

Oldham Council

# Business and Investment Strategy

Draft Report

February 2017

## **WORKING DRAFT**

**This draft is incomplete, awaits review  
and is subject to amendment.**

**It does not represent our final findings  
and conclusions which will be set out in  
any final report.**

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**Oldham Council**

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Draft Report

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

AMION Consulting was appointed by Oldham Council in October 2016 to prepare a Business and Investment Strategy that sets out a shared approach to business engagement, development, growth and investment in the Borough.

The Strategy seeks to build on the significant progress made by partners of the Economy and Skills Partnership in recent years and is aligned with Oldham's Strategic Investment Framework published in May 2016 – providing an action plan for the 'Business' theme described in the framework. The strategy has been developed to ensure that it complements the other two themes within the overarching framework, namely 'People' and 'Place' and the relevant strategies and action plans in place to deliver these priorities.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Report

This Business and Investment Strategy has been prepared for Oldham Council to:

- describe how the Council will work with partner agencies to provide a seamless and shared approach to business engagement, growth and investment in the borough – with a clear business offer and menu of provision;
- facilitate engagement with local businesses and the development of a more pro-active approach to targeting potential growth companies that will deliver high value added jobs and/or entry level employment opportunities for local residents;
- present the key priorities and action to assist business growth and investment, aligned with the Oldham Strategic Investment Framework (SIF) People and Place Strategies; and
- provide an evidenced based framework that can be used to guide future business and investment activities within the borough.

The Strategy will also provide the basis for generating greater leverage of support services from the central Business Growth Hub (BGH) that serves all local authorities within the wider Greater Manchester (GM) area.

## 1.3 Our approach

The business and investment strategy has been developed through a combination of:

- desk based research - to understand the local policy context, performance of the local economy and the business base through analysis of secondary data sources, and an assessment of recent business performance provided by the GM survey;
- scoping current business support provision across the borough – through consultations with delivery organisations and desk based research;

- consultations with key stakeholders including key partner agencies and local businesses – to assess the effectiveness of current provision, key barriers to growth for the identified priority sectors and potential interventions to improve joint working and provision of a seamless service; and
- consultation with the Economy and Skills Partnership group on emerging findings to gather views and input into the development of the Strategy.

## 1.4 Report structure

This report continues in seven sections:

- Section 2 - outlines the local policy context, the performance of the local economy and the business base in particular and recent performance of GM businesses;
- Section 3 - describes the current delivery landscape and the partners providing business support services in the borough. It also provides feedback on a review of business engagement in the Council and feedback from local stakeholders and businesses on existing provision and potential to deliver greater joint working;
- Section 4 - reviews the vision for Oldham as set out in the SIF, the strategic objectives for the strategy and activities that will be delivered to achieve the objectives;
- Section 5 - sets out the key priorities for action and who will be responsible for delivery;
- Section 6 - describes the monitoring framework that needs to be established to track performance; and
- Section 7 - presents a series of delivery recommendations for immediate action.

## 2 Context

### 2.1 Introduction

This section provides a review of the context for the Business and Investment Strategy. It includes an overview of local policy, economic conditions in the area drawn from secondary data and the results of the GM business survey outlining recent business performance.

### 2.2 Local policy context

Table 2.1 summarises the objectives and key priorities of three key documents that provide the immediate local policy framework within which this Business and Investment Strategy sits. They are the GM Strategy, the GM Spatial Framework 2015-2035 and the Oldham Strategic Investment Framework (SIF).

Table 2.1 Local policy context		
Strategy	Aim/Vision	Contribution of the Business and Investment Strategy to the objectives
<b>GM Strategy</b>	The GM Combined Authority and the GM Local Enterprise Partnership (GMLEP) jointly own the Strategy which sets out the productivity and growth challenge facing the city region and the growth and public service reform programmes intended to tackle this.	Oldham’s Business and Investment Strategy will contribute to supporting the strategy’s business growth priorities which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging inward and indigenous investing firms</li> <li>• Attracting more entrepreneurs, start-ups, capital and talent; and</li> <li>• Accelerating the growth of the 90,000 businesses with the greatest potential to expand</li> </ul>
<b>GM Spatial Framework 2015 - 2035</b>	The GMSF seeks to establish a joint plan to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across Greater Manchester. The GMSF will ensure that GM has the right land in the right places to deliver the homes and jobs needed up to 2035, together with identifying the new infrastructure required to achieve this.	The business and investment strategy will contribute to a range of policies within the framework including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SL2: Town Centre development. The business focused objectives include increasing the density of uses and activity, and expanding the employment role of the town centre with an improved supply of office floor space, and greater opportunities for knowledge-based and creative businesses.</li> <li>• GM4: Retail, leisure and tourism – with objectives focused on building on local cultural identity.</li> <li>• GM21: Education, skills and knowledge – with specific objectives related to providing a wide range of sites and premises capable of attracting knowledge-intensive businesses including those suitable for research activities and related spin-off businesses and local employment opportunities through local labour schemes and agreements.</li> </ul>
<b>Oldham Strategic Investment Framework</b>	The SIF sets out an overarching vision for Oldham to: Be a key economic contributor to GM by providing a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people	The strategy will assist in the achievement of the two key ‘business’ objectives, namely to:

	<p>will want to live, visit and work. It will also be a place where every resident is enabled to contribute to and benefit from the continued economic growth of the City Region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieve a balanced local economy, more inward investment and a strong position in Greater Manchester.</li> <li>• enable more business start-ups and increase survival rates.</li> </ul> <p>It will also support the people and place objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a skilled, educated and dynamic workforce that can compete for jobs in the City Region.</li> <li>• support people into decent, secure and well-paid employment.</li> <li>• ensure Oldham is a place that supports sustainable economic growth, encourages enterprise and capitalises on new technology and transport.</li> <li>• create a town centre that meets local residents' needs and wants, is a thriving place for business and attracts visitors to the borough.</li> </ul>
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## 2.3 Overview of the economy and the business base

### 2.3.1 Employment and industry composition

Total employment within Oldham was estimated to be around 80,700 in 2015 (see Table 2.1). This represents 7% of the overall employment in GM as a whole. The ratio of employment to working age population (job density) within the borough stands at 0.57. While this is higher than some other parts of the City Region, such as Rochdale and Tameside, it is below the average for Greater Manchester, which is skewed by the strong performance of Manchester and Trafford in particular.

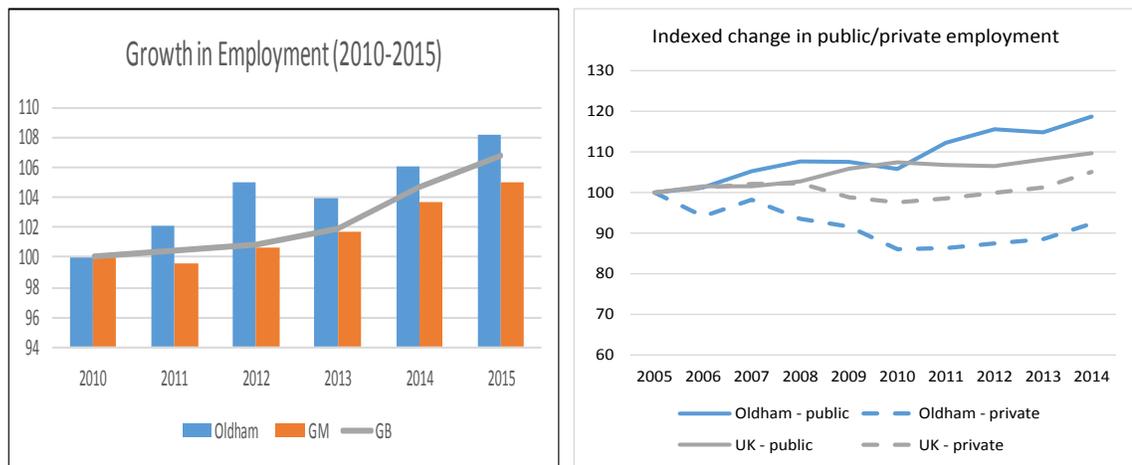
Table 2.1: Total employment, 2015			
	Employment	% of GM total	Job density*
Greater Manchester	1,239,100		0.70
Bolton	105,400	9%	0.60
Bury	66,100	5%	0.57
Manchester	355,300	29%	0.95
<b>Oldham</b>	<b>80,700</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0.57</b>
Rochdale	70,900	6%	0.53
Salford	119,900	10%	0.74
Stockport	124,000	10%	0.70
Tameside	67,000	5%	0.48
Trafford	145,400	12%	1.00
Wigan	104,400	8%	0.52

\*Ratio of total employment to population aged 16-64  
Source: ONS, BRES

In recent years, Oldham has experienced relatively strong growth in employment, after suffering particularly badly during the financial crisis and subsequent recession. Much of this growth has been driven by an increase in part-time jobs, which have risen by 10% between 2010 and 2015, while the number of full-time jobs has increased by 8%. In comparison, at the national level, there has been an increase in part-time and full-time jobs of 3% and 9% respectively.

