

Report to CABINET

Greater Manchester WorkWell Partnership – Oldham’s Local Delivery

Portfolio Holder: Councillor F Hussain, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Councillor B Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing.

Officer Contact: Matthew Bulmer, Director of Education, Skills and Early Years

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Reason for Decision

The reason for a cabinet decision is to approve that Oldham Council will lead the management of the WorkWell Partnership Vanguard programme and accept the grant with a value of £542,771 to deliver the outcomes in the Oldham locality. The report is seeking approval for the Get Oldham Working service to project manage and deliver parts of the model, which requires job creation, recruitment, and a staff honorarium.

Executive Summary

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and NHS Greater Manchester put Greater Manchester (GM) forward as 1 of 15 national WorkWell Partnership Vanguard sites. This proposal was accepted, and each Local Authority is now required to work with GMCA; NHS GM and Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), who have been appointed as consultants, to develop a local plan for the delivery of this offer which must ‘go live’ from 1 October 2024 and is funded until 31 March 2026.

This report sets out the Oldham local plan.

Recommendations

- To accept Oldham's delivery model and Oldham Council to lead on management of the resources for delivery, up to a monetary value of £542,774, providing appropriate governance and oversight.
- To accept the decision for the Get Oldham Working service to create and recruit a new post to deliver parts of the model.
- To accept the decision for the Get Oldham Working service to move an existing staff member from delivering another contract and onto this project and backfill this post via recruitment.
- To accept the decision for the Council's, Get Oldham Working service to offer an honorarium up to grade 8 from existing staff resources to project manage the operations within this model.
- To accept accountability for Oldham Councils, get Oldham Working programme to deliver the GOW therapy element.

Greater Manchester Work Well Partnership – Oldham’s Local Delivery**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and NHS Greater Manchester is looking to enhance and integrate the work and health service provision for city and regional residents as part of 1 of 15 national WorkWell Partnership Vanguard sites. GM will be the largest Vanguard site of all 15.
- 1.2 The aim of this programme is to deliver enhanced work and health support services for people who are at risk of falling out of work or who have stopped working recently because of their health.
- 1.3 The programme has been agreed to ‘go live’ from 1 October 2024 and the funding period ends on 31 March 2026, giving an 18-month delivery period.
- 1.4 GMCA and NHS GM are required to engage with 8,000 residents throughout this period and, as a minimum, a holistic assessment and action plan must be completed with each participant as evidence of engagement.
- 1.5 It has been agreed that 8,000 participants will be split on a ‘fair share’ basis across each locality (based on local area population proportion (%) and not health or employment related factors). This has set a target for Oldham of 672 participants and provides an overall funding envelope of £542,774 (based on £800 per participant for 2024/25 and £811 for 2025/26).
- 1.6 The WorkWell Partnership is designed to engage with four cohorts:
 - Cohort 1 (Pan GM) – People who are employed or self -employed, but who are at risk of unemployment through a Mental Health need and/or a Musculoskeletal (MSK) condition.
 - Cohort 2 (Pan GM) – People who are employed or self -employed, who are at risk of unemployment through poor health, and are on a community health or elective care waiting list.
 - Cohort 3 (Pan -GM) – People who have recently become unemployed in the 8 weeks prior to referral, and where poor health was a significant contributor to that outcome.
 - Cohort 4 (Locality -Specific) – A locally defined and co -produced geographic or demographic cohort who face poor experiences and poor outcomes in relation to employment AND where poor health is a significant contributing factor to those poor outcomes.
- 1.7 Each participant will be provided with person centred support by Locality WorkWell Support Services who are anchored into existing locality provision, and responsible for:
 - Proactive identification and referral of potential eligible and suitable participants Triage, Assessment and Action Planning
 - Providing low intensity practical support (including engagement with employers)
 - Strengthening existing local support provision where required

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- Signposting and onward referral into existing locality provision
 - Reviewing the impact of the intervention at agreed intervals

1.8 The proposed WorkWell Vanguard programme will support delivery of two of the corporate plan objectives, namely: **healthy, safe and well supported residents** and the **better jobs and dynamic businesses**. The proposal will support residents overcome health related issues which are impacting on their ability to either remain or return to employment.

