

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD
01/12/2020 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor McLaren (Chair)
Councillors Toor, Jacques, Hamblett (Substitute) and Surjan

Also in Attendance:

Lori Hughes	Constitutional Services
Jodie Barber	Service Manager - Youth Service
Andrew Hunt	Strategy Partnerships and Policy Manager
Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE	Cabinet Member for Finance and Green
Councillor Eddie Moores	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Catherine Murphy	Opportunity Area
Paul Axon	Positive Steps
Suzanne Taylor	Positive Steps
Sian Walter-Browne	Constitutional Services

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Curley, Councillor Taylor and Councillor 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 MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings held on 20th October and 5th November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

6 MINUTES OF THE GMCA CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the minutes of the GMCA Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6th October 2020 be noted.

7 MINUTES OF THE GMCA HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the minutes of the GMCA Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 8th October 2020 be noted.

8 MINUTES OF THE GMCA ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the minutes of the GMCA Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9th October 2020 be noted.

9

YOUTH OFFER

The Board gave consideration to an update by the Head of the Youth Service on the District youth work offer.



The Board were provided with an update on the motion regarding knife crime and information which had been presented to the Board in October 2019. The Youth Service had received funding from the Community Safety Funds to invest in the creation of District Youth Teams. The Youth Teams had been established and were operational. The aim was to deliver additional and targeted youth work sessions and interventions across the districts of Oldham. The objectives were outlined in the report. The Youth Service also included a Detached/Response Team and an Empowerment and Participation Team.

The Board were informed of the impact of Covid-19 on the services which had been significant. Some staff had been redeployed to support the wider emergency response. Reduced staff undertook youth work using online platforms as well as some limited outreach work which aimed at supporting young people to be safe. As restrictions changed the offer was adapted and increased. The delivery of the Covid safe youth offer was informed by guidance from the National Youth Agency. The impact of Covid on the wider youth offer was also outlined. Many had to close venues and adapt their offer online.

The service continued to engage and consult with young people across Oldham. The Make Your Mark 2020 consultation was ongoing and was a large-scale consultation for young people across Oldham which provided a list of top priority issues identified by young people and informed and shaped the annual work programme for the service and the Youth Council.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People commented on the amazing work being done by the service despite the pandemic and the timetable of work which was planned and added that Overview and Scrutiny may wish to see the outcomes of the Make Your Mark consultation.

Members sought and received information on how priorities had changed, issues related to mental health and hotspots of anti-social behaviour and how demand on youth workers was managed. Members were informed of the response across the youth work sector, work across a number of sectors to support young people, and detached teams which worked across multiple locations in all districts. It was a challenge with limited staff.

Members referred to specific youth teams in districts and the effect from Covid-19 and interlinking with external partners, signposting for carers and parents. Members were informed of

work ongoing in locations which was hampered due to Covid-19 restrictions. A number of social platforms were being used as open sessions could not be held under Covid restrictions. Work was ongoing across a number of services to co-ordinate what was available for young people.

Members referred to the knife crime issue as discussed last year and raised the issue of drugs and asked what work was being done or planned and also about work with young people from the BME community and those who did not have access to social media. Members were informed that drug and alcohol use was part of the strategy and the service worked closely with Positive Steps with their Drug and Alcohol Team to reach out and support young people. Members were also informed about the targeting of different communities through schools and community work which included sessions in parks, working with a diverse range of young people in various areas.

Members asked about issues related to anti-social behaviour on Metrolink and along that corridor and were informed of the targeted work to address the issue with Greater Manchester Police, Transport for Greater Manchester and Community Safety.

Members sought and received information related to how the youth team programme was determined and prioritised which included detached teams in various areas to build relationships with young people.

Members sought and received information related to volunteering by young people and the youth council which included collections for food banks, fundraising and supporting other ideas from young people.

Members asked how they as elected members could support young people and it was agreed for the Board to meet with the Youth Council to discuss what could be supported locally and borough wide.

