

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**  
**05/03/2019 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** Councillor McLaren (Chair)  
Councillors Ball (Vice-Chair), Leach, Taylor, Toor and Curley

Also in Attendance:

Andrew Sutherland	Director of Education, Skills and Early Years
Tony Shepherd	Head of Learning Service
Joanne Betts	Principal Officer, Transport and Highways Policy
Nicola Strapps	Customer Development Manager
Luke Stockdale	Senior Consultant
Tim English	Principal Project Manager, Economy
Victoria Wood	Team Leader, Housing Strategy
Neil Crabtree	Head of Service, Public Protection
Dami Awobajo	Head of Business Intelligence
Sian Walter-Browne	Constitutional Services

1           **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Larkin and Williamson.

2           **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

3           **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

4           **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

5           **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 be approved as a correct record.

6           **MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 be approved as a correct record.

7           **MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Economy, Business Growth and Skills Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7th December 2018 and 11th January 2019 be noted.

8           **MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Corporate Issues and Reform

Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 be noted.

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**MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 be noted.

Member queries in relation to the proposed briefing on the GM Children's Plan and Age-Friendly Greater Manchester would be forwarded to the Governance and Scrutiny Officer for response.

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**VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT AND TERM UPDATE**

The Board gave consideration to a report of the Headteacher of the Virtual School which provided the Board with an overview of the work of the Virtual School in 2017/18.

The Board was informed that Oldham Virtual School worked to promote the educational achievements of Oldham's looked-after children regardless of where they were placed. It did not itself provide education, but recognised that schools were responsible for the educational outcomes of their children and held them to account for the provision they offered and to ensure that the life chances of each looked-after child were improved.

The aim of the Virtual School was to close the attainment gap between children who were looked-after and their peers who were not. This included work on supporting access to education, re-engaging pupils and monitoring attendance and exclusions.

The Board noted the following:-

**IMPACT OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL 2017/2018**

- In 2017 an improving picture of outcomes at Key Stage 2, ranking 19<sup>th</sup> (out of 151) nationally for % of LAC achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (38%) compared to National LAC (32%), Regional (35%) and our statistical neighbours (30.1%)
- In 2017 increase in % of LAC pupils achieving grade 4 or above in English and Maths GCSE (30%) higher than LAC nationally (17.5%), regionally (16.8%) and against our statistical neighbour (18.6%); ranking 11<sup>th</sup> (of 151) nationally.
- Re-launch of the ePEP system, providing training and support to key partners. Improved quality of PEPs for school age children, with better tracking and monitoring
- No Permanent exclusions of looked-after children.
- Admission support for social workers and carers for children starting in reception and moving into Year 7.

## **PRIORITIES FOR 2018 /2019**

- Implementation of new statutory duties
- Workforce Development with the Virtual School team and key partners
- Develop work with Early Years partners to improve 'school readiness' for looked-after children
- Develop work with Post 16 partners to ensure robust pathways to further education and employment
- Develop work with SEND partners to support the early identification of looked-after children with SEND
- Reduce levels of persistent absence for our looked-after children
- Reduce levels of fixed term exclusions for our looked-after children
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the 'Collaborative Framework' for Oldham
- Further develop systems and reporting linked to new staff roles within the Virtual School therefore improving data management and school performance



Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- Designated teachers – every school with a LAC had a designated teacher. The Council hosted termly forums for designated teachers and was looking to increase attendance at these.
- Outcome of Ofsted inspection – requiring improvement, moving to good. A report on their recommendations would be brought to a future meeting and the Action Plan would be included in the work programme. A copy of the Ofsted report would be circulated to Members.
- Work experience – this had been the main issue from the Pupil Voice survey and support was being built in for work experience and education beyond school. Significant work was undertaken to support care leavers.
- Support for individuals interested in drama, dance etc – this was catered for in the Opportunity Area. All children could benefit from these opportunities, which would give them their own unique experience.
- Pattern in exclusions – there was no particular pattern. There was an emphasis on inclusion in schools and improving the understanding of the issues surrounding LAC to try to minimise exclusions. This was a pioneering system generated in Oldham and had received very positive feedback in the Ofsted Annual Conversation.

## **RESOLVED that:**

1. The report be noted.
2. That an update be provided in 12 months' time.
3. A report on the Ofsted recommendations be brought to a future meeting and the Action Plan be included in the work programme.
4. A copy of the Ofsted report be circulated to Members.

