

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**  
**10/09/2019 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** Councillor McLaren (Chair)  
Councillors Toor, Harkness, Jacques, Price and Surjan

Also in Attendance:

Head of Business Intelligence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Curley and Taylor.

**1            APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Curley and Taylor.

**2            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**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 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**6            MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY SELECT COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be noted.

**7            MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 be noted.

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

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be noted.

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### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) SERVICES - UPDATE**

The Board received a report providing a further update in relation to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Services improvement journey. It had been anticipated that the submission to this meeting of the Board would present the conclusions of an Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) final revisit but this had not yet occurred. The Board was advised that, since compilation of the submitted report, it had been announced that the revisit would occur in the week commencing Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

Ofsted and the CQC had inspected the arrangements within Oldham to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in October 2017 and subsequently required the Council and the CCG to develop, with key stakeholders, a Written Statement of Action (WSOA). The Inspection had acted as a catalyst of change, having a huge impact with significant investment and changes occurring in Oldham's children's services. A strong local Partnership and governance focused on improving the lives and experiences of children and young people with SEND was now in place.

Oldham's WSOA published in March 2018 contained five key priority areas and recommendations which have been the subject of intense activity. Outcomes across all five areas have been developed and improved through local partnerships and workstreams. A revised SEND Action Plan and Inclusion Strategy is due to be launched in September 2019, the new strategy taking the work of the local partnership beyond the WSOA and focusing on newly agreed shared priorities to further improve SEND services.

Members noted the update provided and the forthcoming Ofsted and CQC re-visit and discussed the scheduling of a further, post-revisit update consideration.

**RESOLVED** that

1. the progress made against the expectations set out in the Written Statement of Action, the improvement and development of Special Educational Needs and Disability Services, and the forthcoming Ofsted and Care Quality Commission re-visit be noted;
2. a further detailed report be submitted to the Board in January 2020 following the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission revisit.

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### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES: GETTING TO GOOD - UPDATE**

The Board received a report on the current performance of Oldham's Children's Social Care, considering developments since improvement works and a self-assessment were completed in advance of an Ofsted 'Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services' (ILACS) review in January 2019. The ILACS review resulted in a "Requires improvement to be Good" assessment and in response Children's Social Care had created an Improvement Plan to improve the quality of Social Care for children and young people.

The review of performance, as presented, concluded that

- there is clear corporate and political ownership over the children's agenda which has resulted in significant investment to improve the quality of Children's Social Work;
- there has been a significant amount of activity undertaken to improve services for children in Oldham through improved management oversight and transformation, which is beginning to show promising results;
- the levels of demand across key profile areas are decreasing and Oldham is now below or around its statistical neighbour levels;
- caseloads for frontline social workers have substantially reduced from last year and are currently below the organisational target;
- the roll out of the Structural Investment Plan to strengthen leadership and management arrangements in Children's Social Care and to improve capacity across Social Work Teams is underway;
- the financial performance of Children's Social Care is stabilising as a result of the investment and closer monitoring of spend; and
- the improvement in the quality of Social Work is being delivered through new accommodation and training facilities enabling Social Workers to practice high quality Social Work.

The submitted report considered the above issues in further detail, included correspondence from Ofsted confirming that the Improvement Plan satisfactorily reflected the areas identified for improvement in the inspection report and identifies clear actions to address those areas, and the current position on the Improvement Plan 2019-20.

With regard to staffing and in response to Members' queries as to staff turnover and the loss of experienced staff, the Board was advised that what was hoped to be a sustainable staffing structure was being developed which would assist in the retention of staff, thereby stabilising the staffing position. An internal 'college' of social work was also being developed focussing on the 'Oldham practice' which would assist in developing and growing the Council's own social workers. The Council was working with Stockport Council, acknowledged as good practice council, in key areas to develop learning and provide opportunity for mentoring arrangements. Members

sought assurance as to how these developments had improved practice, querying what monitoring systems are in place, what lessons were being learnt, and how the Council would make sure that previous issues were not repeated.

With regard to feedback from parents and from children, Members were advised that work had been done with the Children in Care Council and that consideration was being given as to reaching out to the Parent Forum and how best to communicate the improvements and where the Council wants to be.

With regard to caseloads, there had been a dramatic reduction in the average social worker caseload down from 30+ cases to around 18 per social worker. A small number of social workers remained with the higher figure, but the focus was on safe workloads rather than a purely numerical one. Vacancy and turnover figures could be available, but figures could be impacted by the move from agency to permanent social workers and by ongoing internal recruitment.