2 Current Position

2.1 At the GM Work Well Partnership meeting on 19 June 2024 GMCA advised that the following funding model would be used:

- £800 per participant (with an uplift for 2025/26 financial year) engaged with, evidence of engagement must include a holistic assessment of need and an action plan agreed. 40% of funding will be withheld if this is not sufficiently evidenced.
- Of the 8,000 participants across Greater Manchester, Oldham has been allocated 672 over the 18 months, providing a funding envelope of £542,771 split 30% for October 2024 to 31 March 2025 £161,280 and 60% for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 £381,494.

2.2 Across GM each locality has held workshops to assist in the development of the local delivery models. Oldham has held two with key stakeholders from the NHS, Primary care services, public health, employment and skills, the local voluntary sector and GMCA colleagues.

2.3 Oldham has submitted its proposed delivery model, which was required by 16th August, to the GM leads. All delivery models across each locality will make up the GM plan and are due to be submitted to DWP by the end of August 2024.

2.4 Oldham's proposed delivery sets out to create a single point of access for the referrals to improving efficiencies and access to provision. A team of three staff with expertise in social prescribing, employment and skills, occupational health, access to work, health and wellbeing and employer engagement. These staff will complete all outreach and assessments to produce personalised action plans for all 672 residents. They will also manage a caseload to refer, track and support progress of referrals / activities agreed within the action plans. A staff member will be expected to attend Multi-Disciplinary Team calls/mtgs with MSK, Mental Health and other health teams. One staff member will be employed with the expertise to work directly with employers on the resident's behalf, and where appropriate provide employer visits and support where required.

2.5 Staff management and recruitment will be a joint effort between Oldham Council's Get Oldham Working service and Action Together (Voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector lead). Two of the three staff will be employed by Oldham Council and one by Action Together. This approach should enhance the integration between social prescribing, employer engagement and a work coach model, ensuring better links between health and employment. The staff will have the

flexibility to work in an outreach capacity and location focus and will be defined by referrals. All staff will also have full access to the facilities at Get Oldham Working's site, including 1 to 1 room, appointments desks and training rooms.

- 2.6 In addition to the team of three generating and working with the referrals, we will have some additional provision to ease the pressure from mainstream provision.
- Strand one - GOW therapy, a low-cost model providing low to medium intense therapy and counselling.
 - Strand two - clients with MSK or other health related referred from Work Well to employment related services (ERS) can access OCL for free for 3 months through the Work Well Pathway.
- 2.7 The programme aims to provide funding for level 4 training for approx. 10 staff to build capacity in Oldham Community Leisure's existing team specifically in MSK and mental health conditions. It will also create a community grant fund to utilise when capacity on various activities is low for this cohort coming through the work well pathway. This fund will be awarded to community organisations via the social prescribing route.
- 2.8 The 'Single Point of Access' has been trialled in Rochdale, enabling residents to discuss their support needs with a face to face contact during drop in sessions. This has been very successful and enabled residents to navigate the, often complex, support available with face to face introductions provided to services including welfare to work provision, skills providers and specific provision such as National Careers Service.
- 2.9 It is anticipated that the Universal Support offer, due to be delivered nationally from January 2025, will enable a 'single point of access' for all provision and this will be the building blocks to this position (although this is dependent upon HM Government review and might be delayed).
- 2.10 Management of the Oldham WorkWell offer will be provided by the Employment and Skills team, of which funding will be utilised to recharge management costs for this project management function.
- 2.11 Funding is also allocated for IT systems, marketing, and a support fund to alleviate barriers to returning to employment for participants, in line with GMCA contractual requirements.
- 2.12 The full funding plan is shown in the table below.

	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
Delivery Staff- Oldham Council via GOW	£ 45,091	£ 86,181	£ 131,272
Project management and support	£ 31,500	£ 81,000	£ 112,500
WorkWell SP Link Worker Costings	£ 34,293	£ 66,386	£ 100,679
accomodation and rent	£ 10,000	£ 28,000	£ 38,000
GOW therapy	£ 10,000	£ 40,000	£ 50,000

Community Pot, inc OCL training (6.3k)	£ 10,000	£ 40,000	£ 50,000
Participant Pot, inc subsidy to access Active Oldham	£ 15,000	£ 35,000	£ 50,000
Marketing, IT, other project costs	£ 5,396	£ 4,927	£ 10,320
TOTAL	£ 161,280	£ 381,494	£ 542,771

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Due to the time constraints on delivery, the complexity of the process and stakeholders involved there are three options:

3.2 **Option One: Approve acceptance of the grant and delivery** within the boundaries of the proposed model with three key partners (Oldham Community Leisure, Action Together and Get Oldham Working) leading on the delivery. Oldham Council will provide the overarching governance with outcomes reported to the appropriate boards and portfolio briefings (Employment and Health leads).

