
Report to COUNCIL – 13th March 2024



Business, Employment and Enterprise Portfolio Report

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

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Town Centre

We have been awarded funding of £237k High Street Accelerator funding to pilot activity to tackle voids and support the evening economy. The funding is specifically for Yorkshire Street and Union Street areas of the town centre and cover the period up to 31 March 2025.

The initial £50k was allocated in January to enable us to map and understand the challenges within the town centre. We have used this initial funding to carry out a data and market analysis of the town centre, to measure the current offer of the town, what the gaps are, and link this specifically to the demographic of Oldham to ensure we encourage in business types that meet the needs and demands of our residents. The first High Street Accelerator Partnership meeting was held on 20 February to discuss ideas and plans for the year ahead.

Markets (Indoor)

The team continue to work closely with the Market Trader Liaison Group to ensure the current market continues to operate well and that plans for the new market are shaped collectively. Regular engagement continues with a monthly Trader Liaison Group and a monthly meeting for all stallholders to attend.

The application process has now closed, with 85 potential applicants. The submitted forms have been scored, feedback given and we are in a standstill period for any queries / appeals. The one-to-one stall selection meetings will start from next week.

I visited the new market site on 20 February to see the progress of the build and to get a sense of the space and the scale of the new market. Wilmott Dixon are doing a really good job, and the site is coming together well. I will be visiting again over the coming weeks as stallholders start to visit to choose their stalls.

Markets (Outdoor)

Plans for the temporary relocation of the outdoor market continue, with ongoing liaison with the outdoor market stallholders.

Get Oldham Working

National Careers Service Contract - Get Oldham Working have delivered exceptional performance on the National Careers Service contract exceeding all allocated targets. This has resulted in an opportunity to deliver an enhanced £350,000 contract starting from 1st April which will support an additional 3,000 residents.

DWP Restart Contract - aims to support over 1,000 Oldham residents into employment by understanding and breaking down barriers. Following the success of the current contract, Get Oldham Working have recently been awarded an extension running up to the 30th June 2027. The value of the contract is £1.6m and will help to ensure that an additional 1,000 residents are provided with employment support.

Oldham Procurement Summit – supporting the Oldham pound.

The business support and procurement teams led on the delivery of an event attended by x businesses held on the 5th March. This event was aimed at supporting the Oldham pound by creating opportunities for local businesses.

The procurement summit was designed to support local supply chains in Oldham by telling local businesses about current and future construction supply chain opportunities available in the Borough.

The event was only open to businesses located in the Borough of Oldham. Council based opportunities were spotlighted during the session as well as showcasing opportunities available through our construction partners including Muse, Willmott Dixon and Tilbury Douglas.

Local partners including Oldham College and First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO) who also attended the event to outline the opportunities they have available too.

A key focus of the session was to understand the barriers faced by local businesses on accessing opportunities and learning will now be taken forward with a view to implementing changes to local policy and providing focused support where possible.

Oldham Enterprise Week 27th to 31st March 2023

For the second year Oldham Enterprise Trust presents “**Oldham Enterprise Week**” – a programme of events and activities celebrating the entrepreneurial spirit of this great town. A town named one of the top ten most entrepreneurial in the UK. This year’s focus is mainly upon Social Enterprises

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.