

Minutes

Oldham Partnership executive

17 December 2009

Groundwork Environment Centre

2pm

Members present:

Nick Brown	Oldham Sixth Form College
Gail Richards	NHS Oldham
Cllr Howard Sykes	Oldham Council
Cllr Lynne Thompson	Oldham Council
Charlie Parker	Oldham Council
Paul Argyle	Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
Liz Windsor Welsh	Voluntary community & faith sector
Phil Sumner	Strong Communities Strategy Group
Cath Cook	Voluntary community & faith sector
Marie Gillott	Jobcentre Plus
Sally Pearson	Government Office North West
Alan Higgins	NHS Oldham
Peter Jenkinson	Jobcentre Plus
Jimmy Allen (observer)	OP steering group cooptee
Cllr Ann Wingate (observer)	Oldham Council

Officers present:

John Eley	Oldham Partnership
Alison Vaughan	Oldham Partnership
Karen McCrackle	Oldham Partnership
Michael Jameson	Oldham Council
Lihanne Nelson	Oldham Council
Tim Mitchell	Positive Steps Oldham

Apologies:

Sharyn Lewis	Greater Manchester Chamber
Caroline Ball	Greater Manchester Police
Ian Flanagan Smith	Oldham Partnership
Charles Shaw	OCVYS
Michele Carr	Oldham Council
Cllr Dean	Oldham Council

39/09 **Welcome and apologies**

Nick Brown welcomed colleagues

40/09 **Minutes and matters arising**

Cllr Sykes explained the reason for his, and Charlie Parker's, absence from the previous meeting.

The minutes from the executive meeting on 24th November were approved.

John Eley tabled the notes from the public service board on 15th December.

41/09 **Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)**

John Eley summarised the results of the CAA and recommended a coordinated approach to how we respond.

Charlie Parker commented that he feels we shouldn't reflect too much on this report, but should continue looking to the future. It is difficult to challenge our worklessness red flag in a recession; but the red flag for tackling residents' perceptions continues to be actively tackled.

Phil Sumner highlighted the risk of the BSF programme causing community tension.

Liz Windsor Welsh said that as part of the priority setting process for the voluntary, community and faith partnership, members have been asked what they could do to contribute towards improving our performance in the red flag areas.

42/09 **Commissioning a regional science centre**

John Eley presented a paper which made recommendations on delivering a regional science centre in Oldham. Option 2a was recommended: purchasing an existing property in Oldham and transforming it into the regional science centre.

Phil Sumner asked what this option might cost. Charlie Parker explained that we don't yet know the purchase price as it will depend on the commercial market, however we should certainly ensure we get value for money and acquire the premises at the right price. Nick Brown said at its most expensive, this option was 50% cheaper than other options.

There was support also for option 2b, where premises would be leased. This would enable the centre to be up and running for the 2010-11 academic year.

It was agreed that we decide which timescale is most feasible and will allow some negotiations about premises to take place. After some initial negotiations a report will go to council leadership.

ACTION:

Initial negotiations regarding premises to be undertaken

43/09 **Allocations of area based grant (ABG)**

A report was presented to the executive to advise on changes to the ABG for 2009-10 and to propose allocations for 2010-11. The terms of reference for a single commissioning board were also presented.

Alison Vaughan explained it is now timely to review how we use ABG in anticipation of cuts from 2011 onwards – this scrutiny will be undertaken by the chief executive's management board and will be brought back to the executive who will make the ultimate decisions.

Marie Gillott asked why the working neighbourhoods fund (WNF) isn't in one of the blocks. Alison clarified it was split across the blocks to enable work towards strategic priorities. John Eley added that we need some discussion about WNF uplift and suggested we do this at the next executive. We also need to take into account Greater Manchester level working, and the partnership rather than the council should be involved in these GM-level discussions.

The allocations for 2010-11 were agreed. It was, however, noted that if a Conservative government came to power, we should expect them to produce a budget in fifty days. This could have implications for ABG, so allocations should be referred to as draft.