3.3 **Option Two: to request another locality organisation to lead.** The alternative lead agency (as proposed by GMCA) is NHS Oldham to lead on financial management and delivery. The Cabinet could request that they formally take the lead, but this is not deemed a viable option due to a lack of capacity of other locality lead at this moment in time. There is a need to mobilise by the start of October 2024.

3.4 **Option three: Withdraw from the project.** This is not a preferred option. The proposal has worked with key stakeholders to develop the model at a fast pace and this has created a number of risks but it is believed that these can be managed. The primary risks are the timescales to recruit to the programme and the short term nature of the project. If the Cabinet decides to withdraw it would reduce investment into Oldham reducing the chance to improve outcomes for our residents. It would also have a reputational issue as each area has had to work at pace and this demonstrates that devolution can be effective and quick in decision making.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option one is the preferred option. The Get Oldham Working service and partners are confident that they can deliver this programme within the limited timeframe but recognise that there are risks that will need to be managed.

5 Consultation

5.1 Price Waterhouse and Coopers we funded to pull together a number of workshops with local stakeholders to consult on the design and implementation of the programme in each local authority area. In Oldham this included representation from Oldham Council, NHS Oldham, Action Together, Public Health, GMCA and Price, Waterhouse Coopers.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 This report is seeking permission to accept funding from the DWP via GMCA for management of the WorkWell programme of which Oldham, as a whole, has been allocated £542,771 over the 18 month period, see the table in para 2.12.
- 6.2 Oldham Council's Get Oldham Working service will manage the income and passport out the relevant income to the Oldham 'partners' of the scheme which are Oldham Community Leisure, Action Together and NHS Oldham.
- 6.3 To enable the Get Oldham Service to manage the additional work, requires the creation of 2 additional temporary GOW Programme Officers at Grade 4 for 18 months, recruited internally the posts can cost between £33,830 and £36,950 each per annum including oncosts (the intention being that the substantive posts of those appointed will be back filled). The table listed in para 2.12 shows the allocation of £45,091 in 2024/25 and £86,181 in 2025/26 which more than covers these posts. If costed at top of scale the posts will cost:

	1 Oct 24 – 31 Mar 25	1 Apr 25 – 31 Mar 26 (subject to pay award)
GOW Programme Officer Grade 4	£18,475	£36,950
GOW Programme Officer Grade 4	£18,475	£36,950
Total Cost (maximum)	£36,950	£73,900
Funding Allocation	£45,091	£86,181

- 6.4 These additional posts within Get Oldham Working Service will not require any further funding from Oldham Council but will need to monitor the lengths of service these employees will have been in post as, once an employee reaches 2 years of employment, they are entitled to the same terms and conditions as full time permanent staff which will be subject to redundancy pay. Any potential redundancy costs will be met from resources within GOW service area.
(Catherine Dunkerley – Accountant)