## **OLDHAM EDUCATION DISADVANTAGE AND SOCIAL MOBILITY UPDATE**



Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Learning Service which provided a summary of the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Education Task and Finish Group on disadvantage and provided an update of the work of the Opportunity Area to influence social mobility for disadvantaged children and young people. Members noted that there was a specific education definition of “disadvantaged”.

The Board was updated on the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Education Task and Finish Group in relation to disadvantage. The Overview & Scrutiny Education Task and Finish Group was interested in local strategies to reduce disadvantage and the use of the related Pupil Premium. They sought to gain an insight into the associated challenges and opportunities faced by schools and academies, and to consider how the Group could assist. Two meetings had taken place with a selection of head teachers, officers and elected member representatives.

On 20th September, 2017 a round table discussion had taken place on the theme of ‘how to support social mobility and the attainment and wider achievement of disadvantaged children & young people in Oldham’. The elected members present were keen to support the schools, academies and the local authority in whatever way possible to help support the outcome.

On 21st November, 2018 the Overview & Scrutiny Education Task and Finish Group met again to examine developments in the education of children and young people who were disadvantaged in the borough. At a meeting at the Oldham Sixth Form College, officers presented evidence relating to 2018 educational outcomes and the challenge for 2019 & 2020. This included SEND, the Opportunity Area and its focus on disadvantage. The ensuing discussion reflected on the improvements to provision since the previous meeting and it was agreed that a summary of the work reviewed on the day, including Opportunity Area support, should be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Board.

The Board was also updated on Opportunity Area Support. In autumn 2017 the Department for Education (DfE) identified Oldham as one of twelve Opportunity Areas. Oldham was chosen because the data indicated that children in the borough are less likely to have access to high quality education, employment opportunities and support when they need it than children from similar backgrounds, elsewhere.

The Board noted the Opportunity Area programme was a key part of the governmental priority of tackling social mobility and improving opportunities for young people in areas with both poor social mobility and schools that face challenges. The Oldham Opportunity Area was a collaborative venture by national and local government, education leaders and teachers, voluntary organisations and employers, to give children and young people

across the borough the opportunities and support they deserved. It directed additional resources towards the borough over a 3 year period from 2018-2020.

Three priorities had been agreed and the Board was updated with progress against each of them. Programmes had been designed to strengthen the capacity of the local educational system across each of the 3 priority areas and it was anticipated that these priorities, which were designed to increase social mobility, would continue to be important beyond the life span of the Opportunity Area in 2020. It was recommended that the Overview & Scrutiny Education Task and Finish Group maintained their interest in supporting social mobility by seeking an update on progress in 12 months' time.

Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- The definition of “disadvantaged” – this was an education definition and there were many children that did not fit this narrow definition. The Council recognised that poverty affected education and work was being undertaken to identify the impact and how best to address this issue.
- Voluntary schemes to assist young carers outside of the classroom – it was understood that the social lives of young carers could be affected. Programmes were being considered and schools had a toolkit to help them understand the difficulties faced by young carers.
- Alteration of admissions criteria to enable young carers to have priority access to nearby schools – this could be considered.
- Links with the Youth Council – there were many links, especially in relation to the Opportunity Area. The Youth Council was one of the most active in the country and a credit to Oldham.
- Sustainability when the funding ceased – Strategies were in place and data and intelligence was being gathered to inform a future debate about funding.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The report be noted.
2. That an update be provided in 12 months' time on the educational impact of the work being carried out by the Education, Skills and Early Years Service, supported by Opportunity Area funding, to improve social mobility across the community.
3. Progress and strategies for going forward would be discussed at the Task and Finish group in autumn.

**GM2040 DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Principal Officer, Transport and Highways Policy which provided an update on the delivery of the GM2040 Transport Strategy Delivery Plan 1 and the development of draft Delivery Plan 2.

The Board was informed that, in 2017, GMCA published the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy (2040 Strategy) which set out a long-term approach to planning for the transport needs and aspirations of the GMCA, the ten individual GM Districts and the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (GMLEP).



The first GM2040 Delivery Plan covered the period 2016/17-2021/22. A Progress Report was published in November 2018 and provided an update on progress made in developing and delivering the schemes identified as part of Delivery Plan 1 over the period February 2017 – October 2018. This was summarised in the context of changes to the external environment and governance arrangements in Greater Manchester. The Progress Report also included an assessment of whether the interventions and policies were supporting delivery of the vision set out in the 2040 Transport Strategy in the form of an assessment against a series of key performance indicators (KPIs).

