



# Minutes

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## UNITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

12 September 2016

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

5.30 pm

**Present:** Councillors Dean, McCann and Sykes

Emma Alexander	Business Service Director, Kier
Helen Gerling	Interim Director Commercial and Transformation Services, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC)
Helen Lockwood	Executive Director Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods, OMBC
Simon Miller	Service Delivery Director, Unity Partnership
Pam Siddall	Revenues and Benefits Service Delivery Manager, Unity Partnership
Fabiola Fuschi	Constitutional Services, OMBC

### 1 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jabbar, Stretton, Carolyn Wilkins and John Sillitoe.

The Board noted that Simon Miller had been delegated by John Sillitoe to represent Kier at today's meeting. Helen Lockwood substituted for Carolyn Wilkins.

Councillor McCann declared a personal interest by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Joint Venture Board.

### 2 Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Unity Partnership Board meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising.

### 3 Management Update Report

Consideration was given to a report of the Unity Management Team on the Unity Partnership performance in the last quarter.

Highways - The Coring Debt had been settled positively.

Band 3 status had been achieved; this would allow access to the maximum amount of Incentive Fund in April 2017.

Work Plans were ongoing to produce savings in Highways and Property Services. The new Highway IT System was still in the process of being implemented.

Property - The service was on target.

Work on a Strategic Property Delivery Model was in progress to achieve a strong revenue stream via a better approach to the Council property portfolio.

Revenues - Council Tax and Business Rate Collection remained on track. At the end of July 2016, Council Tax collection rate had increased by 0.4%.

The service had also supported the implementation of Capita Connect, part of the project to increase residents' self-service options in accessing Council services.

Benefit Service - The aspirational targets had been achieved across Benefits and Access Oldham service. A second trainee had been employed as part of Unity support to the Get Oldham Working Campaign. A recovery service continued to be provided to collect overpayments of housing benefits from First Choice Home Oldham.

Contact Centre – many enquiries had been received in connection with elections and waste reduction schemes.

HR (Advisor and Payroll) - Challenges with Selima System continued. The A1 implementation date had been pushed back.

ICT – work ongoing on the final element of the ICT transformation plan.

Supporting Get Oldham Working – 100 hours volunteering had been provided to contribute to the community. £1,100 had been raised for Dr. Kershaw's Hospice.

5 KPI Performance – the analysis was generally good.

A discussion took place on the opportunity of reconsidering the structure of the Unity Partnership and Council input to the Management Update report. A meeting would take place between representatives of Kier, Unity Partnership and the Council to address this matter.

Board Members sought and received clarifications on the following points:

- What measures could be put in place to sanction utility companies that failed to notify the Council of their works on the highways - It was explained that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) held a regional registration scheme that utility companies could use to notify local authorities of their works in specific areas. Information would be provided at a future meeting of the Board.
- Council Tax collection rate in August and Oldham position compared to other local authorities in Greater Manchester - It was explained that Local Authorities collected Council Tax in different ways; however, as soon as the information was received, it would be communicated to the Board.



- Capita Connect and timeframe for Phase Two – it was explained that the business case needed to be assessed before committing the necessary resources.
- Waste collection enquiries and Contact Centre – It was explained that due to the increased volume of calls on waste collection, there had been a change of priorities in calls queuing to ensure that all enquiries were responded to.
- Timescales for Economic Development savings proposals – It was explained that decisions had not yet been made as the business case was not complete. An update would be provided at the next meeting.

**The Board:**

- 1. Noted the Management Update report.**
- 2. Asked the Revenues and Benefits Service Delivery Manager to provide information on Council Tax collection rate in August and Oldham position compared to other local authorities in Greater Manchester.**
- 3. Noted that information would be provided at a future meeting of the Board concerning measures in place to prevent lack of notification from utility companies that undertook works on the highways.**
- 4. Noted that an update on the timescale for Economic Development savings proposals would be provided at the next meeting.**

**4 Elected Members Enquiry System**

Consideration was given to a report of the Interim Director Commercial and Transformation Services on the completion of the work to streamline the process to deal with Elected Members' enquiries. Initial data would be examined to evaluate areas of tardy or poor quality responses. A formal reporting system to senior officers was put in place to assess the process. Work had been carried out with District Teams to ensure that adequate resources were in place to support Elected Members with the new system.

Concerns were raised with regards to the impact of the new process on District Teams' resources and the Elected Members' workload. The remote access of the system was also highlighted as an issue.

**The Board:**

- 1. Noted the content of the Elected Members' Enquiry System progress report.**
- 2. Agreed the proposals to consider the initial data emerging from the Elected Members' Enquiry System in advance of the institution of a formal weekly report to stakeholders and monthly report to the Unity Operations Board.**

**5 Highway ICT System Project Update**

Consideration was given to a progress report of the Head of Highways and Engineering on the implementation of a new Highways System.



The supplier selection process had now been completed. Relevant funds and decisions had been secured. The project was now ready to be implemented. The current forecast date would be January 2017.

**The Board noted the content of the progress report on the Highways ICT System Project.**

## **6 Housing Benefit Position Update**

The Board considered a progress report on the key performance indicator, Right Time Indicator (RTI - combined average number of days taken to process new claims and changes in circumstances) for Housing Benefits. The report was presented by the Revenues and Benefits Service Delivery Manager. From April until August 2016, each month forecast had been met.

**The Board noted Oldham position on the Right Time Indicator – combined average days taken to process new claims and changes in circumstances for Housing Benefits.**

## **7 Unity Partnership Strategy**

Consideration was given to a document which outlined the strategy for Unity Partnership to create a sustainable business by 2022.

Targets and objectives had been identified during a workshop of shareholders that had been held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Marketing material was being produced to be used as evidence when promoting Unity Partnership services to other organisations.

**The Board noted the Unity Partnership Strategy.**

## **8 Any Other Business**

The Board gave consideration to a recommendation of the Director of Commercial and Transformation Services and the Unity Partnership Service Delivery Director to introduce an additional HR key performance indicator to the existing list of performance measures for Unity Partnership. The verification period for the new indicator had ended and the Change Control had been agreed.

**The Board endorsed the Change Control notice introducing a new HR Key Performance Indicator to the existing list of performance measures for Unity Partnership.**

## **9 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Unity Partnership Board was scheduled on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 5.30pm.

The meeting started at 5.30 pm and ended at 6.50 pm