Of particular note in relation to Oldham has been the continued reliance on public sector employment. According to the GM Forecasting Model (GMFM), as of 2014, private sector employment in Oldham was still below the level it stood at in 2005. In contrast, public sector employment over the ten-year period has increased by 19%. At the UK level, public sector employment increased by 10% over the same period, but private sector employment has also grown, by around 5% (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: Indexed change in employment**



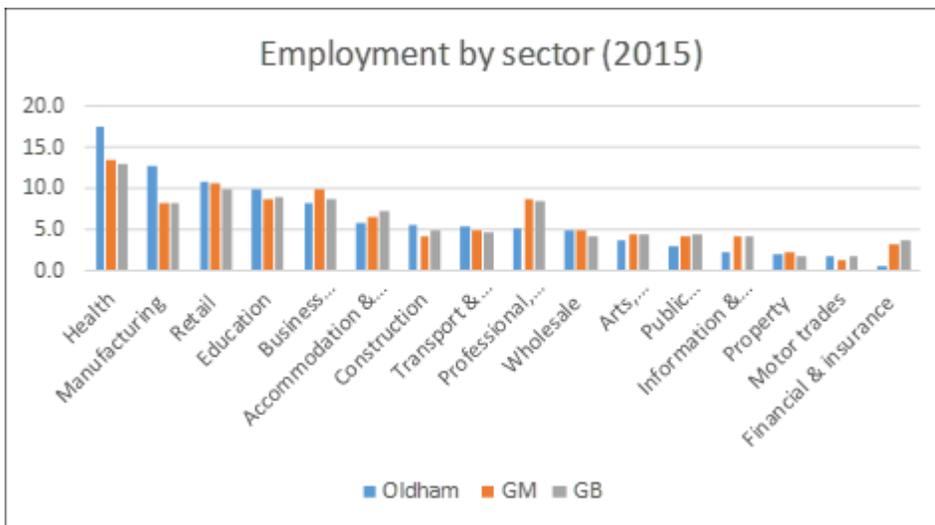
Source: ONS, BRES; Oxford Economics, GMFM

In terms of the structure of employment within Oldham, manufacturing still remains one of the largest sectors in the economy, with the borough home to a number of prominent manufacturing companies and major textiles supply chain firms. Health, construction, wholesale and retail, logistics, property and education are also sectors where Oldham has a relatively high level of employment compared to the UK average (see Table 2.2 and Figure 2.2). There is an under-representation of employment in the financial and professional service sectors, although there has been strong growth in the professional and business support sectors in recent years.

Table 2.2: Total employment, 2015			
	Employment	% of total	Location quotient
Primary industries	1,000	1%	0.43
Manufacturing	10,300	13%	1.59
Construction	4,500	6%	1.20
Wholesale and motor trade	5,400	7%	1.16
Retail	8,600	11%	1.08
Transport & storage	4,200	5%	1.14
Accommodation & food services	4,700	6%	0.82
Information & communication	1,700	2%	0.52
Financial & insurance	500	1%	0.18
Property	1,600	2%	1.10
Professional, scientific & technical	4,100	5%	0.60
Business administration & support services	6,500	8%	0.93
Public administration and Defence	2,400	3%	0.70
Education	7,900	10%	1.10
Health	14,100	17%	1.35
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	3,000	4%	0.84

Source: ONS, BRES

Figure 2.2: Structure of Employment

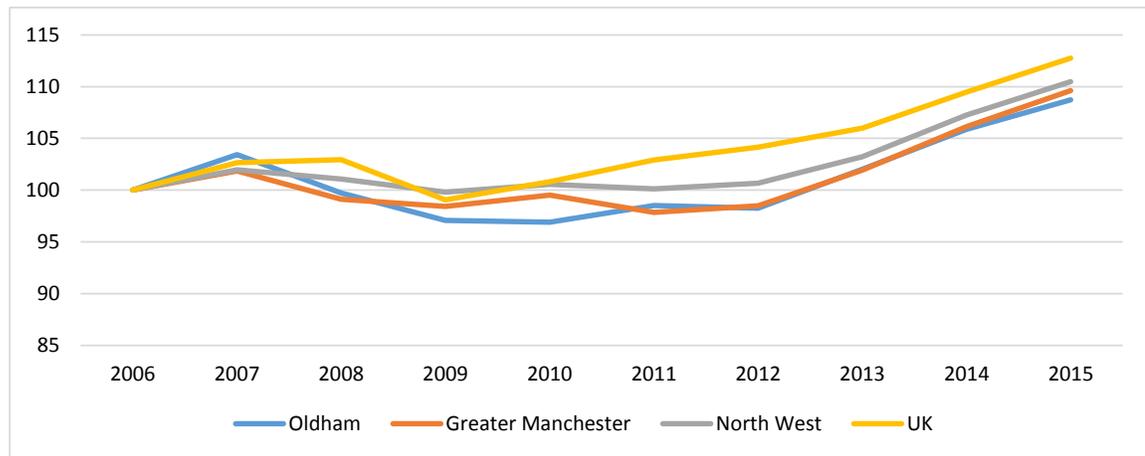


Source: ONS, BRES

### 2.3.2 Economic performance

Based on data from the GMFM, in 2015 Oldham accounted for approximately 6% of Greater Manchester’s Gross Value Added (GVA)<sup>1</sup>. Over the last decade, Oldham’s proportional contribution to the City Region economy has remained broadly constant and the borough’s GVA growth rate between 2006 and 2015 has been similar to the rate for GM as a whole and the North West region (see Figure 2.2).

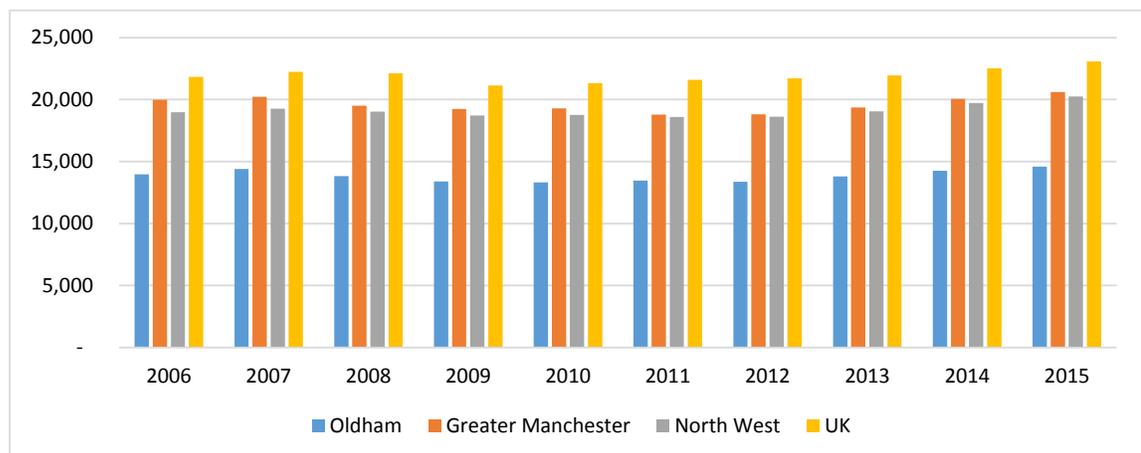
**Figure 2.3: Indexed change in GVA**



Source: Oxford Economics, GMFM

Analysis of the GVA per capita for Oldham, however, shows that the local economy is still performing relatively poorly. In 2015, the reported GVA per capita for Oldham was £14,600 – 70% of the GM average (£20,600).

**Figure 2.4: GVA per capita**



Source: Oxford Economics, GMFM

<sup>1</sup> The Office for National Statistics (ONS) defines GVA as “...the difference between the value of goods and services produced and the cost of raw materials and other inputs which are used up in production.” GVA can therefore be used to measure the economic value of goods and services produced by a specific activity or in a specific area.

### 2.3.3 Enterprise

In 2010, the Oldham Local Economic Assessment identified a large ‘enterprise gap’ in the borough. Since then, the number of active enterprises in Oldham has increased, but at half the rate experienced within GM as a whole, and there remains a relatively low number of businesses in the borough as a proportion of the total population. Over the last decade, the business stock in Oldham grew by 11% – this is the second lowest rate of growth (above Tameside) of the ten GM boroughs.

	Active enterprises			Active enterprises per 10,000 total pop		
	2005	2015	Change (%)	2005	2015	Change (%)
Greater Manchester	81,120	102,230	26%	316	371	17%
Bolton	8,590	9,755	14%	324	346	7%
Bury	6,155	7,495	22%	340	399	17%
Manchester	14,180	21,815	54%	311	411	32%
<b>Oldham</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>6,855</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>5%</b>
Rochdale	5,570	6,630	19%	269	310	15%
Salford	6,590	8,930	36%	300	364	21%
Stockport	10,915	12,565	15%	388	435	12%
Tameside	5,915	6,490	10%	277	293	6%
Trafford	9,205	12,405	35%	427	532	24%
Wigan	7,800	9,290	19%	255	288	13%

Source: ONS, business demography

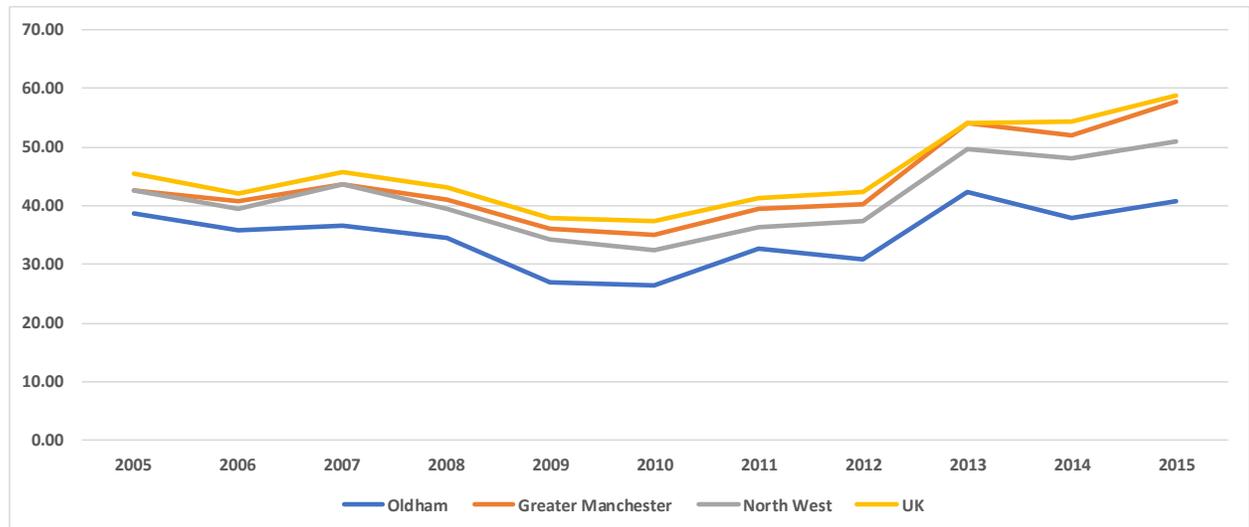
As shown in Table 2.4 below, the stock of businesses in Oldham are predominantly micro and small enterprises with approximately three quarters of all enterprises (74.5%) employing less than five employees, broadly in line with GM and the national picture, 76.4% and 77.7% respectively.

