

Minutes

Meeting of the Oldham Learning Board

Tuesday 2 March 2021

Via Microsoft Teams

at 1.00pm

Present:	James Kempton	Director and Chair
	Jane Acklam	Director and Vice-Chair
	Helen Arya	Director
	Rebeckah Dixon	Director
	Mary Garvey	Director
	Rob Higgins	Director
	Gerard Jones	Director
	Richard Lynch	Director
	Gillian Kay	Director
	Councillor Shaid Mushtaq	Director
	Anne Redmond	Director
	Helen Rowland	Director
	Nicola Underdown	Director
	Ian Walsh	Director
Also Present:	Patsy Kane OBE	Chief Executive Officer – Oldham Learning
	Clare Cheetham	Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Oldham Learning
	Catherine Murphy	Programme Manager, Oldham Opportunity Area
	Carol Hyde	Clerk to the Oldham Learning Board
Absent:	Samah Khalil	Oldham Youth Mayor

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Samah Khalil and Rebeckah Dixon as Rebeckah had indicated that she would have to leave the meeting at 2.30pm due to another commitment.

The Chair commented that he had reflected that Oldham Learning is half-way through Oldham Learning and reflecting on where Oldham Learning have got to and what it has achieved.

The Chair welcomed Rebeckah Dixon (RSC office) to her first Oldham Learning board meeting.



2 Declaration of Business, Pecuniary or Personal Interests

- 2.1 Board Members were asked to complete and sign the documents for the register declaring any business, pecuniary and personal interests relating to companies (goods and services) or personal relationships with pupils, volunteers and members of staff associated with the school where a matter may be discussed at the meeting.

No further declarations were made.

The Chair requested the Clerk to confirm how many declarations were outstanding and to chase Directors for completion and return.

ACTION: Clerk

2.2 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2.3 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

3 Update on CEO Recruitment (Verbal)

The Chair provided Directors with an update of the CEO recruitment meeting that had taken place and thanked Patsy Kane and Clare Cheetham for their work.

Richard Lynch explained that a provisional timetable had been created and the recruitment panel will be working to recruit to the CEO role for commencement on 1 September 2021. Richard further explained that it is intended that the recruitment would be concluded by the end of the May half term, which will afford the successful candidate enough time to provide their current employer with their resignation.

Richard outlined the proposed recruitment dates:

CEO Advert opens: 5 April 2021.

CEO Advert closes: 23 April 2021.

CEO Shortlisting to take place: Week commencing 26 April 2021.

CEO Interview to take place: Week commencing 17 May 2021.

Richard explained that the recruitment process is open to exploring a secondment or commissioning an organisation to provide an individual as CEO. Whilst the framework is set, the mechanics are flexible to appoint the right person.

Richard asked Directors to give some thought about what should be included in the recruitment of the post e.g. presentation, testing etc., so that everything is ready.

The Chair requested that the recruitment panel note the proposed dates and the Clerk to hold dates in recruitment panel diaries.

ACTION: Clerk

4 **Agree Any Other Urgent Business**

The Chair and Board Members agreed that there was enough time and available information to discuss the following item during this meeting at 'Any Other Urgent Business'.

- Recognition for the sector in terms of their great efforts during COVID19.

5 **Finance & Risk Reports**

A copy of the Finance & Risk Report was circulated with the agenda, prior to the meeting.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Finance and Risk Report shows the activity which is funded by the Oldham Learning budget and not from other funding sources.

- 15% of the budget has been spent.
- All activity is profiled, and training is paid for when it has been completed.
- Funding for digital devices has been fully allocated to 10 secondary and 44 primary schools with demand outstripping funding.
- Oldham Learning is working to the academic year, which means that finance straddles two financial years.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that funding from April 2021 still needs to be identified and finalised. Richard Lynch commented that he will be able to offer clarity of funding for the Oldham Learning posts before the end of this financial year.

ACTION: Richard Lynch

The Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) explained that there needs to be a commitment of £150,000 with additional support or subscriptions from schools considered.

