BRIEFING TO OLDHAM HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Report Title: Get Oldham Growing

Date: 11 March 2014

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What the issue is:

This report sets out information on the Get Oldham Growing programme and initial plans for the launch event.

Requirement of the Board:

- For the Board to consider the information presented on the “Get Oldham Growing” programme and initial plans for the launch event.

For the Board to;

- Challenge the rationale and approach behind Get Oldham Growing
- Consider the support and involvement of partners in the programme.

1. Get Oldham Growing

1.1 Get Oldham Growing is initially a 2.5 year programme of work initiated by Oldham Council to promote social business as a public health intervention with a specific focus on growing food in the community.

The programme will support people to;

- participate in more neighbourhood activities,
- gain new skills (growing, cooking, trading)
- participate in the local food economy through supporting growth of social enterprises from existing and new community food projects

1.2 Get Oldham Growing is a practical response to the priorities outlined in the Oldham Public Health Charter, and based on a growing body of evidence linking ill health with socio and economic factors. The Charter’s values-based approach reflects and re-enforces Oldham’s Co-operative Charter. It addresses Oldham’s specific health issues:-

- higher than most of the UK and NW rates of mortality and ill health
- significant health inequalities between Wards
- high rates of unemployment leading to (fuel) poverty, higher mortality, poorer general health, long-standing illness, poorer mental health, higher medical consultation and hospital admission rates.
1.3 The Vision for the Get Oldham Growing programme is:

‘To get communities in Oldham active and engaged in food growing, cooking and eating to improve public health, and develop opportunities for growth of new social businesses in Oldham’s food economy ”

1.4 The programme aims to:

- Increase community participation in food growing, cooking and eating projects
- Increase health food initiatives including knowledge of where food comes from, sharing recipes and cooking healthy foods together
- Increase skills, qualifications and entrepreneurism in food related projects
- Generate employment opportunities and a local trading food economy.

1.5 There are links with other programmes:

- Cooperative agenda.
- Economic agenda - Get Oldham Working
- Environment, regeneration and green space management
- District working
- Love Where You Live
- Bloom and Grow

2. Get Oldham Growing launch event

2.1 A public event is planned to launch the Get Oldham Growing programme. This will be held on 4th April 2014 at Saddleworth Civic Hall.

2.2 The format of the event is based on the successful ‘Feeding Oldham’ event, jointly organised by Oldham Council and Voluntary Action Oldham, held in November 2103 to mark World Food Day 2013.

2.3 The event will launch the Get Oldham Growing programme with the revealing of the Get Oldham Growing identity and website.

2.4 The event will provide an overview of the Get Oldham Growing programme and introduce the different elements of the programme: local food growing; sourcing local food; education, training and skills development; and employment and business development.

2.5 There will be a focus on the food economy.

2.6 Local growing food projects and social enterprises will be invited to briefly showcase their projects.

2.7 Bookable workshops will provide opportunities for delegates to participate in discussions around the different elements of the Get Oldham Growing programme:

- Growing food by individuals and groups
- Land access, availability and use
- Large scale food growing and farms
- Setting up food businesses / social enterprises
- Training and skills development
2.8 Market stalls will provide delegates with an opportunity to find out about and enjoy fresh, local produce.

2.9 The event is open to all those who are interested in growing, sourcing, and cooking local, good quality food which contributes to a sustainable, and profitable, local food economy, providing opportunities for skills development and jobs for local people and enabling them to be healthy.

2.10 The event is particularly aimed at the following:

- Individuals interested in growing sourcing or cooking local, high quality food
- Members for growing groups, allotment societies
- Environmental groups
- Bee keepers
- Farmers and food growers
- Caterers
- Market stall holders

2.11 A range of partner agencies will be approached to contribute to the event.

2.12 The aims of the day are for participants to leave the event:

- Better informed about current activities relating to food – growing, sourcing and cooking, skills development and business opportunities and of the Get Oldham Growing identity
- Having shared their ideas for future development of the programme in Oldham
- Inspired to get involved
- Willing to pledge