	Oldham	GM	GB
Micro (>10)	87.2%	88.1%	89.2%
Small (>50)	10.7%	9.7%	8.9%
Medium (>250)	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%
Large (250+)	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Source: ONS, business demography

An analysis of business births within Oldham shows a similar picture to the overall business stock, with the number of business starts as a proportion of the population being below the City Region and wider North West region averages (see Figure 2.4). The growth in business births in the borough over the last ten years has also been amongst the lowest in Greater Manchester.

Figure 2.5: Births of new businesses per 10,000 population



Source: ONS, business demography

The survival rates of businesses based in Oldham and broadly in line with the City Region, but lower than national average with relatively strong one year and two-year survival rates which drop off to below 50% surviving by year 4 and year 5. Since 2010, survival rates in general have increased and the most recent one year survival rate for businesses started in 2014 stood at 93.1% for Oldham compared with 92.1% for GM and 92.2% for the UK.

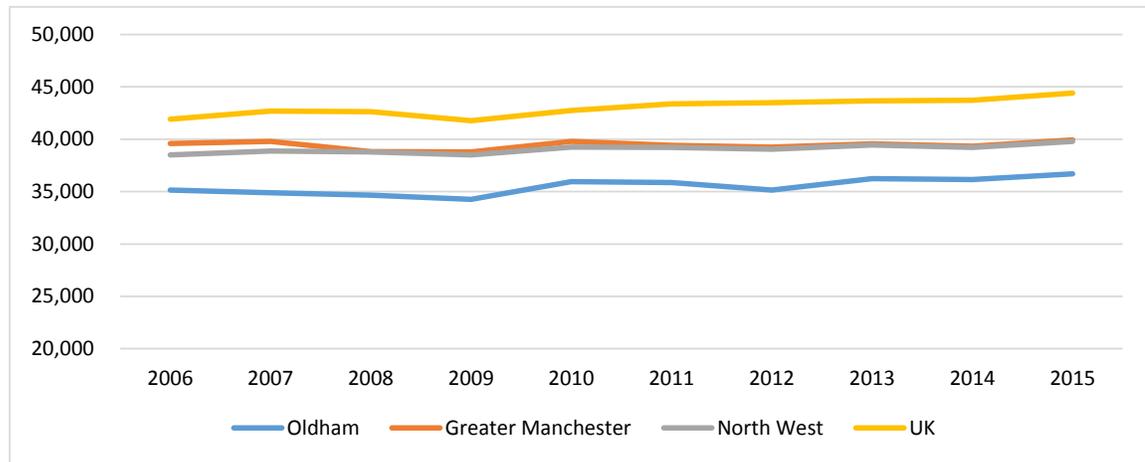
	Oldham	GM	UK
1 year survival	85.6%	86.1%	86.7%
2 year survival	69.5%	70.1%	72.5%
3 year survival	54.2%	54.2%	57.1%
4 year survival	44.1%	45.1%	48.1%
5 year survival	39.0%	38.7%	41.4%

Source: ONS, business demography

#### 2.3.4 Productivity and innovation

Based on the GMFM, the average GVA per employee within Oldham in 2015 was approximately £36,700 (2011 prices). This compared to an average GVA per employee for GM as a whole of £39,900 and a national average of £44,400 (the latter figure being skewed by the strong performance of London and the South East). The gap between productivity levels in Oldham and GM as a whole has reduced slightly in recent years, although it has increased marginally when compared to the UK.

**Figure 2.6: Labour productivity based on an assessment of GVA per worker**



Source: Oxford Economics, GMFM

The relatively low levels of productivity in Oldham are, in part, due to the general underrepresentation of some higher value added sectors in the borough. For example, as identified above, Oldham has a small proportion of employees working within the financial services sector. The percentage of employment in science and R&D is also relatively low (0.7% compared to a UK average of 1.4%). However, in terms of high technology business sectors, particularly in relation to advanced manufacturing, Oldham performs more strongly.

As shown in Table 2.4, there are a number of high technology business sectors where Oldham has relatively high levels of employment. This provides a potential basis upon which to build in terms of moving towards a more productive economy.

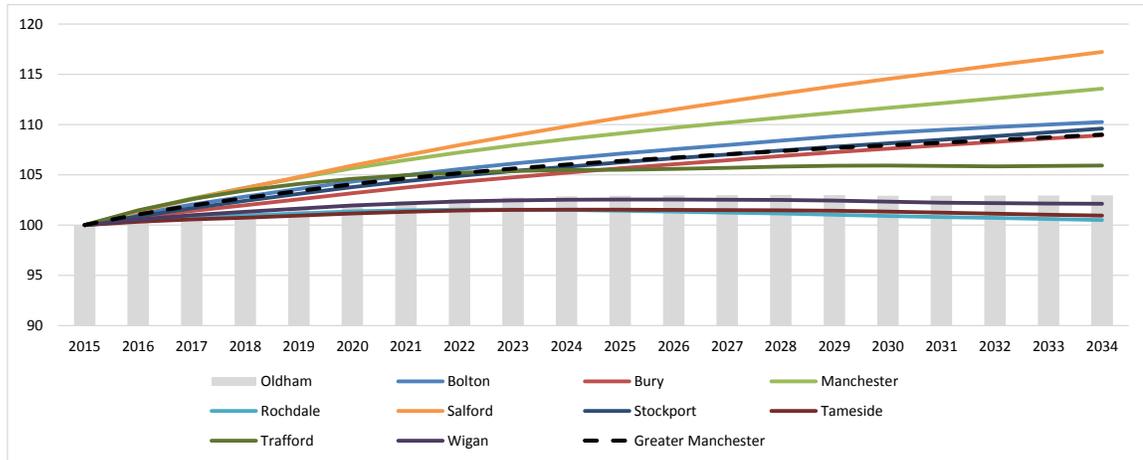
Key manufacturing sectors	Oldham - employment	Oldham – location quotient	GM– location quotient
Rubber products	200	3.74	1.58
Plastics products	800	2.13	1.48
Electronic components and boards	400	6.75	1.32
General purpose machinery	800	5.28	0.86
Other general-purpose machinery	400	2.13	1.04

Source: ONS, BRES

### 2.3.5 Economic forecasts

In terms of the forecast future performance of Oldham’s economy, employment within the borough is predicted to increase at a relatively low rate, as with a number of the other northern City Region boroughs (see Figure 2.6). Over the next 10 years, employment in GM is forecast to increase by approximately 85,000 jobs. Around 75% of these jobs are expected to be within Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Trafford. This reflects a growing concern in relation to the GM ‘North/South divide’.

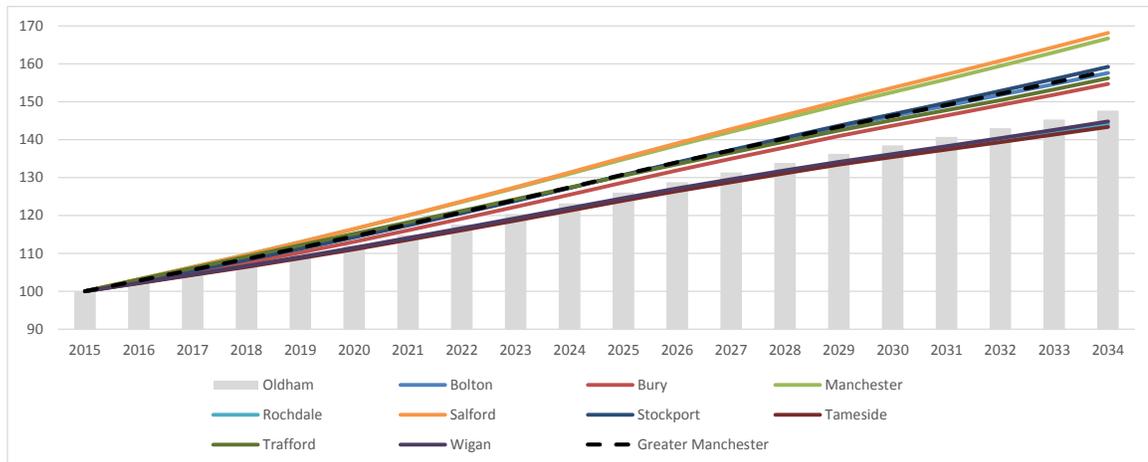
**Figure 2.7: Indexed forecast change in employment**



Source: Oxford Economics, GMFM

The GMFM forecasts in relation to GVA show a similar picture. Although GVA is projected to grow significantly across all areas, the rate of growth in Oldham is expected to be below the GM average. Manchester and Salford, in particular, are forecast to see much higher rates of growth. This suggests that the gap between Oldham, along with other north-eastern parts of the City Region, and the more economically prosperous GM boroughs will continue to widen.