The Board noted that a second draft Delivery Plan for 2020–2025 had been developed in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and was a statement of Greater Manchester's transport investment and reform priorities for the next 5 years. It had been published alongside GMSF for consultation purposes. The closing date for responses, which could be made by email to [2040@tfgm.com](mailto:2040@tfgm.com) or by making comments on the GMSF at [www.gmconsult.org](http://www.gmconsult.org), was 18th March 2019.

Together the GMSF and the Delivery Plan documents demonstrated an integrated approach to transport and land use planning, which identified the strategic transport interventions required to deliver growth. Following consultation on the GMSF and the draft Delivery Plan 2, a final version of Delivery Plan 2 would be prepared for publication later in 2019, which would ultimately form part of the GMSF evidence base.

The Board noted the progress report and, in particular, the changes and progress that impacted directly on Oldham.

Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- Disabled access to Greenfield Station – this was linked to electrification and no progress could be made until a decision on this had been reached. This was still a priority and other options would be considered if electrification was not taking place.
- Could all electric vehicles use these charging points – yes, these were very technologically advanced and could provide rapid charging.
- Progress re flood management schemes – an update would be circulated.
- Transport services becoming fragmented – the policy was looking to deliver as a whole but it was acknowledged there was a lack of control over bus services.

**RESOLVED :-**

1. The report be noted.
2. That an update be provided in 12 months' time.
3. That an update on capital projects be added to the work programme for a report in September.

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**RESIDENT FIRST PROGRAMME, DELIVERING DIGITAL BY DESIGN UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Customer Development Manager which provided an update on the:

- Programme overview
- Programme priority areas
- Achievements and benefits to date
- Member engagement
- Next steps

The Board was informed that the Resident First Programme, also known as Digital by Design, was part of Oldham's co-operative approach to making access to services easy and efficient, by enabling more residents to self-serve, whilst continuing to support those who needed it.

The programme design principles included:

- Increasing efficiency
- Digital First
- Thinking like a service user
- Improving Digital Inclusion
- Data to Intelligence.

The Board was informed that Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the programme were now complete. The initial investment in the programme concentrated on improving and increasing the services accessed online. Phase 1 delivered some quick wins in a number of service areas based on service and political priorities, including a re-launched website which created a solid foundation for self-service.

Phase 2 had concentrated on creating re-usable modular digital components that could be rolled out across the organisation (e.g. online form integrations, bookings and payments). This would increase efficiency and avoid the need to reinvent the wheel.

Following the programme's work the channel shift statistics were encouraging, showing an overall 10% increase in online activity and a 7% decrease in telephone contact. In the services worked with, there was on average a 20% drop in calls and a 27% increase in online activity. Customer satisfaction in those service had also been positive, from residents, members and staff alike.

The Board was informed that there was still much more to do. In order to ensure the increasing service demand, rising resident expectations in user experience and advancements in technology were met, the programme was moving into phase 3. This would explicitly focus on deep re-design of services that exploited technology, used automation and reduced service costs.

Phase 3 would look to be more fundamental in changing our delivery models to transform from a mainly mediated customer service offer to a predominantly self service one. Whilst improving the self serve offer it would be ensured that the mediated offer remained resilient to improve access for all, paying particular attention to those who could not self serve online.

The Board was informed the programme must also contribute to the Council's financial challenges and had a £2m savings target to achieve by 2020/21.

Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- Could the systems be accessed through libraries – it was confirmed that libraries could provide computers and support to enable access. Work was ongoing around social inclusion and supporting those who could not access Council systems on their own.
- Reduction of use of paper across the Council – Sharepoint, which allowed files to be used across activities was being trialled. Equipping officers with technology would reduce the need for paper.
- Could local Councillors access what had been reported and repaired in relation to potholes – this suggestion would be taken back for consideration. It was also necessary for caseworkers to have access.
- Performance indicators – the contact centre currently measures call length and the service was looking to measure the conversion rate of calls to online contact.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The progress made in Phase 2 and the priority areas for Phase 3 be noted.
2. That an update be provided in 12 months' time.

**HOUSING STRATEGY 2019**

The Board gave consideration to a report of the Principal Project Manager, Economy.

The Board was informed that the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) was Oldham Council's main strategic document for housing and interrelated services. It helped set out the strategic approach in tackling fuel poverty, improving house conditions, and meeting the allocations and homelessness responsibilities. It helped

articulate the local strategic response to national and Greater Manchester housing priorities.



