

**Oldham Local Area Agreement: Draft 3<sup>rd</sup> October 05**

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## 1.0 Context and Approach

Since its Amber Red performance rating by Government Office North West in 2004 the Oldham Partnership **has initiated an ambitious process of transformational change** in partnership working and outcome delivery. The Local Area Agreement is being utilised in Oldham to **accelerate** the process of change and drive implementation of the **Community Strategy**. We see the Local Area Agreement as a catalyst for driving forward more effective, co-ordinated and streamlined joint agency working and we are actively in the process of planning and implementing a range of improvements to this effect:

a) During September 2005 the Oldham Partnership Executive re-organised on the basis of a **Local Public Service Board**. The Executive now has a significantly reduced membership concentrated on Chief Executives from major public sector agencies plus representatives from the voluntary and community, further and higher education and private sectors. Its role is to ensure delivery of the LAA and Community Strategy. The Oldham Partnership Steering Group is now responsible for strategic policy making with delivery and executive responsibilities vested in the Oldham Partnership Executive. We have reduced the number of meetings of these fora from eighteen per annum to eight and are actively collapsing the excess bureaucracy around this structure;

b) The LAA is being used to **rationalise and streamline our partnership structure** around the five blocks of the Oldham Local Area Agreement: Safer and Stronger Communities, Economic Development and Enterprise, Healthier Communities and Older People, Children and Young People, and Housing. The Oldham Partnership consists of ten thematic partnerships: Children & Young People's, Community Cohesion, Cultural, Economic, Environment, Health & Social Care, Housing, Local Learning, Oldham Against Crime, and Voluntary, Community & Faith. These are supported by a host of additional partnerships such as the Sure Start Partnership, Teenage Pregnancy Partnership, Oldham Housing Investment Partnership, Oldham Race Equality Partnership, Town Centre Partnership, etc.. Discussions have commenced with our partner organisations and partnerships as to how best to streamline structures and **orientate** around the LAA. In Oldham, we are utilising the LAA to improve and develop our partnerships structures on the basis of our **strategic priorities**. We also envisage that this will be reflected, where necessary, by **internal re-organisation** within our partner organisations to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to multi-agency working.

c) During 2005 the Oldham Partnership has been **embedding a Performance Management Framework** based upon quarterly monitoring reports from Thematic Partnerships and an annual **Oldham in Profile Report**. We are currently investigating, with partner organisations and other Local Area Agreement pilots, the development of a co-ordinated, inter-agency performance management system which will provide data on a quarterly, six monthly and annual basis. We envisage that the LSP/ LAA Performance Management Framework will gradually evolve into a single unified system of performance management, reporting, audit and inspection.

d) In November 2005 we will be agreeing the first steps in introducing an Oldham Partnership **Commissioning Framework** which will oversee the commissioning of resources through the Oldham Partnership Executive and five "blocks" of the Local Area Agreement. The Commissioning Framework has been developed with Deloitte and will give the partnership a common structure for the joint commissioning of work programmes and services against shared objectives. We are investigating the development of more co-ordinated and efficient **programme management systems**. We envisage that the development of the Commissioning Framework will lead to a

rationalisation of fiscal controls, auditing and governance arrangements concerning the myriad of funding streams which enter Oldham. We propose, initially, to begin to negotiate the inclusion of major strategic funding streams such as Housing Market Renewal and New Deal for Communities. From April 2006, we will commence to commission LAA Reward Grant and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund through the Oldham Partnership Commissioning Framework. We believe that the Commissioning Framework will enable us to facilitate a better managed, more transparent and sustainable approach to the deployment of resources against strategic priorities. This system will enable us to more readily **mainstream** successful work programmes initiated through funding streams such as **Neighbourhood Renewal Fund**.

e) The Oldham Partnership will utilise the LAA to continue to drive a **strategic, targeted and evidenced based approach** to resource deployment and service improvement. Our improved performance management information and feedback from the recent LSP Annual Review with GONW has been used to identify the strategic priorities within the Oldham Local Area Agreement. We expect that the Annual Review with Government Office North West will be the mechanism for ascertaining the strategic priorities for the Oldham Partnership.