**Figure 2.8: Indexed forecast change in GVA (2011 prices)**



Source: Oxford Economics, GMFM

### 2.3.6 Potential Growth Sectors

To help inform the SIF, the GMFM forecasts have been analysed to identify sectors within which Oldham has a potential competitive advantage and opportunity for growth. This has been based on determining the sectors where Oldham has a greater concentration of employment / economic activity (GVA) than the UK as a whole (location quotient above 1) and where future growth is expected to be positive / above the UK average. The results of this analysis indicate that potential important growth sectors for Oldham include parts of the manufacturing sector,

construction, distribution/logistics, professional and business support services, and health and social care (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.7: Potential key growth sectors	
Sub-sectors	Employment – location quotient above 1 and positive forecast growth 2015-34
Buildings construction, engineering & specialised construction activities	(10.5%)
Land transport and transport via pipelines	(2.9%)
Warehousing and support activities	(1.7%)
Real estate activities	(3.7%)
Other professional, scientific services	(1.2%)
Employment activities	(3.5%)
Human health activities	(10.0%)
Residential care activities	(2.2%)
Social work activities	(4.4%)
Personal service activities	(3.3%)

\*Percentage in brackets denotes size of sector as proportion of local economy

### 2.3.7 Summary

- Recent stronger growth in employment, although continued reliance on the public sector.
- Large manufacturing base, including in high-tech sectors associated with advanced manufacturing.
- Health, education, construction, wholesale & retail, logistics and property also important local employment sectors.
- Under-representation in higher value added service sectors, such as finance and insurance.
- Continued 'enterprise gap', with low levels of business growth and formation.
- Forecasts suggest Oldham's relative contribution to the GM economy is expected to decline.

## 2.4 Recent Business Performance

### 2.4.1 Key findings from the 2016 GM Business Survey

To supplement the information on the business base highlighted above, primary data is also available regarding the performance of businesses within Oldham and across the GM sub-region. A representative sample of over 1,400 businesses completed the recent 2016 GM Business Survey (65 from Oldham), which also carried out additional business profiling for the first time to identify

the characteristics of high performing businesses. The key findings for the survey are outlined below. Oldham businesses performed in line with Greater Manchester, unless otherwise stated:

- **Business confidence** is relatively strong across GM with 31% of businesses reporting an increase in employment and 50% reporting an increase in turnover. Oldham businesses were less confident with only 42% reporting an increase in turnover, although 38% reported that it had stayed the same. When asked about the implications of Brexit, 71% of companies reported no impact on investment decisions, 6% thought that the sales would increase, 10% of firms stated that investment decisions were on hold, while 13% reported they did not know what the implications would be.
- **Growth sectors** - optimism among firms was broad based, but the strongest growth was achieved by businesses within the following sectors:
  - health and social care and health innovation;
  - creative and digital; and
  - business and professional services.
- **Drivers of growth** – in terms of the key drivers of growth, businesses reported that ‘products and services’ was the most important factor (47%) followed by workforce and skills (45%). In Oldham, a higher proportion of businesses reported the importance of products and services.
- **Barriers to growth** – the biggest barrier to growth among the business base is a lack of skilled staff (30% up from 24% in 2014) followed by access to markets and sales opportunities (27%) and access to finance (22%).
- **Workforce and skills** – with regard to the workforce and skills, the survey confirmed:
  - skills as a key driver of growth as evidenced in the deep dive analysis – particularly for companies employing 50+ employees (67%)
  - 14% of companies had hard to fill vacancies. Over 60% of firms in manufacturing, transport and storage, information and communication cited lack of skills/qualifications as a reason for struggling to find skilled labour.
  - businesses were investing in workforce development. 73% of companies have invested in staff training, particularly external training, and there has been a slight increase in the number of apprenticeships recruited.
- **Exports** – a fifth of the companies surveyed reported that they export goods and services which is comparable to the national average. In terms of the sectors and markets, exporters included manufacturing companies (55%), creative and digital (43%), and retail and wholesale firms (31%). Trade links were predominantly to the EU (75%), North America (48%), non-EU Europe (46%) and China (37%).
- **Products and services innovation** – of the companies surveyed, 80% had undertaken at least one innovative activity in the previous year. This included investment in new plant/machinery, accessing knowledge and expertise to improve the business, and the introduction of new business structures and processes. While innovation varied widely, it was

a positive sign in terms of progress towards addressing gaps in innovation across the City Region. However, the survey also indicated that a significant number of businesses (63%) did not understand Research and Development (R&D) tax credits.

- **Business support** – in terms of awareness and accessing business support services the survey found:
  - awareness of the BGH(BGH) had increased to 45%, particularly among manufacturers (as the BGH previously had the Manufacturing Advisory Support contract) and businesses in the creative and digital sectors;
  - 41% of companies have accessed some form of business support. This included support from accountants/solicitors (16%), banks (9%), local authorities (9%) and the BGH increased to 12%;
  - the reason for accessing support was primarily to increase sales through marketing, general business growth and advice and help with workforce development. A higher proportion of Oldham businesses reported accessing support for marketing; and
  - 20% have used business mentors, although this is significantly lower for Oldham businesses. Continuity planning remains a key issue for many firms.
- **Access to finance** – with regard to funding, the survey found that:
  - 77% of companies report rising costs (staff, IT, raw materials) as a key issue;
  - in line with national trends, 17% have sought finance in the last 12 months. Finance for growth was up to 26% and finance for cashflow down to 27% from the high of 49% in 2012;
  - manufacturing and construction firms reported that they would be seeking funds;
  - 28% of firms will be seeking support from local/central government (doubled since 2014), while 8% said they would consider business angels. Use of venture capital remains low at 2%.
- **Satisfaction with the local area** – a significantly higher proportion of Oldham businesses reported satisfaction with the affordability of premises, access to public transport, and access to road transport. The issues businesses reported dissatisfaction with related to availability of parking, crime and anti-social behavior and business rate costs.
- **Business relocations** – in total, only 17% of businesses identified that they were considering full or partial relocation (55% within the local authority area, 33% elsewhere in GM).

#### 2.4.2 *Characteristics of high performing companies and implications for the Business and Investment Strategy*

In addition to the detailed survey results, the 2016 survey also included additional business profiling for the first time, to identify the key characteristics of high performing companies compared with non-high performers. For the purposes of the analysis, high performing

companies were defined as those with 20% growth in turnover and/or employment and the results of the profiling are shown below:

<b>Table 2.8: Characteristics of high performing companies in GM</b>		
<b>Key characteristics</b>	<b>High performers</b>	<b>Non-high performers</b>
<b>Sectors:</b>		
Business, financial and professional	27%	18%
Creative and digital	20%	10%
Smaller businesses employing 10 staff or fewer	87%	70%
Established, but still relatively young businesses (3-5 years)	17%	10%
Engaged in training	84%	70%
Engaged in international trade	30%	22%
<b>Management and Leadership:</b>		
Advice/support on leadership and management	35%	24%
Will seek advice/support in the next 12 months leadership	48%	29%
Leadership skills of mentors	30%	18%
Use of own leadership experience to mentor others	20%	12%
Engaged in innovative activity	90%	78%
<b>Business support</b>		
Accessed business support	53%	38%
Will do so in the future	86%	76%

### 2.4.3 Implications of the findings for the Business and Investment Strategy

Analysis of the survey results and the key characteristics of the high performing companies provides evidence to support the activities and priorities required to improve the growth of firms based in the Oldham area:

#### **Implications for the Business and Investment Strategy:**

- The results highlight the need for sector specific targeting
- The drivers/barriers to growth highlight the importance and need to invest in products and services (and innovation related to products and services) and skills/workforce development
- Use of a business database to target potential growth companies, including smaller businesses and businesses that have been trading for a relatively short period of time to facilitate growth and enhance survival rates
- Promoting awareness and access to the full range of business support on offer for businesses in the area, including:
  - business advice – from both public and private sector partners (including the Council, Business Growth Hub, Chamber, and local professional firms);
  - skills training – via Get Oldham Working and the Colleges;

- increasing trade and exporting – via the Chamber and the Regional Department for International Trade advisor based at the Manchester Growth Company;
- innovation – through the Innovate UK advisor based at the Manchester Growth Company; and
- management and Leadership support – from the Executive Management Programme being delivered by the Business Growth Hub. This contract has been sub-contracted to a consortium of local partners in Oldham.

## 3 Current arrangements

### 3.1 Introduction

This section describes the range of business support that is available for businesses in the Oldham area, feedback from key stakeholder agencies - both partners and businesses - regarding the current business support offer and some of the key barriers to growth, and the role of the Council in providing future support. A summary of the business support delivered by each partner is set out in Table 3.1.

### 3.2 Existing business support provision

#### 3.2.1 *Oldham Council*

There are currently a number of business facing teams within Oldham Council, but the provision and co-ordination of support to assist the establishment, growth and attraction of businesses to the area is provided by the Strategic Investment Team. This team undertakes a variety of roles including management of the Town Centre and Markets and developing and promoting tourism and Place Marketing in Oldham. Their primary roles involve relationship management; facilitation between internal and external agencies; and the provision of information and advice. The team's priorities are to:

- support local businesses to stay, thrive and grow, strengthening the borough's economy and creating local jobs;
- work with local and regional partners to encourage enterprise and entrepreneurship through support of a number of targeted initiatives and programmes;
- support existing and attract new retail investment in town and district centres; and
- secure significant inward investment and partnerships to sustain regeneration activity across the borough and strengthen the local economy.

Other internal teams that interact with businesses include:

- Business Rates
- Licensing
- Building Control
- Planning
- Town Centre and Markets
- Property management – delivered by Unity Partnership
- Libraries
- Public Protection

### 3.2.2 *Get Oldham Working (GOW)*

Get Oldham Working was established by Oldham Council in May 2013 to support local residents into sustainable jobs. Since then the initiative has created over 2015 work related opportunities for local people. GOW provides a range of recruitment and training support for individuals and businesses including:

- employability skills and training for individuals outside the labour market;
- apprenticeships and traineeships;
- a work club for individuals to develop their job search skills;
- a 'Fair Employment Charter' for businesses to sign up to, that demonstrates their commitment to providing employment opportunities for local people;
- recruitment support for local businesses and a skills diagnostic service to identify workforce development issues acting as a barrier to growth; and
- the provision of tailored sector development programmes to overcome key workforce development issues – for example the 'Warehouse to Wheels scheme' developed in conjunction with Mantra Learning Limited, to boost the skills of those in the logistics industry. The programme directly addressed the shortage of Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) drivers in the borough by enabling employers to advance their careers and help Oldham businesses to grow.

