

# Commissioning Specification

## LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities, (Strong Communities)

**Expressions of Interest** are invited from potential Delivery Agents to undertake:

### LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities, (Strong Communities)

#### 1. Introduction

Since the advent of the Local Area Agreement Commissioning Framework, the four commissioned activities detailed below have been delivered on behalf of the Safer and Stronger Communities Block.

<b>LAA 41-02A Interfaith Development</b>	(operational since 2002)
<b>LAA 25-04A Good Relations Oldham</b>	(operational since 2004)
<b>LAA 13-05 Festival Partnership Activity</b>	(operational since 2005)
<b>LAA 11-07C VCFP and Compact Development</b>	(operational since 2007)

The Safe and Strong Communities Board has now agreed to commission an independent evaluation of these four commissioned activities.

Although some of these commissioned activities were actually operational before 2007, the evaluation work to be carried out will only cover the period from April 2007 until the present, i.e. the following years.

- 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008
- 1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009
- 1 April 2009 - present

The four commissioned activities in question were commissioned by the Community Engagement Commissioning Group (CECG) in 2007- 2008, approved for continuation in 2008-09 and approved for continuation again for 2009-10 by the Strong Communities Strategy Group (SCSG).

#### **SEE Appendix A for further details of the four commissioned activities**

Each of the four commissioned activities is being undertaken by a different voluntary/community organisation or Council Directorate:

Oldham Interfaith Forum	LAA 41-02A
Community Cohesion Support Team, Oldham Council	LAA 25-04A
Coliseum Theatre, (on behalf of the Festival Partnership)	LAA 13-05
Voluntary Action Oldham	LAA 11-07C

The evaluation will consider each of the four commissioned activities in relation to its specific overarching objective:

**LAA 41-02A Interfaith Development**

*To develop strong, inter-faith relationships in Oldham and to develop the capacity of faith communities to support Oldham Partnership’s objectives for building good race and community relations and respect for others*

**LAA 25–04A Good Relations Oldham**

*To develop capacity in Oldham to resolve communal conflict and build good community and organisational relations*

**LAA 13-05 Festival Partnership Activity**

*To use arts and cultural activity to promote pride in Oldham, celebrate the diversity of Oldham’s communities and encourage interaction and understanding between people of different ages and backgrounds*

**LAA 11-07C VCFP and Compact Development**

*To create an environment for a thriving voluntary, community and faith sector, which can support delivery of Oldham Partnership’s objectives and increase the involvement of local people in decision making and the delivery of services*

In addition, evaluation of each activity will:

- examine and assess performance against original objectives and the applicable National Indicators (see table below)

<b>National Indicator</b>	<b>LAA 25-04A Good Relations Oldham</b>	<b>LAA 41-02A Inter-Faith Development</b>	<b>LAA 13-05 Festival Partnership Activity</b>	<b>LAA 11-07C VCF Partnership and Compact Development</b>
<b>NI 1</b> people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	**	**	**	*
<b>NI 2</b> people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	*	*	*	*
<b>NI 3</b> Civic participation in the local area	*		*	**
<b>NI 4</b> % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	*	*		**
<b>NI 5</b> Overall / general satisfaction with local area	**	*	*	*
<b>NI 6</b> Participation in regular volunteering	**	*	**	**
<b>NI 7</b> Environment for a thriving third sector	*	**		**
<b>NI 11</b> Engagement in the arts			**	
<b>NI 23</b> Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and dignity	**	**	*	
<b>NI 35</b> Building resilience to violent extremism	*	*		
<b>NI 110</b> Participation of young people in positive activities	*	**	*	
<b>NI 140</b> Fair treatment by local services	*			*

**Key**

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**Strongly linked to this N I**