## **1.1 Community Cohesion and “narrowing the gap”**

Since 2001 community cohesion has been at the centre of public policy in Oldham and a great deal has been achieved. We recognise that our work around community cohesion has to continue with renewed vigour and have viewed the Local Area Agreement through a **community cohesion ‘window’**. Our strategic approach to community cohesion has been to utilise our performance management regimes and consultative and engagement processes to select outcomes and indicators within the LAA which will help **to narrow the gap** (either between Oldham and the rest of the country or between areas of Oldham and the borough as a whole). We will approach to community cohesion within the Oldham LAA is to **target** priority population groups and geographical areas within our performance management baselines and targets. We intend to utilise the Local Area Agreement to focus resources and programmes of activity to ‘narrow the gap’. We shall continue to develop our inter-agency research and intelligence systems such as GMAC and OldhamInfo to continue to develop our knowledge in targeting priority groups and neighbourhoods. Through Neighbourhood Solutions we are developing inter-agency working at a neighbourhood scale. Working through our six Area Committees we are promoting community engagement and a joint agency approach to resolving local issues.

## **1.2 Housing Market Renewal**

Oldham’s housing stock requires large-scale interventions to improve the quality of both private and social housing, satisfy the requirements of a modern housing market, and meet the demand for social housing. As part of a Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder from 2004-2019, Oldham has commenced a major programme of investment designed to regenerate and improve our priority housing areas. It makes obvious strategic sense to **align Housing Market Renewal with the Local Area Agreement** and to utilise the LAA to help address the significant housing issues in Oldham which lie outside the HMR Pathfinder area. The Oldham Partnership has, therefore, decided to develop a **fifth block of the LAA around housing issues**. We recognise that housing is a major strategic issue which has a major impact across the other four blocks of the LAA particularly in terms of quality of life for Oldham residents.

### 1.3 Major Capital Programmes

The physical regeneration of Oldham is seen as an integral component of the five blocks of the Local Area Agreement. We believe that the major projects included **within Oldham Beyond**, such as University Centre Oldham, will make a major contribution to many of our strategic priorities including not just higher education attainment but also economic growth, higher income levels, reduced crime and better community cohesion. Capital programmes such as LIFT, Extended Schools and PFI schemes will also make a major contribution to the achievement of the LAA objectives and we are actively investigating the inclusion of such schemes within the appropriate blocks of the LAA. In order to improve the co-ordination and effectiveness of our capital programmes, we are also exploring the opportunities to commission programmes of over £one million through the Oldham Partnership Commissioning Framework.

### 2.0 Involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector

Oldham is fortunate in having a **large and active Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)** which provide a wide range of services and activities. Comprising over around 900 organisations, the Voluntary Community Sector is worth around **£36 million per annum** to the local economy, has 2,800 employees and deploys 8,000 volunteers. It is the aim of the Oldham Local Area Agreement to continue to **build the capacity of this sector** to enable it to achieve its full potential as a provider of a diverse array of services and a facilitator for community engagement and empowerment.

Through a formal **protocol** between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Oldham Partnership the VCS is represented throughout the structure of the Local Strategic Partnership and makes an active contribution to the work programme of the partnership. At the Oldham Partnership Executive, the VCS has two Executive Members.

The Oldham Partnership has supported the **full involvement** of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Local Area Agreement negotiations. The LSP has supported (in line with the CEN/LSP Protocol) a twin-track approach to VCS engagement in negotiations around each of the five blocks of the LAA:

- a) direct involvement of VCS organisations as service providers in their own right;
- b) nomination of two representatives of the VCS (by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Partnership) for each Block.

VCS members have also been able to input into the development of the Local Area Agreement through regular meetings of the Oldham Partnership Steering Group and Executive. The VCS also presented its approach and involvement in the LAA at **the Oldham Partnership Annual Conference** on 27<sup>th</sup> September. This event also enabled VCS members to further contribute to the Oldham LAA through a series of workshops designed to test and develop the content of the Local Area Agreement. The VCS also featured in a **promotional video** designed to illustrate the work of the Oldham Partnership and the opportunities provided by the LAA.