### 3.2.3 *Oldham Enterprise Trust*

The Oldham Enterprise Trust has been established to improve the employability of Oldham residents and to promote enterprise which will contribute to long-term economic growth of the borough. As part of the 'Get Oldham Working' initiative, the Trust, kick-started by a £1m donation from The Stoller Charitable Trust, aims to help the next generation of entrepreneurs get start-up businesses off the ground and also aims to support young people into employment.

A small team is responsible for administering the funding on behalf of the Trust, which is co-located with the Strategic Investment Team in the Council. They provide a portal for start-up and growth companies to access the wide range of business funding that is available alongside free business advice and support.

Following on from the initial funding that was provided by The Stoller Trust and the success of the fund in terms of assisting start-up companies, a further £2 million has been ringfenced for new companies and young people in the borough. The Trust has been working with Business Finance Solutions, part of the Manchester Growth Company, to secure match funding to expand the offer to other businesses with growth potential across the area. This 'White Label Enterprise Fund' will only be open for businesses in the Oldham local authority area, but other GM areas are developing similar products.

### 3.2.4 *Manchester Growth Company*

The Manchester Growth Company's (MGC) business support and business finance division exists to provide Greater Manchester's companies with a complete suite of services to support their growth and promote new enterprise. Service design is aligned to the needs and opportunities of the area's companies, with a focus on SMEs with growth potential, and the needs of Greater Manchester's economy.

The Business Support and Business Finance division of MGC comprises:

- Business Growth Hub;
- International Trade – delivered in partnership with the Chambers of Commerce and provision of grants for exporting;
- MIDAS – inward investment;
- Business Finance Solutions – providing loans to businesses unable to access mainstream funding; and
- Programme and Initiatives.

The Business Growth Hub, established in 2011, acts as a central point for accessing an integrated set of business support services in GM whether they are provided directly by the Hub, elsewhere within the MGC Group or externally by other providers in the public or private sector.

Using a range of sources including the European Regional Development Fund, GM Combined Authority, Regional Growth Fund, Local Authorities, BIS funding, Government contracts such as UKTI (now DIT), Innovate UK and the European Investment fund, the BGH provides the following services to businesses across the GM area:

- advice for start-ups and growth companies;
- access to finance;
- digital innovation; eco-innovation; innovation growth;
- enquiries team and business diagnostics;
- executive development programme;
- mentoring;
- sector development programmes – digital, creative, technology; life sciences; low carbon; manufacturing; textiles; and
- workforce development.

The BGH provides services for businesses in all the Local Authority areas across the GM area. Oldham Council is in the process of securing additional business support over and above this provision, through investment to support lifestyle businesses, business diagnostics and workforce development and additional capacity through the Executive Development Programme which provides management and leadership support for potential growth companies.

### 3.2.5 *Oldham Chamber*

Oldham Chamber of Commerce is part of the wider GM Chamber. The Chamber currently has approximately 300 members and provides a range of business support services (including information and export advice) and networking for member companies. To assist members connect with each other, the Chamber runs a series of free 'Action For Business' networking events. Based on feedback from these events, the Chamber's activity in Oldham is currently focused on:

- the digital economy:
  - skills – working with Oldham College as they establish a digital career college and drop in centre for potential businesses in the area to interact with students;
  - supporting the Web Apps Academy's apprenticeship scheme with Employer Ownership of Skills funding; and
  - connectivity - extending the digital connectivity demand aggregation pilot to the Oldham area.
- young enterprise – to encourage the business community to engage with their local education establishments as an investment in the future workforce. The Chamber is currently working on a way to make it simpler and easier for companies to help schools and colleges; and
- construction – work is ongoing to ensure that the property and construction sector members are aware of the pipeline of work in the region and the Chamber plays a key role in servicing the construction network group.

### 3.2.6 *Oldham College*

Oldham College provides vocational training and apprenticeship support for businesses across the area. The College provides support for businesses in helping them to recruit and train potential employees through a range of innovative services provided by a team with sector based experience. The college aims to provide training, skills development and apprentices that will:

- provide the expertise to grow the business;
- improve the productivity and competitiveness of the business; and
- provide trainees and upskilling to counterbalance an ageing workforce.

In line with policy and changes to vocational education and training, the College places a much stronger emphasis on technical competence and academic rigour, including a strong focus on English and Mathematics. Specialist staff are at the heart of the business support team to ensure that provision is tailored to the needs of the employer, and labour market intelligence. They also engage employer advisory boards to advise on curriculum design to ensure industry expertise improves teaching and learning and enhances student and apprentice experiences.

To meet the challenges of the priority sectors, the College has seven sector facing faculties in the following areas:

- caring professions;
- construction and the built environment;
- digital and creative;
- finance and professional services;
- performing arts;
- retail and commerce; and
- sport, travel and public services.

Each faculty is supported by an employer facing Sector Team who work directly with employers and their employees.

### 3.2.7 *Other Partners*

There are a range of other business support providers such as the Federation of Small Businesses and the Princes Trust, that provide support for business start-ups and growing businesses across the area.

## 3.3 Summary of the business support and providers in the area

Table 3.1 provides a summary of the range of business support services delivered in the Oldham and the key partners involved in delivery. The summary has been presented by the type of support on offer:

- business advice;
- finance;
- research, development, innovation;
- place marketing and attracting investors;
- sites and premises; and
- skills and workforce development.

Table 3.1: Existing Business and Investment Support in Oldham		Manchester Growth Company	Oldham Chamber	Oldham Council	Oldham Enterprise Trust	Oldham College	Other partners
Business Advice (including regulatory advice)	Information (& business intelligence)	BGH	✓	✓	✓		FSB;PT
	Start-up advice/Youth Enterprise	BGH	✓		✓		FSB;PT
	Business growth - advice	BGH	✓		✓		FSB
	Mentoring	BGH	✓		✓		FSB
	Targeted sectoral growth	BGH	✓				FSB
	Networking	BGH	✓		✓		FSB
	Regulatory advice and support	BGH			✓		
Finance	Start-up grant funding	BFS			✓		FSB/PT
	Micro loans	BFS			✓		
	Business loans	BFS			✓		
	Export finance	BFS					
	Equity investment	BFS			✓		
Research, development, Innovation	Research, development, innovation - advice	Innovate UK; BGH					RSC
	Funding	Innovate UK					RSC
	Collaboration	Innovate UK					RSC
Place marketing and attracting investors	Export services	UKTI (DIT); BGH	✓				
	Marketing and promotion of Oldham	MIDAS	✓	✓			
	Events for overseas investors	UKTI (DIT)		✓			
	Investor services (package of support)	MIDAS		✓			
Sites and Premises	Council land and property – info/advice	MIDAS		UNITY			
	Commercial land and property –info/advice	MIDAS		UNITY			
	Funding for sites and premises			✓			
Skills and workforce development	Recruitment	Work Co; Skills Co		GOW			
	Workforce development; Apprenticeships	Work Co; Skills Co		GOW		✓	RSC
	Business/sector training	Work Co; Skills Co		GOW		✓	

### 3.4 Feedback on existing provision

To inform the development of the Business and Investment Strategy, a range of consultations have been carried out to assess the effectiveness and suitability of the existing business engagement mechanisms within the Council and to gather feedback from key stakeholders, both businesses and partner agencies, regarding the current delivery landscape and issues that need to be addressed moving forward. A summary of the findings is presented below.

#### 3.4.1 *Feedback from the review of business engagement in the Council*

The review of business engagement in the Council was carried out by KIER in October 2016, through a series of workshops and one to one discussions with council departments and local business leaders. The headline findings identified:

- the valued support provided by the Strategic Investment Team (SIT) particularly among business leaders, and the need to increase the capacity of the team;
- the account management function needs enhancing in line with best practice, as one to one relationships with business leaders are recognised as the most effective engagement mechanism;
- that the initial routing of business enquiries needs to be improved, to free up senior staff time;
- greater collaboration is required with other business facing teams, to add capacity and identify potential growth companies that will benefit from support; and
- pro-active targeting of businesses and sectors is constrained by a lack of business intelligence – investment is needed in collection, analysis and dissemination of information.

#### 3.4.2 *Feedback from partner agencies on current provision*

Consultations were held with the Business Growth Hub, Oldham Chamber of Commerce, Get Oldham Working, the chair of the Oldham Business Leadership Group and Oldham Enterprise Trust, and Oldham College regarding existing business support provision and joint working among the agencies. The feedback identified a number of key issues outlined below, which have key implications for future provision:

- the Strategic Investment Team (SIT) are currently reactive in terms of assisting businesses in the borough. The activities of the team need to shift towards a more proactive rather than reactive engagement and support service and targeting companies with the potential to grow, via more effective working practices and additional capacity;
- greater co-ordination of business facing teams in the council is required (SIT, business rates, licensing, commercial property) with clear protocols required to gather business intelligence, share data with the central SIT and make effective referrals to external agencies;

- better communication and data sharing among the key business support agencies is required and importance given to managing the strategic relationships and oversight of the business support being provided by the various agencies (Council, Chamber, BGH/MGC);
- more effective identification and targeting of companies with the potential to grow, using a business database in conjunction with the Council's CRM system (Tractivity) and strengthening the account management function within the Council;
- increased marketing and promotion of the business support on offer for start-ups, existing businesses and potential investors through the provision of a database and menu of support available from the new website and targeted marketing using the new business database;
- enhance the team responsible for servicing business enquiries and signposting businesses and provide training/up to date information for the call centre staff to direct enquiries more effectively;
- greater use and promotion of business rate incentives and rent subsidies, and procurement mechanisms to secure employment and training and supply chain opportunities for local residents and businesses; and
- improve joint working and engagement of all partners at the investment planning stages.