Further issues responded to were

- further information as to performance with regard to early intervention and children in need could be provided to Members;
- the number of Out of Borough placements had reduced, but in all cases a consideration as to the suitability of a placement was given. Further detail as to Out of Borough placements could be provided to the next meeting of the Board;
- the projects associated with the improvement journey and a consideration as to priorities was given within paragraph 3 to the submitted report;

**RESOLVED** – That the Board receive an update report on the Getting to Good improvement journey in March 2020, with any statistical items or other responses to issues raised at the meeting to be included as briefings with the work programme report.

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## **OLDHAM CARES COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE**

The Board was provided with an update on the integrated commissioning arrangements for health and social care services in Oldham and an overview of the future direction of travel.

Following the co-location of Council and CCG health and care commissioning functions in April 2018, work had been ongoing in relation to activities around learning disability, mental health, care home and care at home commissioning, dementia, continuing health care, and safeguarding strategy and policy work identified in a Section 75 Agreement between the Council and the CCG. In addition, teams had been realigned across the partners to ensure more joined up work and leadership.

Work was progressing at a strategic level. For example, the Market Position Statement published in 2017 sets out the anticipated demand and current market position in relation to a range of needs and services: this was due to be refreshed and is included in the commissioning service plan for 2019/20, and production of the Managing Provider Failure Policy and Procedure, a statutory duty of the local authority in relation to provider failure and continuity of care, now goes further than the statutory requirement in recognition of the joint commissioning arrangements. The report further considered commissioning activity and quality initiatives being undertaken, alongside matters progressing at the Greater Manchester level. Further reference was made to the integration of Adult Social Care teams with NHS community health staff, and of the recent transfer of those NHS staff from Pennine Care to the Northern Care Alliance, and the work to develop new service specifications to improve efficiency and effectiveness, including the potential to empower local staff to commission services within a budget.

Looking forward, a comprehensive blueprint for the future of integrated commissioning has been developed and agreed within the system. This blueprint envisages a move beyond excellent service commissioning to Commissioning for Outcomes and Communities of Identity with a focus on social value. The Council and the CCG would form an Integrated Commissioning Function (ICF) with a breadth of responsibilities creating the conditions for a high quality partnership for providers of health and social care services. The goal was to use the discipline of commissioning to develop the culture and mindset of the Oldham system, being guided by the core principles of the integrated commissioning framework.

A Member noted that staff were to be gathered in 'hubs' and queried whether this meant that people with, for example, a mental health issue would get picked up quicker. The Board was advised that it was not possible to say that people would be picked up quicker, but services were developing in a more co-ordinated or co-operative manner with an absolute commitment to improvement which should see patients/clients seen within timescales.

Considering funding implications, the Board was advised that the extent of the funding gap depended on the formula used, but the gap could be said to be in excess of £60m meaning that it was essential to redesign the what and how of services. The situation was complicated by the fluid nature of health and social care budgets, with budgets being dependent on government announcements of grants, on precepts etc. These positions meant that it was not possible at this time to progress the proposed local budgets.

Other issues considered by the Board were –

- staff turnover in care homes was in the order of 20% and through commissioning it was needed to consider an approach to stabilise the position and develop an equitable approach;
- it was acknowledged that changes in population profiles, or within particular communities that might also be hard to reach, or in circumstances where gender issues might arise, meant that services needed to be planned accordingly; and
- the differing recording and operating systems used by social care and health staff were considered, and work to develop a tool to allow systems to talk to each other and with GP systems thereby allowing exchange of records with patient/client approval was in development.

It was acknowledged that elected Members made contacts and highlighted challenges to, and gaps in, services and that a developed relationship with Councillors needed to be built. It was suggested that a directory, or a working definition of services as they evolve, could be provided so Councillors could be sure that statutory duties were being fulfilled.

Noting the complicated governance diagram within the submitted report, it was acknowledged that communications about, for example, what the jointly commissioned services were trying to achieve in a complicated operating environment and that the first port of call to access social care would be through a GP surgery was key. Simplifying the message was a challenge and would be considered in the next report to the Board.

**RESOLVED** that

1. the Board receive a further update report at the meeting to be held in March 2020;
2. a Members' workshop be held to consider the issue of what details of services could be shared with/provided for elected Members.

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## **TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROJECTS**

The Board was presented with an overview and update on the three-year transport capital programme which had been approved by the Council in February 2019 as part of the Council's wider Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2023/24.