Nicola Underdown sought clarification regarding the likelihood of an underspend of OA Year 4 funding and the DfE clawing back any underspend at the end of OA Year 4.

There was a correction needed in the amount of uncommitted funding.

ACTION: Deputy CEO

The Chief Executive commented on the recovery programme and stated that further spend will be brought to the OL Board, which could include investment in more digital devices for schools or helping Headteachers in their recovery.

Nicola Underdown stated that the OA funding is not designed as capital funding e.g. buying digital devices. However, the OA has a list of contingency activities which overlap significantly with OL e.g. SEND etc.

Richard Lynch stated that he is keen to align the summer activity to disadvantaged groups to recover habits eroded in lockdown.

Cllr Shaid Mushtaq stated he had spoken to young people, and he felt consultation is needed is to agree activity which will prepare pupils for going back to school in September 2021. He further commented that to have school staff working during the summer would have a detrimental effect on their health and wellbeing.



Rebeckah Dixon informed the meeting that School to School Support funding has been extended to the end of the summer term 2021 with five days of funded support from a National Leader of Education (NLE) available to schools who need it.

Helen Rowland commented that Oldham Council has previously held an 'Open for Action' scheme which was for eight to 14 years old's and took place in two-week blocks in different areas e.g. Glodwick etc., this scheme operated 10am – 12pm and 1.30pm – 3.30pm and included sport and health.

Catherine Murphy mentioned that funding is available for food and holiday/summer activities (Holiday Hunger Fund).

The Deputy Chief Executive commented that on reflection the OA money is to be spent on disadvantaged pupils. What is the decision-making process? The Chair sought agreement on a decision being made vis email. Directors agreed that this would be dealt with by means of email, based on recommendations from the Chief Executive in liaison with Nicola Underdown and the Chair.

ACTION: Chair/Chief Executive/Nicola Underdown

The Chair asked the Deputy Chief Executive about the risk of not spending money for primary schools. The Deputy Chief Executive commented that plans to support schools are being worked up with Helen Hampson and Julie Stevens and include mental health and wellbeing support for Headteachers, staff and teachers.

ACTION:

- i. CEO to lead decision around additional spend.
- ii. Deputy CEO to provided detail on primary school investment for the next Oldham Learning Board meeting.

6 Update on OA Year 5 (Verbal)

6.1 Nicola Underdown provided Directors with a verbal update on the probability of a fifth year of the Opportunity Area funding and she further explained that during March 2021, the DfE will be shaping and obtaining agreements etc.

Nicola went onto say that the key facets of Year 5 would be to see progress and that support is sustained going forward. Funding will be smaller than in previous years.

Nicola asked what mechanisms can be used to share learning, experiences and recognise working on the disadvantaged gap.

Nicola informed Directors of the twinning activity which is taking place with Tameside Council and this will continue to grow in the OA Year 5.

Nicola mentioned that the Prime Minister had appointed Sir Kevan Collins as the Education Recovery Commissioner who previously worked at the Education Endowment Fund.

Nicola reminded Directors of the need for a sustainable legacy at the of the OA funding and that this needs to be worked on during the year.

RESOLVED: that the information be received and noted.

6.2 Comms Update

Catherine Murphy provided Directors with an update on the creation of the Oldham Learning (OL) website:

- OL website to go live Monday 8 March 2021.
- OL website being tested this week.
- OL newsletter going out each week.
- Training on OL website and OL twitter account for OL team to make updates.

Catherine Murphy requested a photograph of all Directors with white background.

RESOLVED: that the information be received and noted.

ACTION: Directors to supply Catherine Murphy with appropriate photo for website

7 **CEO Report**

A copy of the CEO's Report was circulated with the agenda, prior to the meeting.

The CEO mentioned that Oldham Learning (OL) has a clear priority to keep engaging with schools and partners. A business case needs to be developed and the CEO explained that work will continue with Stephen Betts (Learn Sheffield).

