

Oldham Partnership Press Release

25th July 2006

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OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE BOROUGH

The Oldham Partnership has retained its Amber-Green rating from Government Office North West, even though the assessment criteria has become more challenging than in previous years.

Government Office examines the performance of Local Strategic Partnership's (LSPs) in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) based on delivery against Government's six key themes of Neighbourhood Renewal – health, employment, education, crime, housing, and liveability.

Each of these themes is rated on a traffic light system of assessment – Green, Amber-Green, Amber-Red or Red – with a composite rating given to the LSP as a whole.

This year's assessment paid particular regard to how LSPs had narrowed the gap in performance between the Borough and the rest of the country, and between the most deprived areas in the Borough and the Borough as a whole.

The Oldham Partnership received an overall score of Amber-Green, with crime, education, housing and liveability receiving the highest possible rating of Green.

Health and employment were both cited as being Amber-Red, although the report highlighted that "Oldham shows a good understanding of the issues, and has a number of interventions in place to tackle these. Inevitably, these will take time to make a full impact."

The report from Government Office goes on to say:

"The Oldham Partnership had made excellent progress over the past few months, and is one of our most improved LSPs. Strong and improving partnership working is evident across Oldham Partnership and played a big part in the development of the Local Area Agreement. Oldham's LAA has been shared with other LSPs as an example of good practice."

"The Partnership recognises the need to accelerate delivery of the neighbourhood renewal and narrowing the gap agenda, particularly through the LAA mechanism. Significant challenges lie ahead if many of the floor targets are to be met and to deliver the Local Area Agreement, but the improvements made by the Partnership will put it in a much stronger position to meet these."

Chair of the Oldham Partnership Executive and Principal of Oldham Sixth Form College Nick Brown said: “The review recognises that the progress made by the Oldham Partnership is having a direct impact on the quality of life for residents in the Borough.”

“By working on a multi-agency basis at a local level, Area Action Teams have been able to address the issues which have the greatest impact on the quality of life for local residents.”

“Consequently, we have seen year on year reductions in crime, a reduction in the number of house fires, and an increase in resident’s satisfaction in their area as a place to live.”

“These practical initiatives are being supported by a series of long-term transformational regeneration projects which will change the face of the Borough, and increase the number of opportunities available to all residents.”

“The £13m Library & Lifelong Learning Centre is a landmark building in Oldham’s Cultural Quarter, and the proposals for regeneration of the New West End have accelerated rapidly with the success of University Centre Oldham and the recent Metrolink announcement.”

Director of Local Government Practice at Government Office North West Michael Greenwood said that the Oldham Partnership has made “good overall progress, with particular strengths in improving educational attainment, reducing crime, partnership working with Rochdale on Housing Market Renewal, and further progress in reducing inequalities.”

Government Office will use the review process to inform their decision on NRF allocations for 2007/8. In 2005/6, the Oldham Partnership received £4.88m worth of NRF, and will incorporate the funding for 2007/8 within the Borough’s Local Area Agreement. A decision on the level of funding is expected shortly.

ENDS

For further information please contact Adam Patterson, Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator at Oldham Partnership on 0161 615 5038, or email adam.patterson@oldhampartnership.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITOR

The Oldham Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the Borough of Oldham.

The Oldham Partnership brings together the various groups in Oldham – the public, private, voluntary, community and faith sectors – to ensure that they work together, and achieve more than they could individually.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a contract between Government and the Oldham Partnership about the services the Oldham Partnership will deliver to the people of the Borough over the next three years.

The Oldham Partnership is supported by the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

For further information on the Oldham Partnership, and to see a copy of the Annual Review Report from Government Office, please visit www.oldhampartnership.org.uk