Members expressed their thanks and appreciation for what young people were doing and asked for their thanks to be passed on to the Youth Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update and information provided on the Youth Offer be noted.
2. A meeting be organised for the Overview and Scrutiny Board members to meet with the Youth Council, Cabinet member and Head of the Youth Service to discuss how the Board could provide support.

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

The Board were provided with an update on the Youth Justice Plan which was a part of the Policy Framework. The Youth Justice Board had not requested an annual plan this year due to the Covid-19 situation and funding had been agreed on the

basis of a ‘Covid-19 Recovery Plan’. The Covid Recovery Plan had received local sign-off and approval from the Youth Justice Management Board and nationally by the Youth Justice Board. Next year’s plan would revert to the standard strategic plan format and governance.

The Plan for 2020/21 had been created in line with the template supplied by the Youth Justice Board and included the following:

- Recovery Plan – including high level overview and service specific areas
- Grant Allocation of Resource
- Service Priorities
- Pooled Budget
- Overview of Value for Money and Spending Plan
- Authorisation

These were detailed in the report.

The Board were provided with additional detail about the delivery of the service which included performance on reoffending and how the service met these needs. Oldham’s rate was below comparative datasets and successful in outcomes, Oldham was slightly above in the custody performance. Members were informed of the focus on children looked after and a range of actions to tackle overrepresentation in black, mixed heritage and Asian young people in custody.

The strategic priorities for the coming year were outlined which included preventing youth crime, reducing offending, reducing custody, safeguarding, protecting the public, improved outcomes for young people and communities and families. The Youth Justice Service had six priorities which included keep delivering outstanding work, improve the health offer, Covid-19 themes, build prevention and diversion, child first offender second and overrepresentation. Health outcomes had been compounded by Covid-19.

Members asked about the percentage of excluded young people in the youth justice system, the extent poverty played in criminal behaviour and if there were enough placements when young people left custody. Members were informed that there was a proven link with regard to exclusion in overrepresentation from the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and other exclusions and it was a priority to build partnerships with schools to stop exclusions, to sign up to an exclusion strategy and before the exclusion took place a multi-agency meeting should be held. There was also a link between poverty and structural inequalities. Placements in accommodation had improved as the numbers had reduced and able to be better managed.

Members asked about the datasets and Oldham’s comparison with other individual GM authorities and how many young people in the Youth Justice system were of SEND or AS background and how those needs were supported. Members were informed that the datasets were national and there was

only the ability to compare with GM and not individual authorities but there was confidence that Oldham's performance was better than that across GM and that there was work to do on the custody rates. Members were informed that there was a higher proportion of young people with ADHD, SEND and speech and language issues and work was tailored around them.

Members asked about employment education where 85% achieved a destination but queried the remaining 15% and how many there were and what was being done to support them. Members were informed that there were 11 young people and each had a case manager who worked with them with an assessment and supported opportunities which were right for the young person. Some were challenging as funding formulas had changed. In Oldham, the service worked with Oldham College and other training providers as well as a training provider network which had been relatively successful.

Members asked what the average time was to address issues and were informed that this was dependent on the cases and that the service could only encourage and motivate.

Members asked if restorative justice had been used and informed that it was and that there was a coordinator for the area of work. All victims were offered the restorative justice package but the rate of take up was not high. There were direct conferences with individual and sometimes with communities. This had been impacted by Covid-19 which was being addressed by the use of written correspondence and shuttle mediation.

RESOLVED that the update and information provided on the Youth Justice Plan be noted.

11

OPPORTUNITY AREA FUNDING

The Board were provided with an update on the Opportunity Area's Performance against its publicly stated targets and planned activity for 2020/21.