Phil Sumner questioned why the strong communities strategy group's allocation was significantly less again in 2010-11. Alison clarified that the Priority Programme Fund, which is usually within this allocation, is a locally pooled resource and we haven't received information about this fund as yet.

ACTION:

Discussions about WNF uplift to be held at the next executive

44/09 Update on safer stronger communities block

The SSC update was circulated but not presented due to Caroline Ball not being present. The presentation will be re-scheduled.

ACTION: Item to be re-scheduled

45/09 Children's Trust update

Michael Jameson (director of children's services, Oldham Council) and Tim Mitchell (chief executive, Positive Steps Oldham) presented an update on the work of the Children's Trust. The trust is a statutory body which is responsible for developing the Children and Young People's Plan and for commissioning a total budget of around £270 million.

The trust was judged to be performing well by Ofsted but partners are well aware of where areas of challenge still remain.

Nick Brown asked whether concerns existed around primary-level attainment. Michael replied that primary schools had been allowed to operate 'in a bubble' until now because secondary attainment was a greater concern. However the school improvement board will now have a sharper focus on primary education.

Charlie Parker thanked Michael for bringing much greater rigour and a focus on getting

the basics right to education in Oldham. This has already led to much progress. Michael added that there were many fantastic achievements that everyone should be proud of.

46/09 Oldham Council budget consultation

Cllr Sykes outlined the council's budget proposals, which had been signed off by the full council the previous evening, and include £8.5 million of the £10 million in savings that the council needs to make. Funding cuts to local authority budgets have been exacerbated by the recession as income from planning and parking charges, for example, lessens and demand for services like free school meals grows.

The budget is laid out under four corporate themes and each priority action has a clear plan and people who are accountable for it. A more detailed supporting paper will be circulated to the executive.

Gail Richards informed the executive that NHS Oldham faces extremely challenging circumstances over the next few years too. Some discussions between the council and the primary care trust around combining some functions have already taken place, but Gail suggested that broad discussions to look at the financial challenges facing the public sector as a whole should be held at the executive. The next executive meeting will be too late for this, so Gail asked for a one off meeting to be convened in late January or early February.

ACTION:

More detailed budget proposal paper to be circulated to exec members, and exec members to give their feedback

Meeting about the future of public sector finance to be convened as soon as possible

47/09 Compact update

Cath Cook gave an update on the compact, a written agreement of conduct between the statutory and voluntary and community sectors.

Cath highlighted particular areas of progress since the compact was launched in May, including the development of a three year action plan and a dispute resolution process, and the recruitment of more compact champions than any other area in Greater Manchester. Three codes of practice, which will provide more practical detail on how the sectors will work together are in development now.

ACTION:

Annual compact updates to be given to the executive

48/09 LAA review and refresh

John reported that this is underway, and that some targets, especially around employment and the economy, are open for re-negotiation. There is a particular feeling that targets around the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) are unrealistic – but, unlike adult unemployment figures, we aren't able to re-negotiate this target. Tim Mitchell also highlighted a significant difference in NEET targets

across the country, and asked for some clarity on this.

Sally Pearson explained that the amount of reward grant we receive won't be affected by targets we haven't met due to the recession. We will receive reward grant for economic indicators despite not reaching targets.

49/09 **Dates of future meetings**

All at Groundwork at 2pm.

24 March 2010

24 June 2010

23 September 2010

23 December 2010

50/09 **Agenda items for future meetings at this stage**

Update: safe and strong communities block (postponed from November 2009)

Block update (March 2010)

WNF uplift (March 2010)

Interim town centre plan (at relevant time)

51/09 **Timetable for the next meeting**

5 March – Final request to executive members for agenda items

11 March – Deadline for receipt of agenda items

15 March – Deadline for receipt of reports

17 March – Agenda and reports emailed and posted to executive group