



Minutes

UNITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

5 November 2014

Members' Meeting Room - Civic Centre, Oldham, OL1 1NL

3.30 pm

Present: Councillors Dean, Jabbar (Chair) and McCann

Emma Alexander
Craig Apsey
Phil Cresswell

Managing Director, Unity Partnership
Mouchel
Assistant Executive Director,
Commercial Services
Unity Partnership
Mouchel
Unity Partnership
Constitutional Services

Simon Miller
John Sillitoe
Richard Warriner
Caroline Walmsley

1 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Shah, Councillor Stretton, Councillor Sykes and Janet Horton.

2 Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Unity Partnership Board meeting held on 3rd September 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

The Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to all staff involved in the work on the Deed of Variation and reported that the signing ceremony was very well attended.

3 Managing Director's Report and KPI Report (Standing Item)

The Board considered a report which provided a review of services across the Partnership. The following points were highlighted during the meeting:

Highways

The Board were informed of current profile raising events and how Oldham had been named as an example of best practice at a recent National Highway Network conference. Thanks were expressed to the team.

Property



The Board were informed that site construction had commenced in Oldham for the new Autistic Spectrum Disorder School and the project utilised the latest modular construction techniques producing a flexible design and reducing 'on site' construction time and risk significantly. The project was being entirely funded by the Education Funding Agency. The build needed to be complete by August 2015.

It was reported that negotiations had recently concluded with car park operator NSL for the letting space within Henshaw House. This enabled NSL to expand their operations and increase their workforce within Oldham, which would be a positive contribution to the Council's 'Get Oldham Working' scheme.

Revenues

The Board were informed that E-invoicing had been rolled out to the early payment suppliers, with 18% of suppliers now submitting their invoices via e-invoicing. The Accounts receivable team were looking into the possibility of sending sundry invoices electronically to customers.

It was reported that as part of the Council's Customer Service Transformation programme, work was well underway to produce a workable online move-in and move-out process. The new technology would allow customers to inform the Council of changes of address online, with the added ability for changes to be made to their accounts automatically. It was further reported that the implementation of the first stage of 'My Account' was planned for December.

Benefits

The Board were informed that Risk Based Verification was introduced at the same time as the Benefits Electronic Claim Solution, meaning that a risk score was applied to claims so that only essential evidence was required on those claims that fall into the low risk group. This meant that Oldham residents were likely to experience a faster process and were less likely to make extra trips to provide documentation.

It was also reported that at the end of July the Academy module for free school meals was integrated within the Benefits Academy system. This meant that free school meals could be awarded simultaneously with Housing Benefits and/or Council Tax Reduction applications if the qualifying criteria were met. As a result the team had identified 828 more children where parents had not known they would qualify.

The Board noted the report.

4 Unity Change Programme (Standing Item)

The Board considered a report which provided an update on the Heads of Agreement related to details of the agreed changes and the Diamond Change Board related to the delivery of agreed cost savings.

The Board was provided with a summary of the work carried out since the last meeting which had enabled the Deed of Variation to be signed on 22nd October 2014.



It was reported that there were some financial pressures around the 2014/15 savings, largely due to the ICT design not being acceptable nor accepted. Work would continue on the ICT proposals which were a requirement of the Diamond Agreement. The contract refresh had been delivered with the change programme continuing to close the financial shortfall and settle the 2014/15 savings targets through sponsoring additional projects.

The Board:

- 1. noted the Unity Change Programme update and the financial pressures around the 2014/15 savings.**
- 2. noted that a forward plan of service efficiencies was now being prepared in order to meet the savings targets required and satisfy the Diamond Agreement including a design and proposal for the ICT Services and savings.**

5 Reshaping Unity ICT

The Board considered a report related to the reshaping of Unity ICT.

The Board noted the report and confirmed Option D as the preferred option and gave approval for Unity to continue to agree to negotiate the terms of a 'Heads of Agreement'.

ACTION: That an additional Unity Partnership Board meeting be convened prior to Christmas 2014.

6 AOB

The Board paid tribute and gave thanks for the work of Phil Cresswell, AED Commercial Services, and wished him well in his future venture.

7 Date and Time of Next Meeting

An additional meeting of the Unity Partnership Board was to be arranged to take place before the Christmas break and Members would be notified as soon as possible.

The meeting started at 3.30 pm and ended at 4.30 pm