The Voluntary and Community Sector has seen the Oldham Local Area Agreement as an opportunity to **help the sector develop its capacity and increase its ability to deliver against our shared strategic priorities**. The sector has **aligned** its Community Empowerment Team Grant comprising **£438,000 in 2005/6** within the Safer and Stronger Communities Block of the Local Area Agreement. Although hosted within this block, the Oldham Partnership recognises the

**crosscutting role of the VCS** in contributing to the strategic priorities across the five blocks of the LAA.

### **3.0 An Inclusive and Project Managed Approach**

Our approach to the Local Area Agreement has been to facilitate, through the Oldham Partnership, the **active engagement and participation of over one hundred organisations and agencies** which together constitute the Local Strategic Partnership. Together, these organisations and agencies span the public, private, educational and voluntary and community sectors within Oldham. The LAA has also been developed with the active participation of both Elected Members and representatives of Oldham's six Area Committees.

To secure the full and active engagement of all our partners we have:

a) Regularly reported and debated the development of the LAA through the **Oldham Partnership Executive and Steering Group** and within our ten Thematic Partnerships;

b) The Oldham Partnership **Annual Conference on 27<sup>th</sup> September** focused in detail on the achievements of the Oldham Partnership and development of the LAA. Attracting over 170 delegates, the Conference explained and presented progress on the LAA by speakers from Oldham Council, Greater Manchester Police, Oldham Primary Care Trust, Zetex Limited, the Voluntary Community Sector and Government Office. The conference included workshops which enabled delegates to discuss and recommend improvements to the LAA based upon outcomes, budgets, local efficiencies, freedoms and flexibilities, and improvements to the Oldham Partnership. Feedback from the Conference is being incorporated into the LAA and a Conference Report produced.

c) Progress on the LAA has also been regularly reported in our partnership **newsletters** and within the **local press**. We have developed a Local Area Agreement section of the Oldham Partnership **website** ([www.oldhampartnership.org.uk](http://www.oldhampartnership.org.uk)) which in August received around 6,000 hits.

The Oldham Partnership has endorsed an approach to the LAA based on **tight project management**:

a) Overall project management of the LAA is vested in a small **Steering Group** led by Interim Executive Director OMBC Sean Harris. The Steering Group meets on a weekly basis and oversees the implementation of the key tasks of the LAA within defined timescales set out in a detailed project plan and Gantt Chart;

b) The Oldham Partnership has **delegated responsibility** for negotiation of the LAA to a number of **Block Leads**. Block leads comprise representatives of the Council, PCT, Police and Private Sector. They report progress to the LAA Steering Group;

c) A small LAA **Support Team** of five officers co-ordinated by Head of Corporate Policy Michele Carr provides administrative and logistical support to the Block Leads. An inter-agency Finance Group led by Mike Hudson provides specialised fiscal advice for the developing LAA and Oldham Partnership Commissioning Framework;

d) Pro formas are being utilised to pull together the salient information for negotiation of each of the five blocks. **Examples of the five blocks are appended to this note;**

e) Progress and formal liaison with **Government Office** on the Local Area Agreement is conducted through the LAA Steering Group. Negotiations are led by Sean Harris (OMBC), John Eley (Oldham Partnership) and by Mike Greenwood and David Davies from Government Office.

## **4.0 Key Objectives for each Block**

### **4.1 Safer and Stronger Communities – *Tackling crime and fear of crime and creating better neighbourhoods***

In addition to the mandatory outcomes for this block, we are actively examining a set of outcomes (such as *Improved Local Environmental Quality*) intended to drive forward a range of **environmental improvements**. This approach is intended to **combine measures to reduce crime and fear of crime with the creation of cleaner, safer and more attractive neighbourhoods with increased community engagement**.

This block currently comprises twenty-five indicators with initial baselines and targets established for fifteen of these. Gaps in data are particularly evident around community empowerment and we will be undertaking a survey with MORI in Autumn 2005 to provide baselines and targets for a further five indicators. We are also actively developing additional indicators which will enable us to target priority groups and areas and 'narrow the gap'.