The transport capital programme is funded from a range of different sources, details of which were provided in the submitted report, and has a current value of approximately £37.5 million. The programme is subject to ongoing monitoring and review which results in its overall value and the profiling of scheme budgets being updated regularly to reflect changes in priorities and additional funding secured. The programme is broken down into several sub-programmes that tend to reflect the different funding streams that make up the programme and the report presented an overview of each of the following sub-programmes: -

- Highway maintenance (carriageways and footways);
- Bridges and structures (road bridges, footbridges, retaining walls and culverts);
- Flood management and drainage;
- Local Growth Deal;
- Accident reduction/safety schemes;
- Congestion and traffic management;
- Greater Manchester (GM) Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund; and
- Other minor works (Public Rights of Way, pedestrian and cycle schemes, disabled access improvements etc).

Securing additional external funding to invest in transport infrastructure is a Council priority and details of several bidding competitions through which the Council hoped to secure additional funding were highlighted. While the Council had success in seeking funding bids, the Board was advised that this could be a long process, with bids needing to be successful in a funding round before detailed Business Plans were prepared and considered for detailed approval. This meant that the programme was fluid, with later years on the programme being dependent on budget and bid approvals; for example, seven bids seeking £18m had been submitted for the most recent tranche of funding from the GM Mayor's Challenge Fund with feedback awaited.

It was queried whether there was any criteria or guidelines for accident reduction/safety schemes for Members to be aware of. There was no formal detail for such schemes, but the Unity Traffic Team were open to hear of local safety issues. Accident reduction schemes were statistic-led and had only limited funding available. The Board was asked to note a concern that highways allocations by the Combined Authority appeared to lend themselves to large schemes only due to the requirement for costly detailed Business Plans being detrimental to small schemes.

**RESOLVED** that a further update on the Transport Capital Programme be submitted to the Board in March 2020.

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### **GENERAL EXCEPTIONS AND URGENT DECISIONS**

The Board gave consideration to a report advising of decisions related to the items "Proposed acquisition of Freehold Interest held in Forge Industrial Estate" and "Delph New Road/A62 Huddersfield Road Flood Alleviation Scheme" which had been authorised under Rule 16 (General Exception) and "Construction and Highways Services Framework" which had been authorised under Rule 17 (Special Urgency) of the Council's Constitution.

**RESOLVED** that the report and the authorisations granted under Rules 16 (General Exception) and 17 (Special Urgency) be noted.

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## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board gave consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme for 2019/20, noting that the Work Programme would require amendment in light of decisions taken at the meeting. The Chair further advised that an item related to climate change would be considered at the next meeting of the Board in October 2019.

Appended to the Work Programme and further to Minute 11 of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the Board received an update report on work being undertaken across Greater Manchester in relation to improving public safety in the night time economy linked to the private hire and taxi trade and in relation to the suggestions made within the Council Motion, in particular the promotion of the 'Ask Angela' and 'Street Angel' schemes through Oldham College, Oldham Sixth Form and the University.

Members of the Board were reminded of the workshop on the Council motion relating to tackling speeding that was to be held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### **RESOLVED** that

1. the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme be noted;
2. the work being undertaken across Greater Manchester in relation to improving public safety in the night time economy linked to the private hire and taxi trade and the ongoing work to promote the 'Ask Angela' and 'Street Angels' schemes be noted.

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## **KEY DECISION DOCUMENT**

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

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

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## **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the date and time of the next Overview and Scrutiny Board to be held on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 at 6.00 pm be noted.

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## **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it contains exempt information under paragraph



6(b) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

## **SELECTIVE LICENSING**

The Board received an update on the Selective Licensing Scheme that comprised selective licensing areas designated due to low housing demand in 2014-15 using powers under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004.

The purpose of measures within the Scheme was, when combined with other measures delivered by partners, to seek a reduction in or elimination of the blight of low housing demand, leading to improvements in the social and economic conditions of the sector. The scheme as approved ensured that all private rented properties within the designated areas are identified, applications are received, properties are licensed, properties are inspected, and landlords comply with management and property standards

An independent review of the scheme had been undertaken to examine the impact achieved in the current Neighbourhoods and whether outcomes have been met, in order to comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004, and to determine the options available to the Council going forward. The review had also undertaken a whole Borough statistical analysis of low demand criteria, and an analysis was appended to the submitted report. The views of the Board were sought as to possible options going forward.

In their consideration, Members of the Board reviewed the submitted report, sought confirmation as to the cost of the service to both landlords and the Council, queried the application of the rankings against the statutory indicators, queried the impacts in particular areas with the Officer undertaking to meet separately with a Member to consider a particular area, and noted the requirements for consultation, the routes for Scheme approval being dependent upon the size of a proposed scheme, and the case studies presented.

### **RESOLVED** that

1. the Board would support the continuation of a Selective Licensing Scheme, noting that the form of any Scheme going forward would be subject to consultation and the determination of the Cabinet; and
2. the Chair further discuss the considerations of this Board with the relevant Portfolio Holders.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.20 pm