

**Report to OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

# **Thriving Communities Programme Update**

**Portfolio Holder:**

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**Purpose of the Report**

To update member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the progress of the Thriving Communities Programme.

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**Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Board are asked to note the progress made and a request for support and engagement with the social prescribing roll-out across Oldham as elected members are key to the connection with people and community groups. In addition a request to make the community groups members work with aware of the next tranche of Fast Grants available.

**Thriving Communities Programme Update**

**1 Background**

1.1 **The Oldham Model** - The Council, and its partners, are committed to a co-operative future for Oldham where ‘everyone does their bit and everybody benefits.’ The Partnership’s Oldham Plan 2017-22 sets out the Oldham Model for delivering tangible and sustained change through a focus on inclusive economy, thriving communities and co-operative services.

*Fig 1 - The Oldham model graphic*



1.2 **Thriving Communities** – To accelerate the Thriving Communities element of the Oldham Model and deliver the common objectives of our health and social care integration - Oldham Cares - £2.69m was agreed from the Greater Manchester Transformation Fund as part of the Health and Social Care transformation fund to support GM devolution.

The programme is a 3 year programme which focuses on;

- building upon our strengths and support groups in the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector
- supporting people earlier in the care pathway
- driving the shift to more earlier intervention and prevention by helping Oldham residents make better life choices and not progress into higher levels of need

The programme will deliver £9m+ of reduced demand in the health and care system (reducing pressure on primary care and acute currently quantified and agreed in the business case signed off by commissioning partnership board in August 2018) in the establishment of Oldham Cares as well as delivering wider benefits to Oldham residents around improving their general physical and mental health and wellbeing.

**Figs 2 and 3 - Thriving Communities Programme/Projects & Social Prescribing Leaflet**

**The Thriving Communities Programme**



**Highlights of key projects and key updates;**

- 1.3 **More than medical support** – also known as social prescribing - we estimate there are more than 700 community groups across Oldham delivering close to 1000 activities, events and positive interventions / support for Oldham residents – by supporting and growing this we can help our residents to make better life choices and access this ‘more than medical’ support which is now positively changing people’s lives by addressing the underlying root cause.
- 1.4 **The Social Prescribing network in Oldham West** is bridging the gap between medical care and the community, by having community connectors in each cluster that work with primary care (and other care forms such as acute, mental health, social care etc.) then support people into the right type of community support. It’s been live in Oldham West since January 2018 and has supported in excess of 250 people. This network helps people who may be coping with life or more than medical challenges such as;
  - Social isolation / loneliness
  - Loss of confidence or purpose
  - Low level mental health
  - Healthier lifestyle choices such as physical activity
  - Life changing events like bereavement or birth
  - Living a life with a long-term condition

The network is helping people turn their lives around (as some of the case studies in the appendix shows) and working alongside our existing services to take people from positions of isolation and distress through to stability and new connections with people in their community, then into employment training where possible.

We have now just initiated a new 3 year contract which has been commissioned via an Innovation Partnership (a new model of commissioning one of the first in England – which allows the approach to be iterated and evolved through coproduction with residents and higher emphasis on social value). The partnership is;

- Led by Action Together and includes;
- Positive Steps
- Age UK

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- Mind
  - Altogether Better

Included here is also testing a 'Care Champion' model in Cluster East which will see the development of peer networks for patients, where patients who have common illnesses attached to surgeries are empowered to come together and support each other in activities and groups e.g. walking groups for asthma/COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disorder) and other breathing conditions or coffee mornings for depression/mental health.

In addition – Oldham people can directly refer themselves via the Oldham Cares website or a phone call or an email. If you need better connections in your community or this type of support, then you should not need to go via a GP to access it and we accept that not everyone uses technology so having the phone line is key.

<https://oldhamcares.com/thriving-communities/social-prescribing/>

Referrals and connections into community support have dramatically ramped up as of July 2019 now the model is operating boroughwide – were now seeing referrals in excess of >30 a week which is 3 times the levels predicted in the business case.

The first phase in Cluster West was successful – Having worked with 10 GP surgeries in Oldham west over the last 12 months we saw 200 people enter the service and be supported;

- 50% of which are direct GP referrals – with the remainder being a mix of self referral, social care, mental health, early help and other community organisations
- The dip sampling of the first phase shows a positive trend (caveated that this is a small sample size and these numbers will change as the service grows)
  - i. **GP visits - 67% reduction in attendances for the cohort who had used primary care in the past 6 months**
  - ii. **A&E attendances – 75% reduction for those who has used A&E in the past 6 months**

We are still to quantify the impact elsewhere in the system and will be bolstering these self-reported figures from people supported with system data tied into health and care as the digital technology and information governance moves forward.