\*

**Linked to this N I**

- examine and assess impact and effectiveness in terms of outputs and outcomes – how the activities have contributed to the achievement of targets related to the LAA National Indicators
- determine areas of good practice, which can be adopted elsewhere and identify any weaknesses in service delivery in order to assist the effective deployment of resources in future years
- ascertain whether or not the activity needs to be continued in the future
- assist in forward planning, (determine whether or not there is scope to build upon the work carried out to date in terms of expansion or progression into new dimensions)
- Consider each commissioned activity's effectiveness and performance in relation to its specific, overarching objective
- Gauge the effectiveness of the activities' contributions to enhancing community cohesion and engagement
- Gain an understanding of the activities' beneficiaries' perceptions of cohesion and levels of engagement both prior to the commissioned activities in question being undertaken and subsequently, to determine what changes, if any, have taken place
- Assist Oldham Partnership in identifying elements of good practice and of weakness in service delivery
- Inform the effective deployment of Area Based Grant resources in future years
- Develop an understanding of Oldham's direction of travel with regard to community cohesion, community engagement and strengthening the capacity of the Third Sector

The commissioned activity **must be completed by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009**.

The activity to be commissioned - **LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities (Strong Communities)** will contribute to the achievement of targets under the following Local Area Agreement National Indicators:

<b>National Indicator</b>	
<b>NI 1</b>	People from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
<b>NI 2</b>	People who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
<b>NI 3</b>	Civic participation in the local area
<b>NI 4</b>	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
<b>NI 5</b>	Overall / general satisfaction with local area
<b>NI 6</b>	Participation in regular volunteering
<b>NI 7</b>	Environment for a thriving third sector
<b>NI 11</b>	Engagement in the arts
<b>NI 23</b>	Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and dignity
<b>NI 35</b>	Building resilience to violent extremism
<b>NI 110</b>	Participation of young people in positive activities
<b>NI 140</b>	Fair treatment by local services

It is expected that **LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities (Strong Communities)** will deliver the following Outputs:

Output Description	Annual Total
Number of independent evaluations of Strong Communities commissioned activities completed	4
Number of Evaluation Reports produced	4

### **Potential Delivery Agents**

- Expressions of Interest are welcomed from individual organisations or consortia. If a consortium applies to undertake delivery of the commissioned activity, **one organisation must be identified as the Lead Delivery Agent**. Accountability for delivery will remain with that identified Lead Delivery Agent.

- Potential Delivery Agents can apply to undertake:

Evaluation of LAA 41-02A only

or

Evaluation of LAA 25-04A only

or

Evaluation of LAA 13-05 only

or

Evaluation of LAA 11-07C only

or

Evaluations of **two, three or all four** of the commissioned activities in question

N.B.

In order to ensure, independent, impartial and objective evaluation of the four commissioned activities, potential Delivery Agents must declare any links, affiliations or relationships with, or membership of the four organisations delivering the commissioned activities to be evaluated.

Similar declarations must be made in respect of members of the proposed Delivery Team(s) of the prospective Delivery Agent(s).

This information must be stated in the Expressions of Interest.

**Expressions of Interest** are therefore invited from potential Delivery Agents for:

### **LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities (Strong Communities)**

N.B.

- **A maximum of £10,000** has been allocated to this Commissioned Activity – **(maximum of £2,500 per individual evaluation)**.
- The Commissioned Activity must be completed **by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009**
- The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports specifically produced for, and resulting from, this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership

## 2. Programme Specification

<p><b>Elements of the Activity to be Commissioned</b></p>	<p><b>LAA 12-09 Evaluation of Four Commissioned Activities (Strong Communities)</b></p>
<p>EVALUATION OF FOUR, COMMISSIONED ACTIVITIES (STRONG COMMUNITIES)</p>	<p><i>The Safe and Strong Communities Board has no wish to be prescriptive about the approach to delivering this activity and its content and scope. However, it is envisaged that potential Delivery Agents will address the following issues as a matter of course in formulating their Expressions of Interest:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to be adopted in evaluating the four, specified commissioned activities</li> <li>• Background information to be reviewed</li> <li>• Evaluation techniques to be employed – how performance of each commissioned activity against its specific, overarching objective will be assessed - how impact on community cohesion, community engagement and capacity building of the Third Sector will be measured - how data will be collected, collated and analysed etc</li> <li>• How the activities' contributions, (individual and collective), to achievement of targets related to LAA National Indicators will be assessed</li> <li>• Issues to be considered</li> <li>• Overall scope, depth and nature of the evaluation methods to be used</li> <li>• How value for money will be assessed</li> <li>• Proposed content and structure of the Evaluation Reports</li> <li>• Timetable / schedule for completing the work within the stated deadline</li> <li>• Staff to be deployed, their skills and expertise</li> </ul>
<p>Delivery Agent</p>	<p>Expressions of Interest are welcomed from individual organisations or consortia.</p> <p>If a consortium applies to undertake delivery of the commissioned activity, <b><u>one organisation must be identified as the Lead Delivery Agent.</u></b> Accountability for delivery will remain with that identified Lead Delivery Agent.</p> <p>Potential Delivery Agents can apply to undertake evaluations of <b>one, two, three or all four</b> commissioned activities</p>
<p>Declaration re potential conflict of interest</p>	<p>In order to ensure independent, impartial and objective evaluations of the four commissioned activities, potential Delivery Agents must declare any links, affiliations or relationships with, or membership of the four organisations delivering the commissioned activities to be evaluated. Similar declarations must be made in respect of members of the proposed Delivery Team(s) of the prospective Delivery Agent(s).</p>