7 Legal Implications

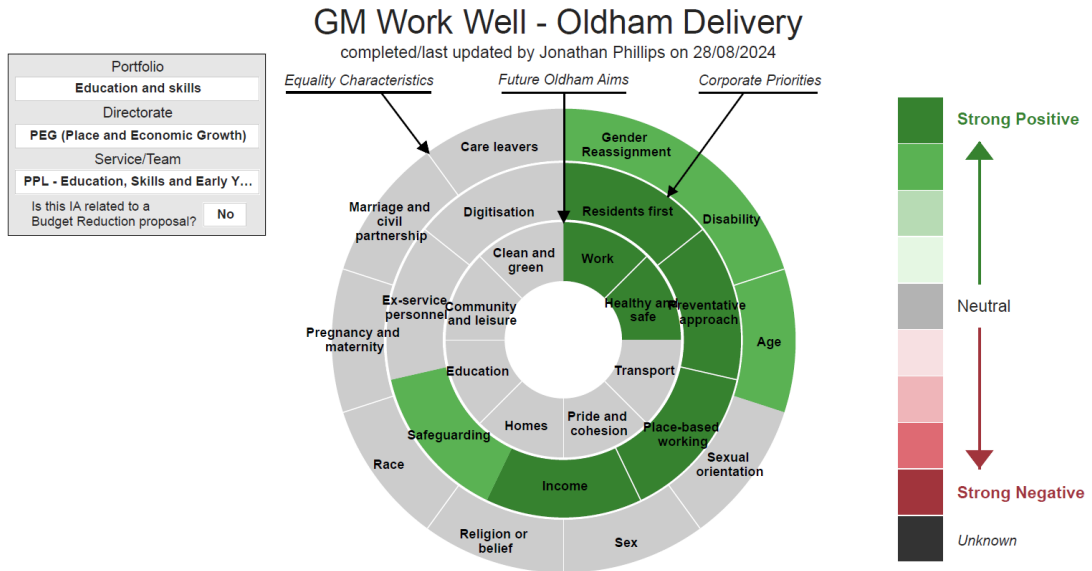
- 7.1 Within the Council's constitution rules upon the giving of outgoing grant monies are very restricted and those upon the receipt of incoming grant monies are virtually non-existent and therefore there is no list of criteria to be met. It is thus in order for the Work Well monies to be received by the Council especially as these are part of a nationwide scheme.
- 7.2 Once received there will nonetheless need to be compliance with other applicable regulations. Examples of these include subsidy control rules when those same funds are distributed to the recipients and any public procurement regime rules or procurement rules of the Council for the engagement of suppliers who are to deliver services under the Work Well scheme. Consideration will need to be given at a relevant time as to such impositions and as to whether or not they and other factors

are considered to be effective and, if so, to what extent, or not at all as the case may be.

- 7.3 Option One is described thus.
“Approve acceptance of the grant and delivery within the boundaries of the proposed model with three key partners (Oldham Community Leisure, Action Together and Get Oldham Working) leading on the delivery. Oldham Council will provide the overarching governance with outcomes reported to the appropriate boards and portfolio briefings (Employment and Health leads).”
- 7.4 With a view to the intended receipt of the Well Work funds there must be clear and detailed agreement in place between all the participants mentioned including the Council. If not already addressed in anticipation of this grant scheme by existing arrangements then an agreement for doing so must be created and put into effect and it must set out how funds will be received and the basis upon which they will be transferred by the Council over to these other three participants.
- 7.5 Mention is made of an ‘Honorarium’ and clarification is needed as to what is meant by that term in this context as it is often misunderstood in which case some unforeseen taxation implications can well arise. Consequently, checks must be made in this context in order to make clear precisely what is intended and if that is permissible.
- 7.6 All the usual empowerment, delegation of authority and budgetary considerations will apply. Given the overall value of £542K+ there will be a need to execute the proposed grant agreement by means of a deed because of paragraph 14.8 of the Contract Procurement Rules within Part 4G of the Constitution.
- 7/7 It will of course be necessary to comply with and abide by all the grant provisions and generally the same features are to be found under every grant scheme, such as clawback in the event of breach or default for example.
- 7.8 In usual circumstances the Legal Department will be requested to examine, assess and report upon the contents of the grant funding agreement. However, if the grant funding agreement is in the same general format as several others previously received from the same source and which have already been the subject of review by various members of the legal team then that process may be easier and quicker. In any event the grant funding agreement will be non-negotiable and not open to amendment as is generally the case with grants emanating either directly from central government or via any another intermediate agency.
- 7.9 At this stage there are no other comments to be made from a legal perspective pending any documents for review.

(Mike Bentley, Consultant & Locum Solicitor – Commercial Team, Legal Department)

8 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**



9 **Key Decision**

9.1 Yes

10 **Key Decision Reference**

10.1 EDS-06-24.

11 **Background Papers**

11.1 N/A

12 **Appendices**

12.1 N/A

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Signed _____ Cabinet Member (Cllr Fida Hussain)	Dated _____
Signed _____ Executive Director/Deputy Chief Executive	Dated _____