- 1.5 **The Fast Grants** – The programme is now delivering £60k each year into grassroots community groups without an overly bureaucratic process. Launched at the end of September 2018. Grants range from £50 to £500. Initial grants have funded initiatives such as; a Nintendo Wii for a residential care home; a dementia support group to create a memory song book, as well as creating a wheelchair and pram friendly path for grandparents to watch their children play football at Waterhead sports club as well as a tea dance in Chadderton for Older Adults (plus many more – some case studies and pictures are included in the appendix).

The next phase of Fast grants will launch at the end of July 2019 and expressions of interest are already being registered. A press release and social media campaign will support the launch and the good news stories from the grants.

- 1.6 **The Social Action Fund** – Social isolation is a growing issue in Oldham. 10% of all people at all ages in Oldham self-identify as being lonely and >30% of all households in Oldham are classed as single occupancy. The fund will use £850k over 3 years to commission 5 medium sized projects to tackle loneliness head on for Oldham as well as physical and mental health. The 5 successful projects have been agreed by commissioning partnership board in April 2019. With the first community of practice held on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2019. The 5 successful projects are;

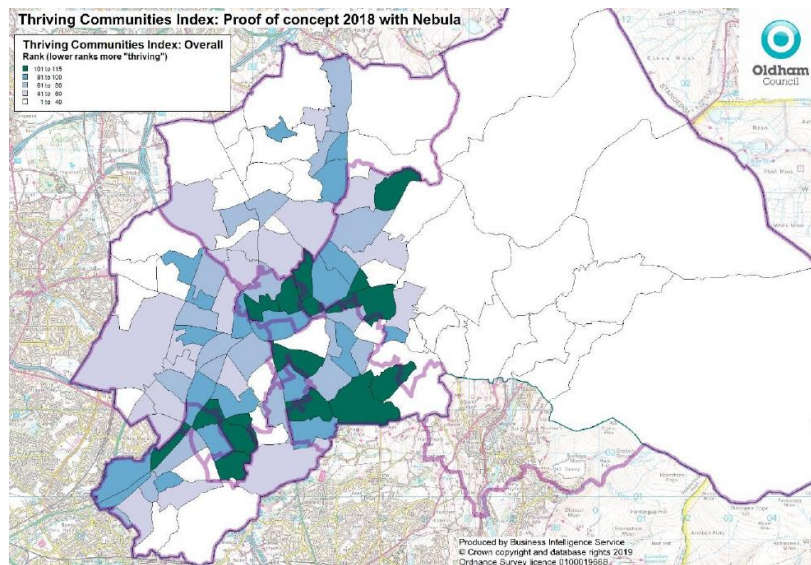
- iii. BAME consortium – focusing on black, asian and minority and ethnic isolation
- iv. Wellbeing leisure – focusing on physical health
- v. Oldham Action and Play Group – focusing on families
- vi. Groundwork consortium – focusing on food and growing
- vii. Street Angels - focusing on town center vulnerable citizens and street community

**Figs 4 & 5 – Fast grants and Social Action Fund Marketing**



- 1.7 **Working closer health improvement and public health** – Recently the Health Improvement workstream and Thriving Communities have agreed to merge to give a stronger voice for earlier intervention and prevention – unpicking wicked system wide issues like obesity and oral health. E.g. over half the population of Oldham is classed as overweight or obese – these are challenges too big to commission for and we need full system change and reform to enable all our workers and residents to address.
- 1.8 **Communications, media and profile for Oldham** – The work of Thriving Communities is being viewed as leading edge – it was recently covered in the National Health Executive and Public Sector Executive magazines. Also, the programme was asked to present recently at the Kings Fund event on Urban Health in London showcasing good examples internationally. This is good profile for the council and helps to attract more funding in the future.
- 1.9 **Workforce Development** – This will develop a common Oldham way to enable our staff to work across organisational boundaries, become more place and asset based, then empower the people who reach our most vulnerable residents to become connectors – the hairdressers, take away workers, off licenses, taxi drivers, nail bar staff. Soft market testing has now begun for a provider who will come in and help us deliver the first cohort (agreed as adults social care staff and smaller community cohort). Workforce training will be made available to community groups who can benefit – a series of Make Every Contact Count has already been delivered with community groups.
- 1.10 **A stronger focus on evidence and evaluation with the Thriving Communities Index** – The Thriving Communities Index segments Oldham into and pulls in 39 indicators in categories of Place, Resident and Reactive Demand – to give us deeper insight into where our positive and negative norms lay within the borough. Also, this is underpinned by external evaluation by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies. Dr Foster (one of the UKs leading analytics companies recently wrote an article about this work. The project has also won a LARIA award commendation (Local Area Research Insight Association). The userbase for the Index now stands at >50 users including; local government, police, GPs, housing, VCFSE, CCG. Plans are underway for a phase two which will explore if other indicators are useful and how we make the data more timely.