Clarification re potential conflict of interest, prior to submission of Expression of Interest	<b>N.B.</b> Any prospective Delivery Agent requiring clarification on potential conflicts of interest in relation to its own situation or that of its prospective Delivery Team, should contact <b>Natalie Downs on 0161 770 5196</b> for a ruling, prior to submitting its Expression of Interest.
Penalties for not declaring potential conflict of interest	Should a Delivery Agent be selected to carry out part or all of this commission and information subsequently comes to light that compromises its original submission in terms of failure to declare any potential conflict of interest, the commission may be terminated and steps may be taken to reclaim any payments made to that organisation.
Partnership Working	The selected Delivery Agent(s) will be expected to cooperate and collaborate, where appropriate, with other Delivery Agents undertaking activity commissioned on behalf of the Oldham Partnership
Duration of programme	The Commissioned Activity <b>must be completed by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009</b>
Deadline for receipt of Expressions of Interest	Potential Delivery Agents are invited to submit Expressions of Interest for undertaking the Commissioned Activity by <b>1.00 pm Friday 23 October 2009</b>
Area Based Grant Funds available	<b>A maximum of £10,000 of Area Based Grant, (a maximum of £2,500 per individual evaluation),</b> has been allocated to this Commissioned Activity.
Intellectual Property Rights	The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports <u>specifically produced for, and resulting from</u> , this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership.

### **3. Further Information**

In formulating Expressions of Interest, potential Delivery Agents should also bear in mind that the Strong Communities Assessment Panel, which will consider their submissions, will expect to see the following detail:

- Measurable, quantifiable Outputs, which demonstrate the effectiveness, scope and scale of the work undertaken
- A fully costed Expenditure Profile, which demonstrates value for money and effective use of financial resources.
- A work schedule, which shows clearly how the Commissioned Activity will be completed within the designated time scale
- Contingency plans / risk assessments to cover eventualities such as the departure or sickness of key staff during delivery of the Commissioned Activity
- Evidence of a proven track record in successfully undertaking evaluation work
- Demonstrable knowledge of community cohesion and engagement issues and the Third Sector
- Evidence that the results of any Equality Impact Assessment undertaken have been taken into account and that equality and diversity issues generally have been taken into account in planning the delivery of the Commissioned Activity

#### **4. Deadline for Submission of Expressions of Interest**

Electronic versions of the Expressions of Interest **together with two references** should be submitted on the template provided and e-mailed to:

**denis.durnian@oldham.gov.uk**

In addition, a **hand-signed, hard copy** of the Expression of Interest, (on the template provided), must be sent to the address listed below.

All Expressions of Interest, (electronic and hard copy versions) **must be received by 1.00 pm, Friday, 23 October 2009. Submissions received after the stated deadline will not be considered.**

It is the responsibility of the potential Delivery Agent to ensure that a signed, hard copy of their Expression of Interest has been received at the following address within the stated deadline.

