BRIEFING TO OLDHAM HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Get Oldham Growing update

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Purpose of the briefing paper:

To update on the recent activities and upcoming initiatives of the Get Growing programme

Requirement from the Health and Wellbeing Board:

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing board:

- Notes the activities carried out/supported by the Get Oldham Growing programme
- Comments on the approaches taken
- Considers local linkages and supports the promotion of Get Oldham Growing provision

Background:

The vision of Get Oldham Growing is to use local food as a vehicle to inspire and engage the residents of Oldham; building skills, supporting entrepreneurship and addressing the wider determinants of physical and mental health. Success for the programme will mean Oldham being recognised as a centre for community food growing and a borough where food enterprises thrive.

The aims:

- Develop employment opportunities through local food production and better establishment of the local food economy,
- Increase skills, qualifications and entrepreneurship in food related initiatives,
- Reduce barriers to participation in food growing activities through supported access to land, training and advice, materials and infrastructure development,
- Increase community participation in food growing, cooking and eating projects with a view to improving the health and wellbeing of Oldham residents.

Current Position:

Community grants - We continue to support local activities through the grants programme, distributing seed corn grants of up to £1,000 and project grants of up to £10,000 to local groups whose aims align with those of the Get Oldham Growing programme. Linked to the Action Oldham Fund, this is an ideal way for groups to benefit from Get Oldham Growing to support their own work locally. We recently awarded a £10K grant to Fatima Women’s Association for the delivery of a programme to improve healthy eating prevalence and increase knowledge of growing foods and alternative cooking methods. At the most recent GOG grants panel meeting we distributed a
further £40K to local voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver food growing and cooking projects for the benefit of many hundreds of Oldham residents.

Food for Life Partnership - is a consortium of organisations that aim to transform food culture in schools through a whole school approach, encompassing teachers, children, caterers and the community. Get Oldham Growing is in the process of engaging with the FFLP to deliver a programme of activities in schools in Oldham that will raise awareness of good practice around healthy eating and lifestyles.

Growing Ambassadors – The Growing Ambassadors programme will bring an additional element of support and local capacity for new initiatives, or those wishing to increase the scope of their work. Delivered through Groundwork, local individuals will be employed to offer support and guidance at a neighbourhood level, working with schools, allotments and community groups to promote and encourage active citizenship through food. By building on the strengths of individuals and communities and not focusing on the challenges and barriers to participation, the Ambassadors will help promote the benefits of involvement, increasing the number of people growing their own food; delivery to start in January.

Growing Entrepreneurs – working in partnership with the Greenspace Team we will support a pilot programme of micro-enterprise development in schools. From site design, planning production, harvesting and processing to aspects of sales and business planning; young people will develop a sustainable social enterprise that embeds a huge range of learning and instils a sense of entrepreneurship in those that participate. Open to application in January.

Hubs and access to land - a barrier to increasing numbers of local food initiatives is access to land. GOG has been working with the District and Asset Teams to streamline a process by which community members can enquire over the use of land for such initiatives. The clear point of contact and associated timeframes will provide clarity over the decision making process and enable local people to find suitable space to deliver their activities. We have been working towards the establishment of a number of community hubs, possible district based. Working with local partners, a number of locations have been suggested, we are now in the process of participating in community consultation and capacity building activities to ensure there is sufficient local leadership and scope for people to benefit.

Get Oldham Growing blog - we now have a blog that updates on some of our activities and good news stories from around the borough. Visit us here:

https://getoldhamgrowing.wordpress.com/

Partnerships - we have been working hard to raise the profile of Get Oldham Growing by supporting and linking in with initiatives from a huge range of local partners; we are currently working with most of the local Registered Social Landlords, members of the voluntary, community sector and local infrastructure partners. Interest in using Get Oldham Growing as a vehicle to achieve organisational objectives is huge, with Get Oldham Growing making the transition from a brand to borough wide movement.