

## Portfolio Report

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Fida Hussain  
Cabinet Member for Enterprise

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

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**Markets:** The new indoor market construction is well advanced with the exterior of the market hall now complete. A prototype of the indoor market metal stall is on site, and stallholders have been viewing this as part of their planning process for the new market. The allocation of stalls continues, and around 30 stallholders are now preparing their business plans, having finalised their location in the new market.

Both indoor and outdoor stallholders were keen to delay the outdoor market move from November 2024, until the indoor stallholders moved to the new indoor market. The relocation of the outdoor market has now been pushed back to Spring 2025 so that both markets remain together on the Tommyfield site. The weekday market will be located on the high street, and a new location for the Saturday outdoor market is being planned in consultation with the outdoor stallholders.

As well as planning for the move, the markets team and market stallholders continue to promote the existing market. In July the market came together to cheer on England in the Euros. On the weekend of the final, free face-painting and football activities were held in the market, Spindles and wider town centre.

**Business Engagement:** There are 2 grant programmes in Oldham aimed at encouraging new business start-up's and supporting existing businesses to grow. Both these grants went live at the end of March 2024 and have been very popular. The start-up grant has received over 60 applications and the growth grant over 50. This pipeline of applications is currently being processed. A panel for the growth grant took place on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug and 17 grant applications were approved. Final sign off of these grants will be by the Council's Director of Economy and Portfolio Member for Business and Enterprise over the next few weeks. These grants will result in the creation of a minimum of 86.5 FTE jobs being created by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and 40 FTEs by 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 24.

Panel for the start-up grant has already taken place with 3 grants being approved and another 4 requiring additional information. These will result in 7 new businesses being created and we are confident that the remaining pipeline will achieve the required outcomes of 40 new businesses being created by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025. These grants are being administered by the Oldham Enterprise Trust.

Final preparations are now well underway for the Oldham Business Awards which take place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September at the QE Hall. It will be a night of celebration and entertainment with the presentation of 13 awards in front of an expected audience of 600 people on the night. As well as being a headline sponsor the Council is also sponsoring the Micro Business of the Year Category. Finalists in this category include M&C Risk Solutions, Be You Styling and CW Dentures Ltd.

**The Hive - Social Enterprise / Business Collaboration Space:** Delighted to see the Hive ready for opening as Upturn Enterprises Ltd have moved into the space providing an anchor support group within the social enterprise / business collaboration space. The first offices have now been let and a varied programme of business events are taking place. Over the next few months, the Council's Business Investment Team will be hosting other events from this space, together with Greater Manchester Growth Company advisors. Any local business can utilise this space for meetings, training events or collaborating – please contact [invest@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:invest@oldham.gov.uk) for more information.

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**High Street Accelerator:** We received confirmation in August that the Council has been awarded £500k Green Funding, part of the High Street Accelerator Funds to enhance the look and feel of Yorkshire Street and Union Street. The High Street Accelerator partnership group now includes a number of the town centre’s night time economy traders and they have been working hard to progress a number of projects including a Heritage Trail, street art and the introduction of three new CCTV cameras.

**Get Oldham Working Redundancy Support Update:** The redeployment support programmes have now concluded. The team are chasing up information from the companies on successful outcomes, but the response has been very limited. All citizens are, this year, still able to access Get Oldham Working services without a referral from the Job Centre and this has been communicated to those impacted by the job losses.

**Yodel:** Around 370 Yodel colleagues were put at risk following our announcement to close the Shaw sortation centre. Following consultation, 50 colleagues were successfully redeployed to alternative Yodel roles in the wider region. The remaining colleagues are currently on paid notice. Several local employers held job fairs on site and early indications show that these were very successful. We understand that interviews are being held by Danish Crown, Kingdom, Stagecoach, Mantra Learning, Evri, Royal Mail and the NHS.

**GXO:** Acorn Care – 94 staff were impacted by the decision to close the site, the majority of whom will progress into alternative employment. Local care companies have been very supportive, notably Oldham Total Care who have taken on 18 Acorn staff and Cygent, a new mental health provider, is opening a new site in mid-September with 40 jobs being created. GOW have supported them with their recruitment - 14 long term unemployed residents were successful into roles, along with a three from Acorn.

**Get Oldham Working Performance:** Get Oldham Working General Performance to date:

<b>May 2013 - July 2024</b>	Created	Filled
Jobs	14539	11160
Apprenticeships	2372	1556
Traineeships	412	367
Work Experience	1775	1678
<b>Total</b>	19098	14761

Core contract performance to be updated in September

**Young Person’s Career Fair** – September 24<sup>th</sup> 3pm – 6pm. (Joint owned with Skills Portfolio).

The Council will be hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Young Person’s Career Fair at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on September 24<sup>th</sup>. The target audience is 15-25 year olds with the objective to support their transition from Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Key Stage 5 (A-level, T-level and BTEC). It is expected that 50+ organisations (training providers and employers) will attend. The event is being promoted to schools and colleges and via the I Love Oldham social media channels and is supporting our commitment to inspire skills and employment pathways for our young people. The event will coincide with the launch of the Employment and Skills Strategy. The first objective is to support young people to achieve good qualifications and move into good employment.

**The Egyptian Room** – GOW are working with partners (JCP Youth Hub) to support the recruitment to approximately 50 jobs that are being created by the opening of the Egyptian Rooms. Recruitment days have been organised for September.

**Recommendations:** Council is requested to note the report.