**Fig 6 - The Thriving Communities Index Map**



1.11 **Member Engagement** - Member Engagement has taken place via presentations on Thriving Communities, which, have been carried out at district executives (before the constitutional change) as well as engagement sessions through existing governance such as Health Scrutiny and Labour Group, Liberal Democrat Groups and similar offers to other parties, as well as 4 briefing/training sessions for member development and the Thriving Communities Index. Further sessions are planned with the facilitation of the district teams now we are mobilising the social prescribing offer across the borough – as members are key – these have now been entered into diaries for July and September.

### 3 **Key Issues for Overview and Scrutiny to Discuss**

3.1 There is a challenge in engaging all of primary care once we mobilise across the other clusters now and in the coming months and building pathways between other key healthcare settings. Good progress has been made in Oldham West through building key relationships and we need to replicate this again in each cluster. This will be an area of focus going forward.

There is an additional question of how (going forward and ongoing) we can best engage member support as the conduit to community engagement?

### 4 **Key Questions for Overview and Scrutiny to Consider**

4.1 None

### 5. **Links to Corporate Outcomes**

5.1 Direct link to Thriving Communities. This does need a stronger linkage with inclusive economy because having a job and purpose is one of the number one determinant of good health and wellbeing.

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6      **Additional Supporting Information**

6.1      Please see Case Studies in Appendices Section.

7      **Consultation**

7.1      Extensive consultation with legal, finance etc has been carried out via the business case process which has been signed off via the Oldham Cares business case process and governance. An 80-page full business case is available on request.

8      **Appendices**

8.1      Appendix 1: Social Prescribing Case Study (Jane).

8.2      Appendix 2: Social Prescribing Case Study (Lisa).

8.3      Appendix 3: Fast Grants Case Studies and Photos



# Social Prescribing



## Jane

### Social Prescribing Case Study

Jane contacted Action Together and referred herself to the social prescribing service. In the initial conversations, Jane expressed an interest in wanting support to help her with feeling less lonely, she wanted someone to talk to and befriend.

Jane suffers from Multiple Sclerosis and has had strokes in the past leading to lacking confidence when going out on her own. She discussed having good days and bad days where her health prevented her from getting out of bed. Jane recently separated from her partner and lives alone. She enjoys watching documentaries on History and Animals. She has support workers who help her with her weekly shop.

Following on from the initial conversations, Asia met with the British Red Cross to discuss how they could support Jane. Asia and Jane met again and Jane agreed this service could suit her.

Asia then referred Jane to the British Red Cross who contacted and met with Jane. Through their support, Jane went out shopping and really enjoyed the company. She said "I am really pleased with the social prescribing service and want to thank you for getting me in touch with the British Red cross, when I am well, I look forward to my phone calls and I have enjoyed getting out. Its a wonderful thing your doing and when I am feeling well enough I'd like to volunteer".



Action Together is the new name for Voluntary Action Oldham and  
Community & Voluntary Action Tameside. A registered charity (No. 1163312).





## Lisa

### Social Prescribing

Lisa was signposted to the Social Prescribing Service through her GP. She lives alone and used to work in a family owned business but found herself without a job after splitting from her partner. Lisa was previously involved in an incident which led to her struggling to cope with her mental health. She has been attending Healthy Minds which she feels is helping. She has had some tough days but has remained positive and continued to push herself.

Lisa attended the Social Prescribing as she wanted support to find work and get ready for work. She wanted to work to help support her mind to stay healthy and earn her own income as she finds living on a low income through benefits really tough. She also wanted to be able to meet and socialise with other people and keep occupied during the day.

During her appointment, various services and groups were discussed, and she was connected to Get Oldham Working to support her employment aspirations and Inspire Women to help her focus on positivity and meet new people.

Lisa said “I went to Get Oldham Working and they were really helpful, positive and encouraging. I’m really pleased I went there, I think they are going to help me get somewhere. They even discussed helping me to maybe get a work placement to get some experience and im really looking forward to what happens next”.

Lisa has since contacted Asia to let her know that she is delighted to have gained full time employment.

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Action Together is the new name for Voluntary Action Oldham and Community & Voluntary Action Tameside. A registered charity (No. 1165552).

### 8.3 Appendix 3 Fast Grants

Grants have funded initiatives such:

- Kits and training fees for a Young Persons Basketball team to enable them to be more sustainable.
- The continuation of a regular newsletter from the 'Breathe Easy' group who are a support and advice group for people with breathing difficulties. The newsletter is sent to members but also to local doctors, Healthy Minds and chest clinics so people who are newly diagnosed will get to know about the group.
- "East meets West Sewing" with Fatima Women's group - where women have been given the opportunity to improve their spoken English, improve team work, imagination, knowledge, budgeting, functional skills for life, motor skills, understanding to make informed choices, and extend social networks.

