

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD
24/07/2018 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor McLaren (Chair)
Councillors Leach, Sheldon, Taylor, Toor, Phythian (Substitute)
and Harkness (Substitute)

Also in Attendance:

Dami Awobajo	Head of Business Intelligence
Tom Stannard – Item 11 only	Director of Economy and Skills
Merlin Joseph – Item 16 only	Interim Director of Children’s Services
David Stringfellow – Item 16 only	Subject Matter Expert – Children’s Transformation
Ray Ward – Item 17 only	Deputy Chief Executive Corporate and Commercial Services
Chris Kesall – Item 17 only	Housing PFI (Private Finance Initiative) Programme Manager
Fabiola Fuschi	Constitutional Services Officer

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ball and 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**

5 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 19th June 2018 be approved as a correct record.

6 **MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 20th March 2018 be noted.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance and Value for Money Select Committee meeting held on 8th March 2018 be noted.

8 **MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Economy, Business Growth and

Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 13th April 2018 and on 8th June 2018 be noted.



9 **MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (AGMA) Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th June 2018 be noted.

10 **MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA) CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (AGMA) Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18th April 2018 be noted

11 **OLDHAM WORK AND SKILLS STRATEGY UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a progress report of the Head of Lifelong Learning, Investment, Employment and Skills on Oldham Work and Skills Strategy which had been previously presented to this Committee in July 2017.

The Director of Economy and Skills was in attendance to present the report and address the enquiries of the Committee. It was explained that the Work and Skills Strategy 2016-20 was one of the three components of the Oldham Strategic Investment Framework (SIF) together with business investment and housing and infrastructure. The strategy had four main goals:

- Create jobs;
- Social Regeneration and in work progression;
- Deliver the Oldham Education and Skills Commission and improve colleges;
- Support a thriving private sector.

It was explained that the Work and Skills Strategy was developed around an Outcomes framework which committed the Council and its partners to working collaboratively in pursuit of 12 priority themes. The Committee was provided with up to date information on each of the 12 themes and the following trends were highlighted:

- Oldham performed well in upskilling young people but was not successful in retaining them as the majority went to work out of the area;
- Significant improvement achieved by Oldham College which was ranked "most improved" college in Greater Manchester; the college had received approval from the Further Education Commissioner to maintain its "stand alone" status. Following from the Area-based review, the Council continued to support the College through a financial recovery plan and re-shaping the offer to meet the demand of local employers.
- Improvement in the uptake of the Apprenticeship programme for citizens;

- Work was ongoing between the Council, the local education providers and the key stakeholders to ensure that the skills provision was in line with the six key sectors for Oldham.
- Get Oldham Working had been very successful and over 3,500 work related opportunities had been filled.
- The Career Advancement Service was currently working with over 300 residents to improve skill levels for residents who were already in work. The project had been showcased at a national conference by the relevant portfolio holder and it had been very well received. There was potential for upscaling it at Greater Manchester level.
- The learner loans had been superseded by a new national retraining scheme. This was an opportunity to make the scheme more flexible and accessible to learners.
- The higher level skills and Higher Education strategy remained a priority. The Council was supporting Oldham College to develop a Construction Skills College.
- The Community Learning and Lifelong Learning provision continued to be rated “outstanding” by Ofsted. From 2019/20 the devolution of the Adult Education Budget which would be administered by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) as a new commissioning environment presented new risks and opportunities.

There were some key areas on skills and employability that Oldham Council intended to bring to the attention of the Government and GMCA:

1. Localising of Apprenticeship Levy and ability for city region to topslice underspent levy allocation; the Apprenticeship levy should be an “apprenticeship and adult retraining” levy providing greater flexibility;
2. Advanced learners loans – devolving facility to make affordability of training easy to manage for family. Revamp the individual learner account scheme – levy and advanced learner system and a more personalised programme for residents;
3. Universal Credit – work on potential impact on “minimum income floor” – people on low wage who struggled to start their own business – future devolution deal could look at freezing “minimum income floor”;
4. Ensuring that Oldham’s sectorial priorities were met by the Area Based Review via GMCA;
5. Strong case for Oldham lifelong learning service – last remaining provider rated by OFSTED “outstanding”; opportunity for a cluster at Greater Manchester level to use budget for geography greater than Oldham.

Members sought and received clarification / commented on the following points:

- Oldham College and its future sustainability – It was explained that quality outcomes for students had improved significantly in comparison to other colleges

and a cautious financial strategy had been put in place. However, the situation of further education providers would be more challenging in future years as they would have to rely more on private capital as the Government's funding would decrease consistently. There was a role for the Council to bring education partners together to work effectively.

- Would the Government secure £1.4M European Social Fund after the UK left the European Union? – It was explained that the Government had declared that it would underwrite EU funded contracts for their entire duration if these had been signed before March 2019.
- Get Oldham Working successful results but work experience placements below target – It was explained that it was necessary to work more intensively with local businesses to increase employers engagement and to work with neighbouring authorities to expand opportunities to create work experience placements.
- Aligning Oldham College offer to employers' demand – it was explained that this depended on the financial health of the provider, its ability to engage with employers, offer of a technical education route and capital investment in facilities. The Council was currently working on a significant investment to create a state of the art facility for construction skills.

RESOLVED that:

1. The content of the report be noted;
2. A progress report be presented in July 2019;
3. A discussion with the relevant portfolio holder be arranged to look at the five key points above and their prioritisation.

12 **GENERAL EXCEPTIONS AND URGENT DECISIONS**

There were no decisions taken under Rule 16 or 17 to note

13 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2018/19 be noted.

14 **KEY DECISION DOCUMENT**

RESOLVED that the Key Decision Document be noted.

15 **EXCLUSION OF THE 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 items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3

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

16

GETTING TO GOOD - CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a presentation of the Interim Director of Children's Services on the current performance of Oldham's Children Social Care and Early Help. An Ofsted inspection had taken place in 2015 and Oldham had received an overall judgment of "Requires Improvement". An action plan had been devised (i.e.: Getting to Good plan) and progress was measured against each of the 15 recommendations received.

The Interim Director of Children's Services was accompanied at the meeting by the Subject Matter Expert - Children's Transformation; they both addressed the enquiries of the Committee.

It was explained that in 2017, Ofsted had introduced a new inspection framework. Consequently, a Focused Visit, one of the components of the new inspection regime, had been carried out in Oldham in March 2018 to look at specific service areas.

The presentation outlined information concerning service demand profiles, financial performance, progress against the Ofsted recommendations and strengths and challenges of the service.

Members sought and received clarification and commented on various points of the presentation.

Members requested that a review of Children's Services be undertaken.

RESOLVED that:

1. The content of the presentation be noted;
2. An update be provided to the Chair of the Board in September 2018;
3. A progress report be presented in January 2019.

At this point in the proceedings Councillor Toor left the meeting.

17

SMART UPDATE

Consideration was given to a progress report of the Deputy Chief Executive Corporate and Commercial Services on the outcome of the review of the Unity Partnership Ltd and the action taken to align its function and form with the delivery of the Council's strategic requirements.

The Deputy Chief Executive Corporate and Commercial Services and the Housing PFI (Private Finance Initiative) Programme Manager were in attendance to present the information and address the enquiries of the Committee.

The Committee sought and received clarification and commented on some aspects of the report.

The Board thanked the Deputy Chief Executive Corporate and Commercial Services for the successful conclusion of the negotiation.



RESOLVED that:

1. The content of the report ne noted;
2. The recommendations 1 and 2 as detailed within the report be noted.

18

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that it be noted that the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board take place on Tuesday 4th September 2018 at 6pm

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.06 pm