It was agreed that the CEO and Nicola Underdown will discuss business plans for the future.

ACTION: CEO/Nicola Underdown

Cllr Mushtaq commented that he read in the report that some of the schools which are struggling the most are not engaging in OA/OL activity. A Director explained that some Headteachers felt that could not release staff as they wanted the pupils to have a familiar teacher and cover would be difficult. The CEO stated that she had followed this up with Headteachers or Trust Leaders who might not be aware that Headteachers are not attending OASHP meetings.

Comment was made that the secondary research breakfasts have been beneficial, and it would be ideal to get the primary ones up and running again.

Ian Walsh mentioned that primary heads research breakfasts used to take place and it would be good to re-start them.

8 **Outcomes Framework – Small group discussions 25 mins / 10 mins feedback**

A paper relating to the Outcomes Framework had been distributed with the agenda prior to the Meeting for Directors' consideration.

The CEO explained that knowing what each schools' strengths/weaknesses is important.

Richard Lynch explained that LA is to:

1. Have a school evaluation and look at how the information is held and have sector led improvement.

2. Have an escalation route or those not engaging with OL/LA.
3. How OL this then moves forward in the sector effectively.

(Rebeckah Dixon left the meeting at 2.47pm)

The Vice-Chair commented on the language used and that it has negative connotations. She also mentioned that the work of Trusts Boards has increased, but not been recognized in the paper.

Helen Arya asked is the data that we will be collecting reflective of the fact we are doing something differently. It was suggested that we need to think more about Social mobility and how OL can impact this. Safeguarding, retention and recruitment were all mentioned.

Anne Redmond suggested map of what is on offer when people come to Oldham may be useful. Anne explained to Directors about the scrutiny process which the Kingfisher Trust has undertaken and how it has developed.

Gerard Jones commented on his experience of being in meetings where he finds it embarrassing when questioned on the progress that schools have made and being asked what challenge is being given when schools are not achieving.

The Chair stated that OL needs to ensure rigor in support and escalation of intervention and asked are we measuring the right things?

Councillor Mushtaq stated OL needs to create an atmosphere of collaboration. Councillor Mushtaq stated that Secondary school admissions were allocated on Monday 2 March 2021 and from his contact with parents he had received comments of negativity about specific schools.

Gillian Kay that the type and extent of the 'support' on offer is not mentioned in each phase and that if this was included in the offer it would improve the document.

The Vice-Chair stated that consistency is required from Oldham Council or OL to build relationships and getting schools to good.

(A 10-minute comfort break was taken at this point in the meeting).

After Directors returned to the meeting, the CEO commented on the helpful points raised and that part of business case needs to be costed up with a clear link to what was available.

The CEO stated that she would work up what it might look like in procuring support but not cost. The CEO also mentioned that the OL needs intelligence on schools and a shared celebration when a school does improve.

Directors split into three groups and were asked to delegate a presenter to feedback on the discussions:

Discussion Group 1 – Helen Arya

In 3 years', time:

- Buy in from all with everyone feeling they have a say and are involved.
- A culture of openness and transparency where people are empowered to speak up and be heard.



- A culture of effective coaching at every level.
- A fearless culture where difficult conversations can be had in a nurturing environment in order to move things on.
- An in-depth and informed identification of the strengths and weaknesses and the approaches needed to progress; approaches that can be kept and built on and where data can be collated to show progress over time. High leverage and well researched approaches with equality of access to them.
- Effective leadership in supporting and challenging Head teachers as they journey through school improvement, developing the resilience and mind-set needed for transformation.
- Ensuring an emphasis on effective governance, responsibility and accountability.
- Community development and support for parents and families.
- A culture where people feel safe to take risks, feel confident and enjoy the work they do.
- Excellent CPD at every level including for leaders.
- Innovation and a commitment to long term change.

Discussion Group 2 – Rob Higgins

Who should sit on QEC? Oldham learning staff.

