

# Minutes

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## Oldham Partnership executive

**24 November 2009**

**Crompton Suite, Oldham Civic Centre**

2pm

**Members present:**

Nick Brown	Oldham Sixth Form College
Cllr Jackie Stanton	Oldham Council
Cllr Lynne Thompson	Oldham Council
Cllr Jim McMahon	Oldham Council
Cllr Dave Hibbert	Oldham Council
Carolyn Wilkins	Oldham Council
Kevin Talbot	Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
Liz Windsor Welsh	Voluntary community & faith sector
Phil Sumner	Strong Communities Strategy Group
Jonathan Yates	Voluntary community & faith sector
Caroline Ball	Greater Manchester Police
Andrea Lee	Jobcentre Plus
Sharyn Lewis	Greater Manchester Chamber
Garth Sharpe (observer)	West Oldham

**Officers present:**

John Eley	Oldham Partnership
Alison Vaughan	Oldham Partnership
Michele Carr	Oldham Council
Karen McCrackle	Oldham Partnership
John Rooney	Oldham Council
June Smith	Oldham Council

**Guests:**

Dave Benstead	Business Leadership Group
Cllr Keith Pendlebury	Oldham Council

**Apologies:**

Charlie Parker	Oldham Council
Cllr Howard Sykes	Oldham Council
Gail Richards	NHS Oldham
Elaine McLean	Oldham Council
Greg Burke	Government Office for the North West
Marie Gillott	Jobcentre Plus
Ian Flanagan Smith	Oldham Partnership

**26/09 Welcome, apologies and introduction**

Nick Brown opened the meeting by describing an opportunity to rapidly develop the regional science centre during 2010 if the partnership is willing to aggregate resources to enable this to happen.

Cllr Stanton commended the idea. Cllr McMahon supported the idea and commented that the physical environment around the colleges needs to improve. John Eley said that if we make a conscious decision to pool our resources and funds, a memo of understanding between partners and a clear business case will be required. Phil Sumner agreed and asked for a paper demonstrating how the idea would work to come to December's executive.

**ACTION:**

**Paper to commission the science centre to be brought to December executive (JE)**

**27/09 Minutes and matters arising**

- It was explained that Charlie Parker and Cllr Howard Sykes' absence was unavoidable, due to both being called to the treasury. Phil Sumner (who raised the issue at the last meeting) accepted this; Cllr McMahon commented that neither had attended for over a year and their buy in to the LSP was very important.
- Nick Brown told members that in the spirit of openness all partnership minutes are available online at [www.oldhampartnership.org.uk](http://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk)
- The June executive minutes were approved
- Nick presented the public service board (PSB) minutes and asked how we should share these in future. It was made clear that the PSB's role is about increasing the speed with which we get things done, rather than making decisions.
- Phil Sumner commented that he would like the opportunity to have an input into certain items that come up at PSB.
- Several members commented that CAA might lead us to review the partnership and ensure we're fit for purpose, so we could gain greater clarity on the relationship between the PSB and the executive during this process.
- Cllr McMahon commented that the executive shouldn't be overly concerned with process and reviewing minutes

**28/09 European Public Sector Award (EPSA)**

John reported that Oldham Partnership had been awarded an EPSA, beating over 80 partnerships from across Europe. The judges were impressed by the scale of partnership working in Oldham. Nick reported he had taken part in an event in London recently that had also shown him that Oldham Partnership is far ahead of our counterparts.

**29/09 Credit crunch cabinet update**

Michele Carr presented an update on the activities of the credit crunch cabinet (CCC). Investment has mostly been around supporting residents through the recession, because we already commission a range of business support through the economy and enterprise block. In particular support has focused on helping residents who haven't been

unemployed before.

Overview and Scrutiny will review the work of the CCC and its impact. Michele reported that the existence of the CCC has highlighted that there is no natural home in the partnership for financial inclusion, and this should be considered in the CCC's exit strategy.

The CCC has spent approximately half of its £400,000 rapid intervention fund; having been extremely disciplined and only commissioned activities that definitely can't be provided through other means. Andrea Lee reported that mainstream provision has been adjusted, so Jobcentre Plus now provided more services for professionals or people with a trade. Cllrs McMahan and Hibbert suggested a snapshot of the interventions and impacts in their wards would be useful. Nick suggested a one page summary of what the CCC has done across the borough, and the impact, would be a practical way forward. To round off these discussions, Jonathan Yates commented that Oldham's response to the recession, in particular the speed at which partners responded, was excellent.

**ACTION:**

**October CCC mins to be circulated to the executive (MC)**

**One page summary of CCC activity and impact (MC)**

**30/09 LAA reward grant**

John talked executive members through his report on our progress towards twelve stretch targets and the likely amount of reward grant we will receive. The report also covered the principles for allocating the reward: on one or two transformational projects that will make a major difference in the borough. Cllrs McMahan, Stanton and Thompson gave their support for using the reward grant on a major project that Oldham will benefit from for years to come and will demonstrate to residents what the partnership has achieved. Cllr McMahan suggested we revisit this in December, alongside the paper about the regional science centre. He also suggested we agree a line about the allocation of the reward grant, so that partners clearly understand what it will be used for.

