

Report to COUNCIL – 1st November 2023

Cabinet Report of Business, Employment and Enterprise Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Cllr F Hussain, Cabinet Member for Business, Employment and Enterprise

Business Awards – 15th year of **Oldham Business Awards** – most successful to date with sponsors secured by the Council including MUSE, Tilbury Douglas, Rowan Ashworth and Get Oldham Working. The event promoted the excellence in the local business community and raised £6k for Mahdlo and Dr Kershaws. The Council's Build a Business project, which supports residents move into becoming entrepreneurs, was a finalist.

Frank's Business Breakfast is a partnership created between Frank Rothwell, Oldham's Business Ambassador and Oldham Council. The initiative was started to create a space for Oldham businesses to better connect as well as an opportunity and platform to educate Oldham businesses. At the Fourth Business Breakfast we had a successful event with over 100 businesses in attendance with a focus on cybersecurity delivered by the National Cyber Security Centre, which is a part of GCHQ and is the UK's technical authority for cyber threats.

The Council has agreed a new **business support programme** with the Business Growth Hub which was launched in October. It will be more flexible and will support a wider range of local businesses which, for the first time, will now also include our retail, market traders, hospitality and leisure sector which will help us rebuild our post-covid economy.

SEUK Place Status - Oldham Council in partnership with Upturn Enterprise has secured 'Social Enterprise UK Place Status' which puts our borough on the map as a place where social enterprises thrive. The award recognises that Oldham is a hotspot of social enterprise activity. The Council and Upturn have submitted a three-year plan which sets out an approach to support councils, charities, consumers and budding social enterprises to grow "Social Enterprise Communities" tackling key local issues.

The programme aims to promote, raise awareness, and build the markets for social enterprise at a local and national level. This builds upon the Council and Upturn's Proper Good programme – a £2m loan programme which is supporting social entrepreneurs to grow their businesses. The next steps will be developing the social value market place and launching the new Social Innovation Hub in the Spindles.

Get Oldham Working team celebrated 10 years – they have helped over 13,000 residents into work, growing from a team of 2 staff to nearly 40. They support our residents whether they are unemployed and looking for work, or through their innovative Career Advancement Service, they can support residents in work to get better paid jobs. The team has recently been named the highest performer for National Careers Service in the North West and will see provision expand to support even more citizens.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.