Data exercise

Attendance, exclusions

Discussion Group 3 – Gillian Kay

What we would like to see:

- A strong sense of leadership within the system and from the system, growing our own and supporting the pathway from NQT to leadership, growing leaders and supporting leaders. A sector led approach being the springboard for improvement with OL having a strong commitment to high quality support and CPD.
- A framework for CPD that includes high quality development for teaching and learning, and leadership which includes governance. A framework that all schools can access including those that are graded good and outstanding.
- A courageous approach to identifying the KPIs that judge the quality of education rather than the overreliance on DFE KPIs. KPIs that are different and also place value on qualitative data, those that are fundamental to system change.
- We want community buy in, a community that has confidence in the educational offer in Oldham's schools.

ACTION: Chair/CEO/Clerk/Learning Board Members

9 Leadership Framework Plan – *Whole Board discussion to follow*

A copy of the Leadership Framework Plan had been distributed with the agenda prior to the Meeting for Directors consideration.

PK commented on the how to measure KPIs for leadership and asked Directors for their

thoughts.

The Vice-Chair asked which hubs is OL working with for English and Math's?

The CEO commented on knowing what is happening in Oldham regarding:

- Which Headteachers will retire in the next five years.
- What do SLEs need to develop
- Who has a Deputy Headteacher who is ready to move forward for Headship?

The Chair asked Directors about the Quality Education Committee (QEC) and who should be on it.

Richard Lynch stated that there should be a core representation from OL and include those in the sector.

The Chair asked Directors to send suggestions to the CEO about the CEQ remit and to solicit Directors.

ACTION: Directors

10 **Any Other Business**

The following items of Any Other Urgent Business were agreed for discussion and tabled at agenda item 3.

There was no other business to discuss.

10.1 Recognition

Is there something we can do to recognise the contribution of staff if there is something we can do to recognise the efforts made etc.?

The following suggestions were made:

- A framed certificate.
- Nomination to Pearson Teaching Awards which closes in the next two weeks.
- Small video messages from key leaders, as well as parents and pupils.

The Chair asked that any further suggestions be sent to the CEO.

ACTION: Directors to reflect further

11 **Date and Time of Next Meetings**

The Deputy CEO tabled a list of dates for future meetings of the Oldham Learning Board and sought Directors agreement of the proposed meeting dates.

The dates were agreed, and Directors asked to add them to their diaries.

ACTION: Directors

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Trust Board should be held on:

Tuesday 4 May 2021 at 9.30am

ACTION: CEO/Clerk/Oldham Learning Board Members

12 **Confidentiality**

There were no items of confidential business.

(There being no further business, board members and trustees were thanked for their attendance and the meeting was declared closed at 4.05pm).

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____



Action Point	Agenda Item	Description	Item to be completed by:
1.	2.1	All Directors to complete the business, pecuniary and personal interests form. Clerk to chase outstanding forms.	Clerk/All governors
2.	3	Clerk to ascertain Recruitment Panel availability for Shortlisting and Interview dates.	Clerk/Recruitment Panel
3.	5	Finance and Risk Reports: Richard Lynch to provide clarity of funding for the Oldham Learning posts before the end of this financial year.	Richard Lynch
4.	5	Correction needed in the amount of uncommitted funding.	Deputy CEO
5.	5	CEO to lead decision around additional spend.	CEO
6.	5	Deputy CEO to provide detail on primary school investment for the next Board meeting.	Deputy CEO
7.	6	Directors to provide Catherine Murphy with the pen portrait and photograph for the Oldham Learning website.	All Directors
8.	8	CEO and Nicola Underdown to discuss business plans.	CEO/Nicola Underdown
9.	9	Leadership Framework Plan - Directors to send suggestions to the CEO about the CEQ remit and to solicit Directors.	Directors
10.	10.1	Directors to reflect and provide suggestions on how Oldham Learning can recognise the contribution of staff in schools. Send to CEO.	Directors
11	11	Clerk to send out Oldham Learning meeting dates.	Clerk