The Board were informed that the LHS underpinned and supported the delivery of a range of statutory housing responsibilities, ensuring that the Council could demonstrate that it had periodically reviewed the housing needs of its area in relation to both housing conditions and the needs of the borough.

Further legislation required that when the Council carried out such reviews, they also had regard to the special needs of chronically sick or disabled persons and reviewed the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers residing in or resorting to the borough.

The LHS was supported by an up to date local housing needs assessment (LHNA) informed by a household survey and a large range of secondary data, which supported the strategic and statutory planning obligations of the local authority. The LHNA completed and complemented the assembly of the housing and planning evidence base for the borough.

The Board noted the new LHS was very much an evidence-backed strategy that added value to developing Oldham's new Local Plan and was insightful into informing and supporting how the Council could act in response to the new house building targets arising from the publication of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, to deliver high quality and more diversity of choice, tenure and price points in Oldham's housing offer.

Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- Infrastructure such as schools and doctors – the Place Plans were being mapped out and there would be workshops to identify issues in different areas.
- Quality and affordability of housing – many approaches would be considered, not just outright sale. The aim was to make best use of current and new-build stock.
- Could the Council decide what type of houses were needed – largely yes, as this would be supported from a strong evidence base.
- Vision for Oldham as a whole to ensure mixed communities in most areas – the approach suggested by the evidence base would be used in discussion with communities and would not be definitive.
- Options needed to make it easier for people to downsize and free up family houses – housing exchange schemes could be considered.
- Addressing absentee landlords and unsuitable accommodation – work was going on across Greater Manchester to identify new and better ways of working with the private sector.
- Input by voluntary sector and homeless – consultation would be very wide and the governance structure would be tasked with bringing all the strategies together.

- What had the evidence shown so far – a huge rise in the over-75 population which would affect what types of housing were needed.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The phased approach of the development of the Housing Strategy and final approval timeline be noted.
2. The summary findings and direction of travel arising from the work completed to date be noted.
3. An informal meeting would be convened early in April 2019 to consider recommendation 3.
4. Workshop dates would be shared with Board Members.

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**CLEAN AIR PLAN - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

The Board gave consideration to a report of the Director of Environmental Services and a presentation.

The Board noted that, as directed by Central Government, the Greater Manchester Local Authorities were being asked to endorse the Outline Business case (OBC) for the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, as part of the feasibility study being carried out on their behalf by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). The OBC was presented in detail at the meeting for consideration.

Members were informed that the Clean Air Plan would tackle the reduction in nitrogen dioxide and ensure the amount in the air was reduced to the legal limit. All of the Greater Manchester authorities were working together and, of the 152 stretches of road across Greater Manchester identified as needing action, 15 were in Oldham.

Members noted that there were 4 classes of Clean Air Zone and that this was not a congestion charge, as there would be no charge for compliant vehicles.

The Board was informed that the outline business case had to be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Consultation would start on 15<sup>th</sup> May, with the full business case to be submitted by the end of 2019 and to come into force in 2021.

Greater Manchester was looking to start with the Class D option, focussing on buses, taxis and HGV's initially and would then move to Class C, which would include vans. Government funding of approximately £250M would be required to make this happen in Greater Manchester.

Members asked for and received clarification on the following:-

- Had the government referred to providing funding – no
- What would happen if there was no funding – the scheme would have to be considered in the light of the funding available.

- How would it be enforced – the government would provide cameras and number-plate recognition systems.
- Publicity for the Plan – this would be targeted at businesses as private cars would not be affected. TfGM had a communications group which would provide a standard message.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. That the Clean Air Plan OBC as presented be endorsed and recommended for approval.
2. That a further update be provided to the September meeting of the Board prior to the final business case being submitted.

16 **GENERAL EXCEPTIONS AND URGENT DECISIONS**

The Board gave consideration to a decision authorised under Rule 17 of the Council's Constitution. The Chair outlined the process for the agreement of decisions under the Rules.

**RESOLVED** that the General Exception and Urgency Decision related to the Auto Enrolment (Pensions) be noted.

17 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board gave consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme for 2018/19.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme for 2018/19 be noted.

18 **KEY DECISION DOCUMENT**

The Board gave consideration to the Key Decision Document which listed key decisions to be taken from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

**RESOLVED** that the Council's Key Decision Document be noted.

19 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the date and time of the next Overview and Scrutiny Board to be held on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 6.00 p.m. be noted.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.25 pm