### 3.4.3 *Feedback from businesses*

A series of discussions were also held with businesses representing the key priority sectors within the local economy, to understand their existing relationship, if any, with the Council and their views on the business support provided, key barriers to growth (and solutions) and the role of the Council in providing support. The consultations identified:

- good relationships with the council where they exist, with generally positive feedback regarding the support received;
- a lack of awareness and understanding of the broader council offer, particularly in relation to assisting businesses and the need for more effective marketing and promotion, signposting, and production of timely information with a plea to 'keep it simple';
- the need to consolidate and capitalise on recent investments made particularly in the Town Centre (e.g. leisure and retail development) and the need to address issues such as Town Centre Parking which impact on these sectors in particular;
- a need to streamline/co-ordinate networking events as the 'same people attend every event'- and are predominantly professionals. For example, networking events are currently organised by the Oldham Business Leadership Group, Oldham 100; Professional Oldham, Oldham Chamber; and the Business Growth Hub;
- a requirement to get the balance right and recognition of the need to promote both public and private sector business support providers – for example the BGH and the use of local companies/professionals;
- an appetite for growth – but some investment decisions on hold given current economic climate and implications arising from the decision to leave the EU;

- attracting skilled individuals remains a key issue for a number of industries, and retention of skilled labour. The mobility of the workforce is also increasing important particularly for health and social care and the logistics industries given their operating hours and managing this introduction of the minimum living wage;
- a recognition that the Council can only go so far. Given their limited capacity, more signposting is required where specific business support is required to grow the company (e.g. exporting, innovation advice and funding); and
- bigger companies would welcome one to one dialogue and engagement with the council.

### 3.5 Challenges and opportunities for business growth in the area

#### 3.5.1 SWOT

A summary of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the growth of the business base within Oldham, based on the feedback from partners, businesses and the review of the existing delivery landscape and economic context is set out in the box below. The key messages for future delivery are also provided.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good connectivity – motorways, tram, access to the rail network</li> <li>• Diverse &amp; vibrant community</li> <li>• Colleges and UTC – vocational and academic</li> <li>• Sector strengths – e.g. manufacturing, logistics</li> <li>• Family owned businesses wanting to stay in Oldham</li> <li>• Sector-based networks/groups</li> <li>• Affordable sites and premises</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low skills and multiple deprivation</li> <li>• Peripherality (within GM conurbation)</li> <li>• Limited dialogue with businesses and understanding of business needs</li> <li>• Lack of awareness/active promotion of the business support offer</li> <li>• Business survival rates</li> <li>• Limited supply of readily available good quality sites and premises</li> <li>• Image</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent investment in strategic sites (including the City Centre)</li> <li>• Active business leaders and potential ‘ambassadors’ GM Spatial Framework – new housing and employment floorspace (industrial, warehousing, office, retail, leisure)</li> <li>• Good business support offer and network of providers - BGH; ringfenced funding for start-ups and business growth (Oldham Enterprise Trust); GOW</li> <li>• Devolution – more collaborative working with private sector</li> <li>• Apprenticeship Levy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued out migration of young people/skilled individuals</li> <li>• Disparities widening across GM – north/south divide</li> <li>• Regulations</li> <li>• Accessing EU market opportunities</li> </ul>

### 3.5.2 *Implications for future delivery*

The consultations with businesses focused more on the process of engagement and the role of the council and other business support providers rather than the business support product/service and therefore gaps in provision. This was partly as a result of the lack of awareness among the businesses of the support on offer. The key messages regarding future delivery relate to the need for:

- proactive vs reactive engagement and support:
  - greater use of business intelligence;
  - key account management system;
  - more effective referrals internally and externally;
  - identifying and targeting growth companies and sectors;
  - greater awareness of the business support offer; and
  - data sharing among partner agencies.

## 4 Vision and strategic objectives

### 4.1 Vision

The overarching Strategic Investment Framework set out the following vision for Oldham:

*'To be a key economic contributor to Greater Manchester, providing a place where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit and work. It will also be a place where every resident is enabled to contribute to and benefit from the continued economic growth of the City Region'.*

This vision will be achieved through a range of actions supporting:

- **Place** - an attractive, efficient and distinctive environment where business and enterprise can thrive and where people will want to live, visit and work.
- **People** – an inclusive and cohesive community with a skilled, educated and dynamic workforce and decent, secure and well paid jobs.
- **Business** - a balanced and growing local economy which supports more business start-ups, increased business survival rates and attracts more inward investment.

### 4.2 Strategic objectives

The business and investment strategy will support the achievement of the above vision for Oldham. It will assist in creating a balanced local economy, that includes both high value added jobs and employment opportunities for local residents. by:

- raising the profile of Oldham as a business location;
- de-risking the investment process for companies looking to relocate and expand in Oldham;
- increasing the survival, retention and growth opportunities for indigenous businesses (including social enterprises);
- promoting the development of an enterprise culture and assisting more business start-ups; and
- ensuring that businesses are fully aware of the support available to enable them to innovate and grow.

### 4.3 Activities

To facilitate the growth of the business base and capacity within it, Oldham Council will work with existing partners and networks to co-ordinate approaches. The priorities for action are considered below under three broad headings:

- business intelligence, engagement and marketing;

- business support services; and
- sectoral development.

#### 4.3.1 *Developing a shared approach to business intelligence, engagement and marketing*

##### **Improved collection, analysis and dissemination of business intelligence**

The regular review and analysis of trends and developments and dissemination of resulting findings amongst partners will be essential to ensure the continued relevance of this strategy and its component activities. Such developments will include wider economic and sectoral changes as well as changing needs and opportunities within the Oldham economy. Such ‘external’ review will be particularly important not just because of the accelerating rate of technological changes that will affect the prospects for many industries (as well as potentially giving rise to new market opportunities), but also because of the considerable uncertainties affecting the wider macro-economic climate – not least as a consequence of Brexit.

##### **Business engagement and establishment of a key account management system**

Within Oldham, and across the City Region, there are a range of partners providing business support and mentoring to new start-ups and existing businesses as outlined earlier in section 3 and summarised in Table 3.1. These include, for example, the Council, Oldham Chamber of Commerce, the Oldham Enterprise Trust and the BGH and associated partners in the Manchester Growth Company.

Moving forward, a business engagement and support strategy or protocol will be necessary to ensure that:

- wasteful overlaps or needless competition in provision are avoided;
- providers and businesses are aware of the full range of provision available; and
- effective ‘pathways’ for businesses are in place with appropriate signposting and referrals.

The development of an ‘Oldham Business Support Offer’ managed by personal business advisors will be crucial to streamlining support and delivering a coherent service. The business advisor will be responsible for managing individual business accounts and ensuring (and monitoring) the support arranged through it for each business. Business account or relationship managers will provide a key role in coordinating the package of support available for the business and streamlining the process for securing assistance.

##### **Marketing and promotion**

Marketing and promotional activities are important in raising the profile of an area, of the businesses within it and in attracting inward investment. They are also important in ensuring business awareness of potential opportunities and of the support services available.

It will be important to ensure that marketing and promotional activities take place at the appropriate level and that, in particular, they are properly coordinated with activities at the wider City Region level – including those of Manchester’s inward investment agency MIDAS. MIDAS aims to secure inward investment into the City Region working alongside partners such as UKTI which

works to boost British exports and to facilitate business investment in the UK. As well as working with businesses already based in the city region, these agencies seek to target priority international markets and sectors, by developing commercial propositions that demonstrate why the region is an appropriate location. The role of the Oldham Strategic investment team should be to ensure that an appropriate 'business offer' is in place for relevant potential investors once their interest has been secured. This offer needs to include a range of support and assistance to find suitable property, skilled people, finance and support and to help embed them into local networks

Similarly, the marketing of Oldham needs to be coordinated with activities in the wider City Region will require close working with agencies such as Marketing Manchester. The development of a designated 'Oldham Ambassador' role linked into the Manchester City Region's Global Ambassador programme ('MBASSADOR') delivered by Marketing Manchester would facilitate this joint working. A shared business events calendar should be developed with partners.

#### *4.3.2 Developing and promoting Oldham's Business Support Offer:*

The range of business support services on offer, and their mode of delivery, should be both comprehensive and capable of being tailored to the specific requirements of individual businesses. Certain principles should underpin their provision. They should be:

- coordinated through a personal business advisor or 'business account manager' role to ensure that assistance is streamlined and co-ordinated on behalf of the business;
- demand-led, and responsive to changes taking place within the industries in Oldham, particularly the growth sectors and industries facing rapid technological change;
- prioritised for businesses that will seek to maximise the job opportunities for local people and address social inclusion;
- inclusive and available for all businesses and individuals within the borough (with equality principles embedded in all support on offer) and with a particular focus on the promotion of social enterprise; and
- monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the activity is delivering value for money, relevant to the needs of businesses and achieving the intended outcomes and benefits.

The following summarises the different components of a business support offer for Oldham.

#### **Business information, advice and guidance**

The provision of good quality, impartial business advice and mentoring is critical for businesses at all stages of their development – from start-up onwards. The type and intensity of advice needed will differ from business to business - depending on, for example, size, type, sector and stage of development. The first step therefore should be the development of a business needs analysis or diagnostic session with a qualified business advisor, to determine the type of support required – for example, business planning, access to finance, access to premises, help to find the right people or upskilling the existing workforce, breaking into new markets or assistance to develop, protect and exploit new ideas. This 'lead' advisor will then be responsible for managing the business account and the support arranged through it on behalf of the business.

