

Oldham's credit crunch cabinet

Monthly update

October 2009

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

1 Credit crunch cabinet monthly report






This is the seventh update from Oldham’s credit crunch cabinet (CCC). This update is published after each of the cabinet’s meetings and will give you a clear picture of the current economic situation – positives and negatives – in the borough. It will help the partnership to examine trends, and anticipate the need for preventative action, and will help partners to identify any adjustments they might need to make to their mainstream services.

2 The current situation

- The number of Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) claimants went up again between August and September 2009 to 7356. Oldham continues to have the third highest JSA claimant rate in Greater Manchester.
- Oldham’s JSA claimant rate is now 5.5% of the working age population, which is higher than the Greater Manchester average (5.1%) and the UK average (4.2%)
- Jobcentre Plus vacancies were up in September to 1053 vacancies, and seasonal work will soon start to affect these figures.
- The wards with the most JSA claimants remained Coldhurst, St Marys and Alexandra. There were significant decreases in Chadderton South and Royton South.
- The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) rate in July was 8.9%, but school leavers will have affected this figure and November’s figure will give a more balanced view.

Full statistics are shown below.

Dashboard Indicator	Reporting Frequency (& Timing)	Baseline January 08 (unless stated)	Latest Performance Data 2008-09		RAG Trend	GM Rank
			August 2009	September 2009		
Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count	Monthly	3,899	7,206	7,356		6 out of 10 (1 = highest number of claimants)
JSA Claimant Rate (proportion of working age)	Monthly	2.9%	5.4%	5.5%		3 out of 10 (1 = highest rate)

population)						
JSA Off Flow	Monthly	706	1,661	1,276		8 out of 10 (1 = highest off flow)
JSA On Flow	Monthly	1,048	1,883	1,449		6 out of 10 (1 = highest on flow)
JCP Vacancies	Monthly	1,441 (Sept 2008)	958	1,053		8 out of 10 (1 = highest number of vacancies)
Business Rateable Values	Monthly	£136.4m (01.12.07)	£133,621,455			Not Applicable
Number of commercial properties	Monthly	7,124 (01.12.07)	7042			Not Applicable

3 Other updates

- An options appraisal for an extension to the CCC's support for the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) was brought to the meeting. The CCC had already confirmed that the casework support officers currently in post and funded through the rapid intervention fund would be funded until the end of May 2010, so this paper looked at the CAB's need for further support.
- The CCC agreed to commission an extension to the specialist advice worker funding until December 2010 and an additional post with primary responsibility for recruiting and training volunteers until December 2010.
- Steve Duthie (Oldham Chronicle) gave an update on the community reporters pilot scheme. The pilot will train community members to help deliver good news about Oldham.
- Seven reporters are in the early stages of their training, having been recruited through Highway to Opportunities. In addition to the Chronicle, Oldham Community Radio, Revolution Radio and University Campus Oldham are involved in the delivery of the scheme.
- Oldham has seen a decrease in the employment rate AND a decrease in the number of people claiming out of work benefits. This is because there has been an increase in the number of economically inactive people: those who are neither working nor seeking work, for example carers or those who are living off a redundancy payment.
- The Future Jobs Fund is a national scheme to create jobs for 18 to 24 year olds who have been out of work for approaching nine months. The first cohort of young people in Oldham is expected to be recruited before Christmas. There will be approximately 500

vacancies in Oldham over three waves. The six-month posts, paid at the minimum wage, will be a range of positions at Oldham Council, the Oldham Housing Investment Partnership and Positive Steps Oldham. They will provide benefits in communities and neighbourhoods and ongoing accredited training for participants.

4 Beat the crunch roadshow

The beat the crunch roadshow took place in Oldham town centre between 26th and 31st October.

Funded by the credit crunch cabinet, the roadshow is the first of a series of events where we will be offering advice and support on a wide range of topics on a walk-in basis. Residents can talk to our expert team about debt advice, training and employment opportunities, benefits and housing, businesses start-ups and even childcare provision.

Look out for the roadshow across the borough over the coming months. Alongside the residents' events, there is also a series of events to help businesses weather the storm. The first of these is an online webinar on 19th November – businesses can log on for free online advice from experts. For more details of the roadshows, visit www.oldham.gov.uk/creditcrunch.

Beat the crunch

Come along to the beat the crunch roadshow for free advice about jobs, housing, childcare, benefits and much more.



5 Next meeting

The CCC will meet next on 21st December at 2pm.

The group will no longer meet every month, but a monthly statistical report will continue to be produced every month.

6 Contact us

Economy and enterprise unit, Oldham Council – 0161 770 4670; credit.crunch@oldham.gov.uk

Housing strategy, Oldham Council – 0161 770 2045; housingstrategy@oldham.gov.uk

Communities unit, Oldham Council – 0161 770 3274; community.relations@oldham.gov.uk

www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/ccwc

The CCC and its rapid intervention fund: a reminder of the principles of operation

The Oldham Partnership executive approves area based grant (ABG) allocations to each of the partnership blocks to support the delivery of their key priorities and local area agreement outcomes. The Public Service Board was delegated to manage and allocate any resulting ABG under-spends from the blocks. £400,000 of under spent area based grant from 2008/09 has been allocated to the credit crunch cabinet's 'Rapid Intervention Fund' to provide a single co-ordinated partnership response to the impacts of the economic recession in Oldham.

A business case defining and evidencing need must be provided to the CCC prior to the allocation of any of the RIF. CCC members are clear that the RIF is to be used where no other funding sources exist and there's no other way of delivering the activity. Furthermore the RIF doesn't provide long term funding; it is a means of reacting quickly in the short term to help Oldham through the recession.

The decisions of the CCC are accessible to everyone in the minutes and monthly reports at www.oldhampartnership.org.uk/ccwc. The principles of operation can be viewed on the same page. The CCC regularly reports to the Oldham Partnership executive, and these principles were agreed at the executive in March 2009.