The Oldham Opportunity area was in its fourth year of delivery. The Department for Education (DfE) had confirmed that all existing Opportunity Areas would receive additional funding for a further academic year (2020/21). The Cabinet Member for Education and the Managing Director for Children's Services were members of the Oldham Opportunity Area Partnership Board and had pivotal roles in investment decisions and monitoring delivery. The report provided the latest position regarding performance against each of the publicly stated targets and took account of the impact of Covid-19. The report also provided a summary of activity.

All targets had been extended for an additional year and had been or were forecasted to be met by the end of Year 4. The exception was Target 5 (related to Attainment 8 scores at the end of Key Stage 4) which would not be met.

The priorities for the Oldham Opportunity area were:

- Priority 1: Ensure all children are school-ready by the age of five;
- Priority 2: Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils; and
- Priority 3: All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work.

Members were provided an update on activity which had been carried over to this year, the use of local Key Performance Indicator data and the involvement of the University of Manchester. The final evaluation report was expected in Autumn 2021. Members were also provided with an overview on priorities and investments. The challenges and priorities for Year 4 included risk management, legacy planning, evaluation & impact assessment and sharing learning. Members were provided with a summary of progress against targets. Targets not reported were outlined to the members. Members were informed of the establishment of Oldham Learning which was a system led organisation.

Members asked about the school readiness target and if children had regressed due to the pandemic. It was confirmed that with the impact of Covid-19 there was a widening in the gap and this was happening nationally. Progress had been seen before lockdown and the situation was being monitored to see what could be done locally and challenges were being discussed with the Department for Education.

Members asked about the sustainability of the programme and how this could be demonstrated. It was confirmed that this was a challenge but there were inheritors in the area which included the formation of Oldham Learning which would build a financial model to support themselves, the placement of a team with the Clinical Commissioning Group and other items were being discussed with the Youth Service. A full legacy plan should be in place post-Christmas. Members requested that a report be brought back to Overview and Scrutiny in September 2021.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update and information provided on the Opportunity Area Funding be noted.
2. A further update on the programme be provided to Overview and Scrutiny in September 2021.

12

GREEN NEW DEAL STRATEGY AND GENERATION OLDHAM

The Board were provided with an update on the progress of the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy which had been adopted by the Council in March 2020 and the Generation Oldham community energy programme.

The strategy had set a number of objectives and pledges for delivery on environmental issues in a range of work areas which broadly fit into three over-arching 'pillars':

- Growing the Green Economy
- Low carbon infrastructure and a local energy market
- Northern Roots.

The Oldham Green New Deal Strategy had also set two carbon neutrality targets:

- For Council Buildings and Street Lighting by 2025
- For the borough by 2030.

Progress on the above two targets was highlighted in the report.

The Board were also informed of the impact of Covid-19 on the Green New Deal Programme. The delivery programme was reviewed in June 2020 and a number of changes were made which were outlined in the report. The review had identified £135K of savings from the Transformation Reserve.

Additionally, the impact of Covid-19 at a strategic level had implications for the 2025 and 2030 carbon neutrality targets.

An evidence base which targeted Green New Deal activities in Oldham was available from the Local Government Association (LGA) Green Jobs online report. The report showed the number of jobs in Oldham which the LGA expected to be created in meeting both the national 2050 carbon neutrality target and the 2030 'milestone'. The Council was targeting activities in the Green New Deal Programme to boost activity in the areas of the low carbon economy. Key Oldham Green New Deal initiatives included low carbon electricity, low carbon heat and energy efficiency. The achievements of the Oldham Green New Deal were outlined at Section 1.14 of the report.

Due to the financial challenge associated with Covid-19, the Oldham Green New Deal Programme had a very limited budget from resources within the Council itself. The programme was having some success in securing external funding from a range of sources to support delivery of initiatives. In order to meet targets a strategic approach to the delivery of low carbon infrastructure across the whole borough would be necessary. The report also highlighted carbon-offsetting – tree planting and the Government Net Zero Ten Point Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Green thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Board for their continued interest in the strategy which had been adopted earlier in the year. Oldham Council had been the first authority to adopt a Green New Deal Strategy. Due to Covid-19 there had been an impact on the financing of some project which would have to be delayed or modified. The Northern Roots project was taking shape and government funding was being sought.