Other investment priorities/activities should include:

- provision of shared services for business start-ups and SMEs to complement existing provision (for example, The Acorn Business Centre; the E3 Business and Enterprise Hub; Falcon Business Centre);
- development of additional incubation space and innovation centres in key locations (e.g. as part of the new office quarter); and
- facilitation of new linkages with key partners to tailor other business support to meet Oldham's needs - for example, the Colleges in relation to apprenticeship support and upskilling; and the Unity Partnership with regard to property and business premises.

**Access to finance**

There are a range of potential funding options to support new business start-ups, and to assist existing businesses (including social enterprises) invest and grow, which include grants, loans, and venture capital. These come from a range of sources including European funds, Government funding and the private sector (including banks and alternative sources such as peer to business lending e.g. accessed through platforms such as Funding Circle).

At a local level, there are a number of area based Business Improvement Grants available to support businesses in key locations within Oldham (e.g. Failsworth, Shaw and Lees, and Oldham Independent Quarter) and funding available through the Oldham Enterprise Trust for new start-ups and growth companies. Across the City Region, the BGH promotes a range of specific grants and loans to support export, and growth of individual sectors (e.g. Textiles Growth Programme).

While details of the various sources of finance is available for businesses through the Council and BGH websites, more pro-active advice and support, in conjunction with business planning, can often be required by businesses to access funding and understand the most appropriate route. While all relevant agencies (such as the Council and Chamber) will have an important role in raising general awareness of business finance availability, the Business Account manager will have a key role in facilitating access, as part of a broader package of support for the company.

Other potential areas for development will include:

- the development of relationships with funders including local banks and other lenders (including venture capital providers);
- active marketing and signposting support to raise awareness, through business events, websites, and via the network of business account/relationship managers;
- development of a grant/loan scheme - including turnover rent offer for Council premises for business start-ups; and
- development of a business rent/rates scheme and policy that supports the delivery of objectives.

### **Support to access new markets**

Key to the development and growth of businesses is the ability to access new and expanding markets. Marketing and promotional events and initiatives developed with appropriate partners and involving businesses have an important role to play in promoting general awareness, particularly in external markets, of local business capacity and capability. More focused market research and/or marketing is often important in the development of start-ups and of new ventures by existing businesses and may be an appropriate focus for advisory and other support.

In addition, however 'new markets' are not always external. The development of effective and efficient supply chains provides a mechanism for improving competitive advantage for businesses and for entrenching and consolidating businesses within an area – thus helping to protect and consolidate their local economic impact. Various mechanisms exist to promote supply chain linkages, with communication playing a key role in the process - for example, meet the buyer events and the development of local capacity registers. Regular dialogue with businesses in the same industry and buyers/service providers is crucial to ensure that changes are communicated and cascaded through the (existing and potential) supply chain. In addition, in appropriate instances more interventionist approaches can be taken such as the use of contract clauses in the procurement process (including purchasing by the local authority itself).

### **Research and development and innovation (R&D&I)**

Innovation enhances productivity, output and the development of new products and processes. It is a key enabling force for economic growth and for economic transformation - leading to a more knowledge-based and higher value economy. In addition to the research capabilities of existing firms, the presence of, and ability to access, research expertise (including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and other research centres) plays a key role in developing and maintaining an area's skill base and providing a sustainable infrastructure to promote innovation and growth.

The innovation system nationally has been characterised by relatively low levels of R&D expenditure compared to other global economic powers. While particular strengths can be identified in areas such as university-business collaboration and the quality of Higher Education, the overall level of investment in innovation by businesses lags behind international competitors. However, the UK's research base continues to top international benchmarks (including institutions within MCR) including its research systems, intellectual assets and academic entrepreneurship.

In Oldham, and the wider City Region, growth through innovation and encouraging a general uplift in R&D spending and knowledge transfer through greater industry/university collaborations will continue to play a central role in promoting growth among the existing business base and its supply chains – particularly in high growth and knowledge based industries. Promoting and understanding the types of innovation support (in particular through Innovate UK and the Catapult Centres) and R&D funding (from the various research councils for example, and HEFCE) will be a key function of the Business Advisor role, to ensure that businesses can access research findings and the necessary specialist expertise required to respond to new technological changes and new market opportunities within their particular industries.

Other investment priorities should include:

- facilitate access to knowledge transfer partnerships and R&D postgraduate placements; and
- work with target sectors to promote innovation, throughout the supply chain.

#### **Regulatory support/access to council services**

The range of statutory and other regulatory requirements, and the work involved in compliance with them, can on occasion represent a barrier or disincentive to business activity and new investment. Advice on the scope of potential regulatory requirements and assistance in ensuring their compliance should be provided as part of the business advisory service. This should cover, for example, environmental health, trading standards, licensing, fire safety and planning and building control issues /requirements. The service should comprise an initial free business diagnostic service advising on the scope of regulatory requirements and should signpost businesses to relevant information and any specialist support that may be required. It should also follow-up referrals and ensure that appropriate and satisfactory responses are being secured.

#### **Sites and premises**

Oldham Council has a leading role in regeneration and promoting strategic developments. Council land and property (industrial, retail, office) for sale and to let in the Oldham area is outsourced to the Unity Partnership. The council has a role in signposting businesses to both the Unity Partnership and other Commercial property providers and overseeing provision. An audit of the current stock is required to understand the scale, quality and availability of sites and premises across the borough at the present time and this will remain a key part of the overall business offer. Investment priorities will include:

- further transformation of the Town Centre – through building on the success achieved to date and significantly improving the business, residential and leisure offer;
- bringing forward the development of strategic sites and premises – by working with the various Joint Venture vehicles in place and other site owners / developers to develop, deliver, promote and market key development schemes, including sites identified through the GMSF (for example the Northern Gateway Sites); and
- creating an attractive and vibrant network of District Centres – through the development and implementation of District Centre Development Plans.

#### **Access to skilled labour and training provision**

The importance of up-skilling and continuous professional development is an important issue for Oldham given the area’s relatively high proportion of residents with low or no qualifications. In particular, it will be essential for:

- improving productivity levels - a major priority for the UK and particularly so for businesses within Oldham, which has levels well below the national and city region average. Productivity is key to business competitiveness – and thus the protection and development of an area’s economic base; and
- developing the identified priority growth sectors – especially those that involve the use of new technology.

Greater collaboration will be required between employers, especially those in growth sectors, and FE and HE establishments to ensure that provision is designed to take advantage of growing markets. If courses are linked to real demand within the labour market and the economy, this will in turn attract students. In addition, greater collaboration will help encourage more industry placements, the development of advanced apprenticeships, the design of bespoke higher level technical and specialist courses, and knowledge transfer partnerships. The provision of facilities (for example incubation space; HE spin outs) and initiatives to encourage graduate retention will also be particularly important in driving up higher level qualifications in the borough.

Assisting individuals into the workplace and enabling progression will also ensure that there is a pool of workers able to meet the normal churn or replacement demand within the industries in the borough. This strand of activity will link closely with the need to ensure that apprenticeships are tailored to meet the demands of businesses in emerging and growing sectors, and the work of the GM Apprenticeship Hub. In addition, flexible skills solutions that are tailored to individual or collective business needs will need to be developed through support available locally (Get Oldham Working) and from the Manchester Growth Company and the subsidiary Business Hub and Skills Companies.

Investment priorities/activities should include:

- development of a coherent 'skills offer' for employers to include an audit/skills action plan and provision of assistance to co-ordinate recruitment of trainees, access to training at all levels and the promotion of existing provision;
- facilitating the development of tailored and joint training among businesses in the priority growth sectors, e.g. Mantra Learning is currently providing tailored support for businesses in the Logistics Industry in the borough;
- provision of support to enable businesses to access and utilise external and mainstream funding alongside their own investment in skills in the workforce;
- promote the benefits of collaboration through initiatives such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and research/postgraduate placements; and
- graduate retention facilities and provision of subsidised placement programmes within the borough.

#### *4.3.3 Targeting priority sectors*

A review of economic forecasts for the borough and an assessment of its strengths and assets has identified six priority sectors that have a particular potential to help drive future jobs and economic growth as well as increased GVA. Four of the sectors, where the borough already has strong clusters of employment, (manufacturing; logistics; construction and property; and health and social care) are areas where Oldham is seen as having the potential to play a lead role at the City Region level. In terms of retail, leisure and hospitality and professional and business support services, these sectors will provide an important focus for achieving a balanced local economy.

Targeting assistance on businesses within these sectors (and the sector development bodies or network associations that co-ordinate activity on behalf of businesses) will help ensure that the

potential opportunities are realised. Individual sector growth plans will be required (or refreshed where need be) to ensure that investment benefits as many of the businesses within each sector as possible.

A range of actions will be undertaken to support the development of each of the identified priority sectors. These actions will potentially include:

- **Markets** - to stimulate demand; to enable access to markets; and to attract mobile investment from outside of Oldham and the City Region;
- **Capital** - to ensure the availability of finance; to secure an appropriate skills base; and to meet infrastructure requirements
- **Enterprise** - to provide business support; to promote R&D and innovation; and to encourage business collaboration.

The following provides a brief overview of each of the sectors – summarising why it is important; Oldham’s strengths; requirements for its development; and the scope of potential support actions.

