

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.

Oldham Trading Platform

There are currently 148 local businesses that have signed up to the Oldham Trading Platform and there are a further 180 waiting to be checked and on-boarded in December. We are currently working with a number of large contractors to ensure that local contracts are up-loaded onto the platform for local businesses to potentially access.

Market Trader Support

We are working with a number of market traders to ensure the timely and smooth relocation to the new market hall. We are keen to ensure that these traders receive maximum support during this transition. This support includes regular communication and updates via traders meetings and individual trader support on a 121 basis via a team of dedicated officers to help with any questions or issues that arise. All the stalls in the new market need fitting out to the requirements of the traders. The Council is providing grants to the traders to help with this cost. This work is currently on-going and officers are working with traders to support them with this process.

Oldham Construction Club

Hosted by GM Chamber and construction company Tilbury Douglas, Oldham businesses were invited to attend the Oldham Construction Club on 3rd Dec at the Oldham Event Centre. The construction club aims to bring together local businesses to enable local supply-chain opportunities by working alongside Oldham Council and local contractors to present real opportunities, facilitate real connections and deliver real local impact. The event featured information on key developments and projects within Oldham and Manchester North as well as an interactive session where the network shared best practice and made new connections.

Get Oldham Working Performance:

Get Oldham Working (GOW) continues to deliver a high-performing, locally rooted employment and skills service supporting inclusive economic growth, improved wellbeing and sustainable job outcomes for Oldham residents. Delivery remains responsive to emerging need while aligning closely with Oldham Council priorities, the Live Well agenda and Greater Manchester strategic objectives.

Between July and September 2025, GOW engaged over 2,400 residents and supported 743 people into employment, exceeding the annual job outcome target of 718. Key programmes continue to outperform expectations, including Support to Succeed, which achieved 171% of its quarterly start target, and In-Work Progression, supporting over 100 residents to progress into better roles or secure pay increases.

Independent evaluation data highlights that employment in Oldham has grown by approximately 15% over the past decade, reinforcing the impact of GOW's targeted, place-based model in engaging residents furthest from the labour market and supporting sustainable participation despite ongoing structural and social challenges.

Key Achievements & Highlights:

- **National Recognition: Employment Related Services Association Annual Awards (ERSA)** - GOW was a finalist in four ERSA Award categories and was announced as the

national winner for Tailored Employment Support, standing ahead of major national providers and reinforcing the strength and impact of Oldham's locally tailored model.

- Oldham Jobs Fair (September 2025): Over 2,200 attendees and 60 employers, with strong engagement from priority wards including Alexandra, Werneth, Coldhurst and St Mary's.
- Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund: £266,000 secured to develop community digital hubs, mobile outreach and volunteer training to tackle digital exclusion across the borough.
- Regeneration Links: Active collaboration with Muse Developments and the Council's Inward Investment team to ensure residents benefit from emerging regeneration and construction opportunities.
- Community Partnerships: Sponsorship of Oldham Athletic and the Oldham Business Awards strengthened relationships with local businesses and wider civic partner.

Performance Snapshot (Q2 to September 2025)

- Residents Engaged: 2,433 (89% of target)
- Residents into Employment: 416 (116% of target)
- Residents into Learning: 441 (112% of target)
- Sustained Employment (13+ weeks): 202 (113% of target)

While engagement was slightly below target due to lower-intensity National Careers Service provision and temporary staff absences, outcomes remain strong and the service is on track to meet or exceed year-end targets.

Service Modernisation

GOW continues to strengthen infrastructure and quality through:

- A centralised triage and referral system
- Integrated CRM platform
- Implementation of Outcome Star for holistic resident progress tracking
- Alignment with Live Well Oldham and neighbourhood delivery models.

These developments support improved consistency, data insight, and client-centred practice.

Strategic Development & Infrastructure

Plans remain in progress for the redevelopment of the Working Wardrobe and Spindles site, including youth-led co-design and construction of new facilities and enhanced wellbeing spaces. This initiative will provide training and volunteering opportunities while improving service accessibility and environment quality.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.