

Minutes

Oldham Partnership Steering Group

14 May 2009

Crompton Suite, Civic Centre

At 6pm

Members

Present:

Bill Edwards

Raad Al-Hamdani

James Allen

Jon Bloor

Cllr Olwen Chadderton

Marie Gillott

Stuart Goodwin

Roger Gould

Jean Maxwell

Laurian McDonald

Dave McGealy

Cllr Alan Roughley

Garth Sharpe

Cllr Glynis Shaw

Jonathan Yates

Chair and Environment Partnership

Saddleworth and Lees Area
Committee

Coldhurst Area Committee

Local Learning Partnership

Oldham Council

Jobcentre Plus

Greater Manchester Police

Churches Together

Royton and Shaw Area Committee

Alexandra Area Committee

Voluntary, community and faith sector

Oldham Council

Medlock Vale Area Committee

Oldham Council

Voluntary, community and faith sector

Observers

Present:

Martin Burroughs

John Eley

Pam Flynn

Ian Flanagan Smith

Susan Kirkham

Karen McCrackle

Oldham Partnership support team

Oldham Partnership support team

Government Office North West

Oldham Partnership support team

Oldham Council

Oldham Partnership support team

Apologies:

John Crompton

Janet Gipson

Ian Kendall

Lihanne Nelson

Moira Percy

Pauline Richardson

Failsworth Area Committee

Hollinwood Area Committee

Oldham Community Leisure

Children's Trust

GMPTE

Chadderton Area Committee

20/09 **Welcome and apologies**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies

21/09 **Minutes and matters arising**

Jimmy Allen requested that the update on youth provision be provided at the next meeting.

Similarly, the changes to the council's structure will be on the next agenda, along with an update on neighbourhood working. On the latter subject, Jimmy Allen reported that there will now be a regular meeting of all area committee co-optees.

The group heard that the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) work was continuing with the valued help of some steering group members. Garth Sharpe reported that he had met Harji Patel from the partnership support team to discuss EIA, but he would like to request a follow up meeting.

Jimmy Allen said that he had addressed a query to Tom Wolstencroft of Oldham Council after the last meeting, but had not received a reply.

ACTION:

- **Youth provision update to be provided at next meeting (Oldham Partnership support team – OPST)**
- **Update on council and neighbourhood working developments to be provided at next meeting (OPST)**
- **Further meeting with Garth to be arranged (HP)**
- **Tom Wolstencroft to be contacted (OPST)**

22/09 **Update on the Economic Development and Enterprise Block**

Jon Bloor gave the group an update on this block's work. The block has five key aims: enterprise, skills, innovation, investment and full employment. Although the recession has certainly caused the number of companies investing in Oldham to dry up, it has brought opportunities to help Oldham residents to develop new skills in readiness for the upturn. Jon gave an overview of the programmes that are underway across Oldham, including support for local companies to win local contracts such as for the work associated with the Building Schools for the Future programme and the adult careers service.

In some cases we don't yet know how we are performing against our targets because the data has not been published. We do know that we are on target to achieve certain important targets: the number of young people who are not in employment education or training (NEET) is 7.1% (target = 7.7%); the number of people in our worst performing wards claiming out of work benefits is 31.4% (target = 32%) and we have three times the amount of high quality commercial floor space than we were aiming for.

Jimmy Allen stated that employers are increasingly looking for vocational skills rather than just qualifications. He asked how we ensure our young people develop these skills. Jon acknowledged this could become an issue due to the recession, but that we have a lot of activity underway to address this. Indeed in comparison to areas with similar characteristics, Oldham's NEET figure is very good.

Cllr Chadderton asked how the help available to young people is promoted to them. Jon reported that every young person has a Connexions advisor so they don't need to seek out the support – instead it comes to them.

In terms of the impact of the credit crunch, Oldham does seem to have held its own so far. A series of roadshows to help residents and businesses beat the recession will begin soon, and a recent Passport to Employment programme led to 120 long term unemployed residents gaining employment at Tesco.

Garth Sharpe asked that the steering group be informed when the new figures are published.

ACTION: An update to be provided to steering group members in July when the new figures are available (JB)

23/09 **LAA performance report**

Ian Flanagan Smith gave an update on progress in meeting our performance targets, in particular focusing on those targets that are giving cause for concern.

