oldham, we will work towards three themes:

- Economic prosperity
- Safe and strong communities
- Health and well being

However, we know that an integrated approach to what we are trying to achieve is essential. For example a place with safe neighbourhoods offering a choice of quality housing and excellent education are more likely to attract and retain the skilled and enterprising people who will contribute to greater economic prosperity.

### **Our 4 crosscutting LAA issues**

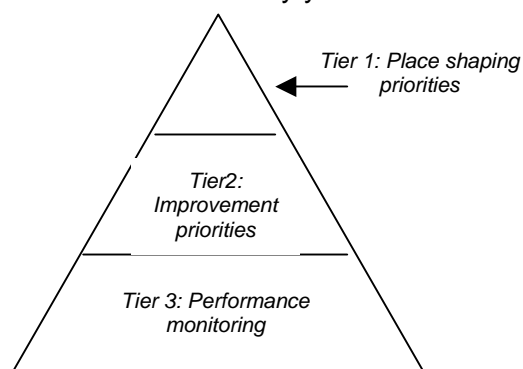
In addition to the three topic sections, our SCS and LAA contain four further issues that are important across the board and should be considered in all of our activities:

- A cohesive society – getting on well together
- Community engagement
- Culture
- Sustainable use of resources

### **The LAA in more detail**

Government asks all local authority areas to select up to 35 indicators from a national list of 198 for their LAA. These 35 reflect the area's key priorities and targets are agreed for each. We are also required to include 16 education and early years indicators in the agreement.

There are new legal requirements for certain partners to contribute to the achievement of these targets – this is important because it is the first time law has underpinned working in partnership. Areas can also include indicators devised locally to reflect local priorities in their agreement – and the same legal duty applies.



In Oldham we have taken a slightly different approach to our LAA and have included all 198 indicators – with each allocated a priority level from one (highest priority indicators including specific improvement targets agreed with government) to three (indicators against which we will monitor progress rather than working towards targets). This is to recognise that Oldham's needs are many and varied, and we shouldn't lose sight of those that aren't in our tier one.

### **What is Oldham Partnership?**

Oldham Partnership is this borough's local strategic partnership. It brings together partners from all sectors of Oldham – public, private, voluntary, community and faith – to work together to improve the quality of life of residents and the prosperity of the borough. By working together we can develop a much broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the borough, and can lead Oldham's transformation. In short, we are much stronger.

**Find out more – [www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/key-documents](http://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/key-documents)**