**Six potential stretch targets** have so far been identified which include:

- a) total crime;
- b) domestic burglary
- c) violence against the person
- d) criminal damage
- e) number of people engaged in volunteering activity
- f) increased street cleanliness

**Fifteen funding streams** are currently being examined for this block including Street Scene (mainstream Council budget), Local Transport Plan, Waste Performance and Efficiency, Basic Command Unit, Anti-Social Behaviour Grant, Building Safer Communities, Drugs Strategy Partnership Grant, Drugs Intervention Programme, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Community Empowerment Team Grant, Domestic Violence Grant and Eco-school (mainstream Council budget). Current funding streams potentially allocated total **£2,716,775 for 2005/6 (this figure is likely to substantially increase)**.

### **4.2 Economic Development and Enterprise – *Improving aspirations, skills, educational attainment and employment opportunities***

In addition to the mandatory outcomes for this block, we will be seeking to **increase skills levels within the local population in order to boost the local economy and improve income levels**.

This block comprises seventeen indicators and performance baselines have been identified for many of these. Indicators have been developed to support a targeted approach consistent with the Oldham

LAA. For example, we have specific indicators to measure the number of people in priority groups assisted in moving into work (lone parents, sick and disabled people, people out of work for over six months) and to reduce worklessness; particularly in the three most disadvantaged wards.

Further development of this block is being undertaken with SQW Economic Development Consultants who are currently undertaking an **economic assessment of Oldham**. This work is aligned with the development of our LAA and will be completed at the beginning of November.

Economic development and enterprise will be greatly assisted by the implementation of major **flagship capital projects** such as those envisaged in Oldham Beyond. Therefore, inclusion of major capital projects is being considered for this block and development of Oldham Beyond projects, Mumps Business area, Hollinwood Junction and A62 corridor improvements have been included as indicators within the LAA.

Potential funding streams so far identified include LSC and JobCentre Plus, ESF, ERDF, LABGI, NRF and LEGI. We wish to pursue opportunities for pooling LSC and JobCentre Plus funding through GONW as these funding streams are not exclusive to Oldham.

We will also be seeking to develop a more co-ordinated and streamlined approach to consultation, research and engagement with the private sector to reduce duplication and consultation fatigue. Flexibilities sought include relaxation of data protection legislation and the ability to negotiate targets locally between agencies.

### **4.3 Healthier Communities and Older People – *Creating more opportunities to enable citizens to lead healthy, active and longer lives***

In addition to the mandatory outcomes for this block, outcomes are focusing upon measures to **improve the health of the population by improving lifestyles, increase life expectancy and reduce health inequalities**. There is also a focus upon **improving the quality of life of older people** including their involvement in service development and provision.

Forty-two indicators have been identified for this block, many of which are “baskets” of indicators to measure complex health and lifestyle outcomes. Proposed indicators include:

- Prevalence of smoking in the Oldham population;
- Proportion of people surveyed reporting consumption of fruit and vegetables at 5 portions per day;
- Proportion of the surveyed population reporting alcohol consumption per week at above the recommended level;
- Number of pensioner households in receipt of pension credit or council tax credit.

Seventeen potential funding streams have so far been identified and include Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Falls Prevention, Mental Health Grant and European Development Fund.

Local efficiencies for this block will concentrate on integrated performance management. The Health and Social Care Act provides many of the freedoms required to implement the LAA. However, we are investigating freedoms around the licensing of premises for alcohol sales and smoke free public spaces.

#### **4.4 Children and Young People – *Enabling children and young people to lead healthy, active lives and be highly skilled, educated and socially responsible***

Outcomes for this block will largely reflect the five **Every Child Matters** national outcomes of: Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution, Achieve Economic Well-Being. For example, outcomes for children and young people include improving health; ensuring they (particularly those most vulnerable) stay safe; ensuring they excel through formal and informal education.

Potential indicators include:

- Increasing the percentage of schools achieving Level 3 Healthy Schools Standards;
- Reducing reported juvenile nuisance;
- Reducing conception rates (under 16s);
- Reducing the percentage of young people using drugs and alcohol;
- Reducing the number of under 18s killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents;
- Reducing incidents of reported bullying in school and non-school settings;
- Improving school attendance;
- Improving Key Stage 1-4 achievement;
- Achievement at NVQ2 and 3 at 19;
- Reducing the proportion of 16-18s NEET.