Members were updated on the funding being sought for large scale renewable energy projects. Members were also informed about a mine network which had the potential to use Oldham's industrial heritage to extract heat. The Coal Authority had looked at the mines under Oldham and determined that this could be one of the best opportunities in the country and the

initial feasibility study was favourable. Oldham's activity on the Green New Deal had attracted the attention of Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and was preparing to report on best practice in terms of council policy to secure benefits of low carbon transition and Oldham had been selected as one of three deep dive studies.

Members were also provided an update on Oldham Community Power and Generation Oldham which included the support to Saddleworth Community Hydro. Oldham Community Power had installed some solar pv under Phase I. Phase II had not yet happened. There had been a setback due to Covid and also due to the DfE changing the rules on installation of solar pv on schools. However, with the neighbourhood master planning project it was hoped to link and be guided by residents as to which buildings required solar pv to become a true community programme.

Members asked about the youth offer and links to the Youth Council as the environment was one of their priorities and how much reassurance could be given to young people. Members were informed that young people had engaged with the agenda. There was a cross party group for climate change and delegates from the Youth Council had been invited and involved in driving forward the agenda. Members were informed that some government funding was tied to specific initiatives or other guidelines which could not be applied in Oldham. The Cabinet Member would be speaking to the Government. Members were also informed about a developed apprenticeship standard to work with companies.

Members queried the status of the strategy and the funding streams to take forward the Green New Deal. Members suggested working with the Cabinet Member and relevant officers to look at funding and infrastructure. Members also referred to the Ciitizen's Assembly.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the strategy had been approved earlier in the year. Some projects had to be stopped due to the financial implications arising from Covid-19. Members asked if organisations could be created which could access funding and were informed that funding from central government was restricted in terms of criteria and private investors would only invest if there was a lucrative return. Members were informed that every grant was being applied for as well as EU Funding. There was a strategy with a number of projects but due funding progress could not be made. Members were informed that funding could be targeted, looking to how residents could become involved, the potential of a private sector partner and coordination with regeneration schemes. It was agreed that an update would come back to Board in March 2021.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress of a wide range of initiatives under the Oldham Green New Deal programme, despite the challenge of Covid-19, be noted.
2. The recognition of Oldham's pioneering Green New Deal approach be noted
3. The evolving approach to meeting the Council 2025 and Borough 2030 carbon neutrality targets be noted.
4. The range of funding streams being made available by the Government to support the low carbon transition be noted.
5. The payment of capital and interest by Oldham Community Power to its members, approved at the 2020 Annual General Meeting and the integration of its approach to a Phase 2 into wider community level Green New Deal initiatives be noted.
6. A further update on the Strategy and Funding be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Board in March 2021.

13

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Board were informed that it had been agreed that the Local Plan: Issues and Options be deferred given the uncertainties regarding the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. The Council was committed to the review of Oldham's Local Plan. However, depending on how the GMSF progressed, officers would need to consider how best to progress the review and the potential implications. The Local Plan: Issues and Options would be brought to a future Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.

RESOLVED that the information related to the Local Plan Issues and Options be noted.

14

GENERAL EXCEPTIONS AND URGENT DECISIONS

The Board gave consideration to a report which advised of decisions related to Scaling Up Locally Supported Contact Tracing and the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme.

RESOLVED that the report and authorisations granted under Rule 14 (Special Urgency) be noted.

15

KEY DECISION DOCUMENT

The Board gave consideration to the latest Key Decision Document published on 13th November 2020.

RESOLVED that the Key Decision Document be noted.

16

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board gave consideration to the latest Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme and were provided an update on items and actions outlined on the document.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme be noted.

17

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the date and time of the next meeting to be held on 19th January 2021 at 6.00 p.m. be noted.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.22 pm