Private and Confidential  
(LAA 12-09 Eval4Acts)  
Denis Durnian  
Partnership Support Team  
Oldham Council  
Room 441  
Level 4  
Civic Centre  
West Street  
Oldham  
OL1 1UL

All Expressions of Interest received from potential Delivery Agents within the stated deadline will be considered by an Assessment Panel, which will meet during the week commencing **26 October 2009**.

Applicants will be informed of the Assessment Panel's decisions within 21 days of the Assessment Panel meeting.

# APPENDIX A

## Brief Details of the Four Commissioned Activities (Strong Communities) to be Evaluated

### LAA 41-02A – Interfaith Development

The nature of the activity is to build good relations between the different faith communities represented in Oldham, to enable people of those faiths to be strong in their own identities and respectful of others. In addition, the activity will work with other organisations to address and reduce inequality and to enable people of faith to participate in the decision making processes of the Borough. It also provides the first point of contact for other organisations in the Borough in matters affecting all faiths, for developing inter-faith work and for providing mediation to resolve conflict and to provide a coordinated interfaith response to issues.

### LAA 25-04A – Good Relations Oldham

Good Relations Oldham, GRO, aims to:

- build good relations within and between the communities of Oldham;
- reduce community tensions;
- prevent conflict;
- support communities and organisations in managing and resolving disputes

Its activities comprise:

- Training and development in conflict awareness and mediation skills, including development of a team of qualified mediation practitioners
- Delivery of projects or casework by practitioners
- Development of a network of contacts, who can support the development of good relations work;
- Building the organisational capacity of GRO to deliver good relations work in Oldham
- Contributing to the development of capacity to support good relations work in the North West

### LAA 13-05 – Festival Partnership Activity

The aim of the Festival Partnership is to celebrate and promote the diversity of Oldham's communities. It presents opportunities for individuals and groups to discover fresh ideas, participate in and generate new work; furthering their understanding when they meet in creative environments with people from similar or different backgrounds.

At the heart of the Festival Partnership are the following core objectives:

- To bring together people who do not normally mix from different parts of Oldham to collaborate with a common aim and to give people a shared sense of belonging and common identity;
- To provide new public cultural happenings to animate Oldham, celebrate the diversity in Oldham and help promote pride in the town;
- To provide more opportunities for high quality arts participation with the aim of people having a more positive attitude towards people from other social and cultural backgrounds;

The Festival Partnership is an established cross-sector partnership of organisations, agencies, area-based initiatives and community groups that share a common value to promote stronger communities through genuine participation in cultural activity.

### **LAA 11-07C – VCFP and Compact Development**

The Voluntary Community and Faith Partnership, (VCFP), was established in January 2004. The main aim of the VCFP is to be an active and representative body for all the voluntary, community and faith groups in Oldham. It exists as a body to consult, to advocate and to influence policies, planning and delivery of services in Oldham on behalf of the VCF sector. The VCFP represents the third sector at the Oldham Partnership and thematic partnership groups. Its other aims include:

- To be aware of the needs and issues, which concern local people
- To represent and be the voice of local people, groups etc within the structure of the Oldham Partnership
- To engage and communicate with local people to more effectively meet the needs, and promote the vision of the Oldham Partnership.
- To speak and act together with a sense of agreed common purpose
- To regularly monitor and evaluate the progress and achievements of the VCFP

Although significant changes have taken place, there is strong evidence that the function of effective third sector representation to the strategic partnership and its work is still essential. This is strongly argued in the framework for the comprehensive area assessments that will require evidence that the third sector is meaningfully engaged in decision making.

The current commissioned activity is therefore seeking to implement the following changes:

- Open up the membership for the VCFP
- Make it easier for people to sign up to be a member of the VCFP and increase the number of people it represents.
- Create communities of interest groups (either geographic or thematic), where there are current gaps.
- Align membership with the networks to be established by the new 'Embedding Equality' commission.
- Create formal partnerships with other networks that exist across Oldham, (Children's Hub, Oldham LINK, and the new networks arising from the 'Embedding Equality' commission).
- Create a strategic action plan that monitors progress against key issues that concern the VCF sector
- Support the community champions and the Compact Steering Group to develop three codes of practice to support the Compact.
- Become a more proactive and solution-focused partner within the Oldham Partnership.