**ACTIONS:**

**Revisit reward grant allocation, alongside regional science centre paper (JE)**

**Agree a line for the allocation of the reward grant**

**31/09 Update on safer stronger communities block (including housing block)**

Caroline Ball said that due to illness the SSC report would be circulated by email within two weeks.

John Rooney delivered the housing update.

Phil Sumner commented that in his experience, Oldham was a difficult place to be homeless and he had sometimes needed to drive people to Manchester for help. John Rooney responded that a rough sleeper count had been undertaken one night – only one person was found and they were re-homed that night. He acknowledged that this didn't include the 'hidden homeless' who might be sleeping on a friend's sofa for example. There is accommodation immediately available in Oldham so people shouldn't need to be brought to Manchester. Nick commented that when his students have needed to be re-housed it has been handled very well.

Cllr Hibbert asked whether we struggle to find areas for development. John responded that yes, we do, but our new homes target takes this into consideration, and government

is allowing us to re-negotiate this target in light of the recession.

Caroline Ball asked about re settling offenders and John reported that housing still work with community safety services to ensure offenders know what to expect when taking up a tenancy or to find them supported housing if necessary.

**ACTION:**

**SSC report to be circulated within two weeks (CB)**

**32/09 Area Based Grant Commissioning**

John reported that ABG has significantly streamlined the way we work, but that partnership structures could be further simplified by a single commissioning board. Work is underway to set this up.

Phil Sumner asked that the single commissioning board include people who understand the 'soft' targets. Jonathan Yates said the voluntary and community sector would support the move to one board. Caroline Ball urged a note of caution because we don't yet know what will happen to ABG in the future. Michele Carr suggested that particularly for economy and enterprise there needs to be an understanding of how changes in our commissioning structure fit with regional and sub regional commissioning of services, and she also commented that she would like private sector involvement retained.

Cllr McMahon stated that the membership and terms of reference of such a board would be extremely important and also that we need to begin to manage the risk of changes to ABG now.

**33/09 Comprehensive area assessment update**

John reported that Oldham has been provisionally allocated two green flags and two red flags in our CAA.

Green: breaking the cycle of worklessness – a higher skilled generation; significant reductions in teenage pregnancies through information sharing

Red: Resident perceptions of Oldham and public sector bodies; rising numbers of people on out of work benefits for more than five years

This is under embargo until 9<sup>th</sup> December when it will be released at

[www.direct.gov.uk/oneplace](http://www.direct.gov.uk/oneplace). A red flag isn't a straight condemnation; it shows that what we currently do isn't sufficient work to tackle an issue and the Audit Commission will monitor our progress more carefully.

Liz Windsor Welsh asked where issues raised in the CAA will be discussed and what the next step in dealing with it collectively will be. She also suggested that in many cases we have dealt with an issue raised by a resident, but they might not always believe that we have, due to a mistrust of service providers.

**ACTION:**

**Confirmation of next steps with regard to CAA to be given (CW, JE)**

**34/09 Business Leadership Group (BLG)**

BLG is a group of business people from large Oldham businesses. They have significant influence nationally and internationally and would like to put their skills and knowledge to good use to help Oldham. Dave Benstead, the group's chair, expressed their commitment and desire to do this. All members have particular specialisms and are keen

to 'get their hands dirty'.

The executive welcomed the development of such a group and discussed how they saw the BLG's relationship with the partnership:

- The BLG could look at the prospectuses and identify where they could help
- They could focus on one particular priority, for example the university town
- They could have a role on the single commissioning board
- The partnership wants to do some very ambitious things – having the help of people who are involved in multi million pound activities day to day is extremely valuable
- They could be part of a regional science centre working group

It was agreed that there would be a small group with ex-officio membership of the executive. They would be called in for certain debates. Cllr Hibbert expressed his personal commitment to working with the BLG. Before the next meeting, discussions would be held to allow the exec to get an idea of the BLG's priorities so we can identify what it would be useful for them to be involved in.

**ACTION:**

**Discussions with BLG to be held**

**35/09 Prospectuses**

The latest versions are on the Oldham Partnership website  
([www.oldhampartnership.org.uk](http://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk))

**36/09 Dates of future meetings**

17<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm

**37/09 Agenda items for future meetings at this stage**

Update: Children and young people block – December 2009  
Interim town centre plan – at relevant time

**38/09 Timetable for the next meeting**

*Monday 7 Dec 2009*

*Deadline for receipt of reports*

*Wednesday 9 Dec 2009*

*Agenda and reports emailed and posted to executive*