Improving outcomes against the full range of identified indicators will focus on:

- The macro level – narrowing the gap between Oldham’s performance compared with national outcomes; and
- The micro level – narrowing the gap between:
  - \* the worst performing wards and communities and Oldham as a whole;
  - \* vulnerable groups particularly looked after children, young offenders and certain BME groups and Oldham as a whole; and
  - \* **the worst performing schools and Oldham as a whole.**

Potential funding streams so far identified include the range of Connexions-related funding, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Children’s Fund.

#### **4.5 Housing – *Meeting the needs in all neighbourhoods/ communities to provide affordable and decent homes and give support to those who need it***

A range of housing options have been identified designed to meet housing need and demand whilst improving housing conditions and services for key groups such as the homeless, vulnerable households and young people. A number of proposed indicators have already been identified for this block. For example:

- Number of people living in private housing that does not meet the ‘decent homes’ standard;
- Empty private sector dwellings returned to occupation or demolished;
- Homelessness levels;
- Satisfaction of Council housing tenants;
- Reduction in violence against the person (crosscutting with the Safer, Stronger Communities Block).

Potential funding streams so far identified include First Choice Homes Second Round ALMO Funding, Fitton Hill Transfer of housing stock to Villages Housing Association, Hollins/ Limeside Transfer of Housing Stock to Portico Housing Association, Homelessness (ODPM) Grant, Housing Corporation, Housing Corporation Approval Development Programme, Housing Market Renewal (Funding shared with Rochdale), Supporting People Funding, Warm Front Funding, Disabled

Facilities Grant, Residential Allowance Grant, Section 16 Tenant Empowerment Grant, Tenant Empowerment Grant.

These include some **substantial amounts of funding** e.g.:

- Fitton Hill Housing Stock Transfer £25 million (04-09);
- Hollins/ Limeside Transfer £13 million (03-07);
- Housing Market Renewal (shared with Rochdale) £53.5 million (04-06)

Current levels of funding proposed for this block amount to around **£46 million for 2006/07 and £126 million for 2007/08.**

Prevention of homelessness will enable us to save the costs of expensive ‘end of pipe’ solutions. We are **seeking freedoms and flexibilities on capital receipts, ALMO and Housing Revenue Account.**

## **5.0 Local Efficiencies Sought**

The Oldham Partnership is seeking to restructure to **streamline its bureaucracy** in line the Local Area Agreement. Discussions are underway as to how partnership structures can be rationalised and amalgamated to produce a more focused and manageable LSP. For example, the Environment Partnership and Crime and Disorder Partnership could merge and incorporate Safer Neighbourhood Boards. We have already begun to orientate our **LSP performance management** around the structure and content of the LAA. More detailed rationalisation of performance management, reporting responsibilities etc will follow restructuring. We are also examining local budgetary arrangements to enable us to use our income in a better way. For example, using monies from environmental protection (e.g. fixed penalty notices) within the LAA.

## **6.0 Freedoms and Flexibilities Sought**

We will concentrate freedoms and flexibilities where we encounter restrictions, particularly around fiscal and budgetary arrangements, which prevent the Oldham Partnership from delivering against the outcomes identified in the LAA. We may also wish to use the LAA as an opportunity to rationalise and reduce the number of plans and strategies which guide our work. Our assumption will be that the LSP/LAA Performance Management Framework will gradually evolve into a single unified system of performance management, reporting and audit & inspection. Other requests could include:

- Funding across financial years moving to a three year budget cycle;
- Local flexibility on the capital/ revenue split in funding streams;
- Removal of controls on staff posts;
- A new approach to performance management on key issues where increasing performance can lead to the perception of decreasing performance
- Flexibilities on housing capital receipts;
- Freedoms around licensing of premises selling alcohol and designation of smoke free public spaces.

## **7.0 Analysis of Progress**

The working structure for the LAA is now in place and a strong awareness and consensus around our approach has developed across Oldham agencies and sectors. The LAA is now entering its second phase of development with a greater emphasis on detail and co-ordinated negotiation. Our LAA will initially concentrate on the strategic alignment (as opposed to pooling) of budget streams.