- **Serious violent crime rate**

Stuart Goodwin reported that this is giving Greater Manchester Police (GMP) serious cause for concern. Increases in violent crime have occurred in particular in the town centre between 10pm on Friday and 4am on Sunday; and in domestic violence. The latter increase may indicate more confidence in reporting domestic violence.

GMP is working with trading standards on making Oldham's night time economy safer, but at the same time they recognise that some of Oldham's pubs and bars are close to bankruptcy and a stricter door policy may mean they go out of business. John Eley suggested that the steering group hear about Oldham's alcohol strategy at a future meeting.

- **Serious acquisitive crime rate**

Performance on this indicator slipped but a project to tackle it is seeing significant success especially around burglary which reduced significantly in February and March.

- **The number of new affordable homes**

This slipped too but is picking up again, in particular Tandle View Court will be open at the end of May. Jimmy Allen queried the delays on certain housing developments.

- **Obesity in year 6**

This currently stands at 18% of pupils. Again work is underway to address this. It was suggested the steering group's views be sought on Oldham's healthy weight strategy.

- **Stopping smoking**

We are not meeting the target for the number of people accessing the smoking cessation service. A site for the service in the market has been secured to bring the service to more people. Cllr Chadderton asked how we reach very young smokers.

John Eley asked whether the area committees felt they were getting enough information about their own areas. Members felt a break down by area (where possible) would be helpful, especially for the at risk targets.

ACTION: Alcohol strategy and healthy weight strategy to be presented at a future meeting (OPST)

NHS Oldham to clarify whether we do any work with very young smokers (OPST to contact Alan Higgins)

Breakdown by area to be provided to area committee reps where possible. (IFS)

24/09 **Oldham Partnership strategic research working group (OPSRWG)**

Susan Kirkham talked group members through OPSRWG's plan for this year. She highlighted:

- Oldhaminfo.org needs further investment and has the potential to include a partnership consultation and research database, either developed in house, or by consultants.
- A general residents survey that would gauge residents' perceptions and therefore tell us how we are performing on some of our local area agreement indicators.
- A longitudinal survey, where the same people are tracked over a number of years. This idea has received support from the Public Service Board, but would have considerable costs attached (approximately £150,000 per year). Roger Gould asked how significant it is that we do this only in Oldham. Could we work with other authorities or get financial contributions from partners?

The research on low income, poverty and worklessness is underway. A report on the findings will be delivered at the steering group's September meeting.

The Steering Group approved the implementation of the 09/10 research delivery plan.

ACTION: Research findings presented to the group in September (IFS); Oldhaminfo to be promoted at area committees (MB)

25/09 **A proposal for well-being indicators**

Martin Burroughs presented a proposal to get a picture of well-being in its widest sense in Oldham. He proposed adopting a methodology that has already been adopted by several local councils and measures well-being under three domains – personal, social and place. Under these there are a further three sub-domains and under each of those a series of indicators.

Cllr Roughley suggested a more rigorous definition of what we mean by well-being is needed; and also asked what would change as a result of us doing this activity. Do we know how a measure of well-being helped the other areas that have developed one? Pam Flynn said she would help us to get in touch with Manchester City Council so we can learn from their work.

Ward-level detail may be difficult to access, but group members suggested it would be

helpful in assessing whether resources are directed correctly.

Raad Al-Hamdani said that the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs had commissioned a piece of work on well-being measures that may help.

ACTION: Evidence as to the effectiveness of well-being measures to be sought. (MB)

26/09 Other business

Ian highlighted an event on 23 June to which elected members and area committee representatives had been invited. The workshop will look at long term targets for Oldham, which we have been asked to develop by the Audit Commission. The outcome of this event will be reported back to the steering group. Jonathan Yates asked whether there will be a voluntary and community sector representative at this.

ACTION: 2020 targets to be reported to a future steering group meeting, and VCS representation on 23 June to be checked (IFS)

27/09 Future meeting dates and agenda items

Bill Edwards asked that steering group members help shape future agendas. One item was suggested: an assessment of the cost of partnership staff.

9 July, 6pm, Crompton Suite:

- Update on council re-structure and implications for steering group
- Update on neighbourhood working
- Youth provision
- Latest economic development and enterprise figures
- Assessment of the cost of partnership support staff

10 September, 6pm, Crompton Suite:

- Findings of the low income, poverty and worklessness research
- 2020 targets

Other agenda items to be reported at a relevant time:

- Alcohol strategy
- Healthy weight strategy

ACTION: Steering group members to advise the partnership support team of agenda items by 18 June 2009.