Table 4.1: Key strengths and requirements of the priority sectors			
	Importance	Strengths in Oldham	Requirements
<b>Manufacturing</b>	13% of employment in Oldham (10,300)  Highly productive - GVA per person £60,000 (cf. Oldham average £36,700)  Future Oldham GVA growth forecast higher than UK	Recent increases in textile employment  Strong high technology sector - the largest sub-sector in terms of number of businesses.	Demand for modern, high quality industrial property with access to major transport links.  Increasing need for higher level skills and managers, professional and associate and technical occupations.
<b>Logistics</b>	6th largest employment sector in GM and 7th largest GVA.  Key enabler of growth for other sectors.  5% of Oldham’s employment (4,200)  Forecasts suggest further employment growth	Accessible location, with motorway access and close to the regional centre.  Relatively affordable sites and premises.	Access to major transport routes  Availability of suitable sites and premises.  Historical relatively low level skill requirements but moving towards higher skills needs
<b>Construction</b>	53,000 people employed in GM  Contributes £3bn of GVA to the City Region economy.  Accounts for 6% of Oldham’s employment (4,500).  Forecast to grow significantly across GMCR	GMFM highlights construction-related activities, as strengths in Oldham and key drivers of employment and productivity growth.  Oldham well placed to benefit from growth in residential development	Access and awareness of planned activity and procurement  Extensive supply chain requires good access to major transport routes.  Skills a key issue - increasing skills gap nationally

<p><b>Health and social care</b></p>	<p>Largest single sector in GM-over 165,000 people (14% of total employment).</p> <p>One of largest employers in Oldham (17% of all jobs) 14,100</p> <p>Increasing service needs stimulating demand for further employment.</p>	<p>Significant recent and forecast growth in Oldham</p> <p>Sub sectors of human health, residential care and social work each expected to drive growth</p> <p>Key assets e.g Royal Hospital - 4,700 jobs, £62m+ investment since 2009.</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention problems – with mobility and accessible transport being a key factor in delivering home based care.</p> <p>Skills gaps and occupational shortages</p>
<p><b>Leisure and retail</b></p>	<p>Significant proportion of both the GM and Oldham economy.</p> <p>Provide an important route into work and ‘entry level jobs’ including lower level skills.</p> <p>Sector employs some 16,300</p> <p>Key to transforming the borough as a place to live, work and visit.</p>	<p>Continued growth forecast in employment</p> <p>Oldham’s ‘offer’ has seen recent improvement e.g. new cinema complex new leisure centres, Town Centre cultural regeneration programme, proposed Hotel Future project</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention of staff is a major challenge</p> <p>Improving image among potential employees</p> <p>Developing staff skills and work progression</p>
<p><b>Professional, financial and digital services</b></p>	<p>Employs 228,000 people in GM (19% of total employment)</p> <p>Encompass a range of high value added activities.</p> <p>10,600 jobs in Oldham</p> <p>Forecast to be one of the highest growth sectors for the City Region in terms of both employment and GVA</p>	<p>Recent strong growth in professional and business support services within Oldham</p> <p>Growth concentrated in the Town Centre.</p> <p>Metrolink and the proposed development of an office quarter in the Town Centre will help to strengthen Oldham’s offer</p>	<p>Access to skilled labour</p> <p>Strong business to business links</p> <p>Good quality accommodation close to public transport and other facilities.</p>

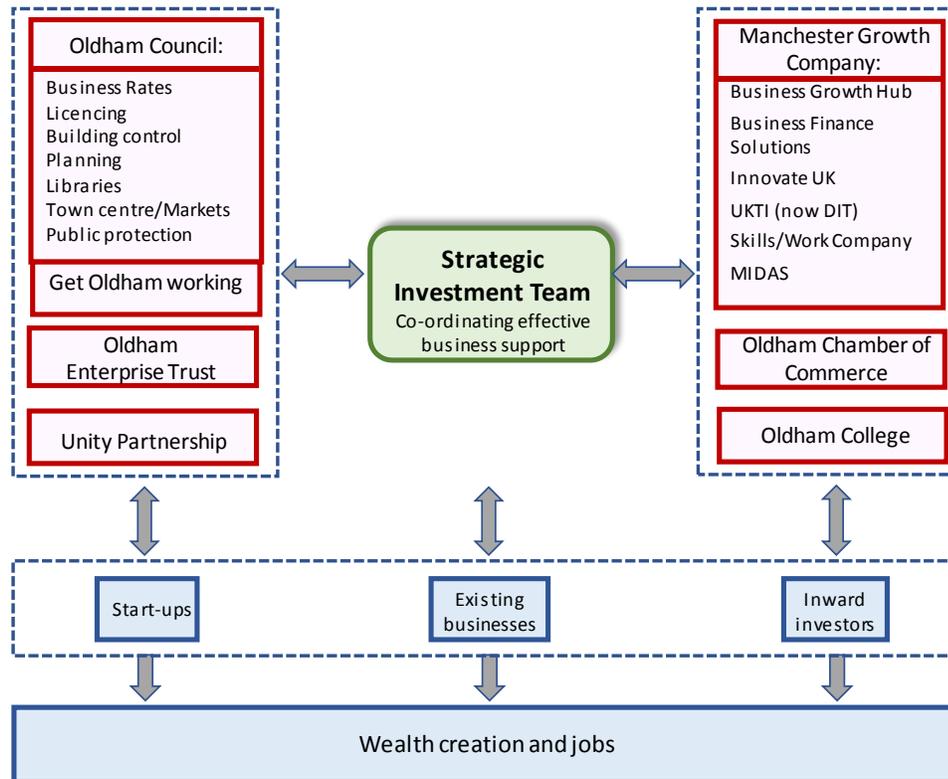
## 5 Action Plan

### 5.1 Management and delivery arrangements

#### 5.1.1 Overview

The Strategic Investment Team within the Council will continue to play a key role in ensuring that effective business support is provided to support businesses and the creation of wealth and jobs within the borough. To achieve this, the team will develop and build on existing relationships with both internal council teams and external partner agencies as shown in Figure 5.1 below. The delivery of business support will also run alongside activities being delivered through the 'People' and 'Place' interventions outlined in the SIF.

**Figure 5.1: Framework for the delivery of business support**



#### 5.1.2 Role of the Strategic Investment Team

As described above, the Strategic Investment Team will support businesses in the borough by co-ordinating the support available from within the Council and maximising linkages with external delivery partners. While the team will have less of a role in the delivery of one to one business advice, they will have responsibility for:

- the management of internal and external relationships and oversight of the wider business team;
- business intelligence, monitoring and evaluation of data held in the CRM database;
- business engagement – including account management and liaison with sector forums;
- marketing and promotion – to include Place Marketing and raising awareness of the business growth offer, through direct targeted marketing and effective signposting to appropriate business support providers; and
- strategic investment and sector development.

Given the functions required, additional capacity will be required within the existing Strategic Investment Team to ensure that the team is able to become more pro-active and able to target support accordingly towards businesses that have the potential to grow and create jobs in the local economy.

The KIER review carried out in 2016 for example, highlighted the significant variation among the other GM local authorities with regard to resourcing the business support functions within their localities. In Stockport, the Business Support Team has approximately 18 members of staff to service their business base of 12,000 enterprises (2 Senior Growth Managers; and 16 supporting growth managers, officers, and support officers) while Oldham has 6,800 businesses and a team of 2 investment officers, excluding the Town Centre and Market management functions.

### 5.1.3 *Management and Governance arrangements*

The Strategic Investment Team currently sits within the Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods portfolio within the Council and reports directly to the Director of Economy and Skills. The Executive Director for Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods has overall responsibility for the provision of services and support for businesses.

The Economy and Skills Partnership, chaired jointly by the Leader of Oldham Council and the chair of the Oldham Business Leadership Group, will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the Business and Investment Strategy and alignment with the SIF and other priorities/interventions being delivered through the Skills Strategy for example. The partnership comprises representatives from both the public and private sectors, and includes the main business support and skills providers within the borough. The partnership will continue to draw on the expertise and input from local businesses and relevant sector network groups (as they become more established) and the Oldham Business Leadership Group.

## 5.2 Key priorities for action

The following tables describe the actions required by all partners to:

- develop a shared approach to business intelligence, engagement and marketing;
- deliver the Oldham Business Support Offer; and
- target businesses within the identified priority sectors.

**Table 5.1: Developing a shared approach to business intelligence, engagement and marketing**

Area of Focus	Key Actions	Lead Delivery	Partners	Funding/ Levers	Timing	
<b>Business Intelligence</b>  Collect, analyse and disseminate data to improve targeting and business engagement  Contribution to SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5	Develop a comprehensive business database, using Experian data to provide the core inputs and supplement this data with NNDR and Tractivity.	Strategic investment team	Libraries	Experian data	April - May 2017	
	Map the data, and prepare sector profiles for the website.					
	Use the database to identify large employers and potential growth companies as the basis for the account management system. Signpost businesses to the business support providers – e.g. BGH, Oldham Enterprise Trust, Chamber and Get Oldham Working					Ongoing
	Establish a data sharing agreement with the BGH and other providers	Strategic investment team	BGH Chamber OET	BGH Service Level Agreement	May 2017	
	Develop a protocol for directing businesses to the BGH and other providers					
	Convene an internal working group for business facing teams to share business data and develop a protocol for directing businesses to the BGH and other providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Town Centre Manager/Markets</li> <li>- Business rates</li> <li>- Licensing</li> <li>- Property (Unity)</li> <li>- Development/Planning, building control</li> <li>- Strategic Assets/Strategic Projects</li> </ul>	Strategic investment team	Town Centre		June 2017	
	Identify private sector champions and nominate lead officers within the Council to liaise with the existing networks and sector groups on an ongoing basis to gather information regarding business needs	Strategic investment team	Sector Networks OBLG		Summer 2017	
	Develop and administer an annual business survey Boost the next GM business survey	Libraries	New Economy		Spring 2017 Spring 2018	
Use the CRM system (Tractivity) to monitor business engagement and referrals and ensure the business database remains up to date	Strategic investment team	Libraries		Ongoing		

<b>Business Engagement</b>  Establish and implement an account management system to engage employers  Contribution to SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5	Establish procedures for more effective routing of business enquiries in the Council - develop the menu of business support provision and list of key contacts for appropriate internal departments/external agencies. Train frontline staff and ensure that the CRM system is used for recording enquiries and referrals made.	Strategic investment team  Call centre	Call centre staff		June/July 2017  September 2017
	Identify and assign key account managers to large employers and establish appropriate mechanisms for ongoing engagement	Strategic investment team	Senior management team; Sector champions		Summer 2017
	Manage the BGH relationship and monitor businesses in receipt of support through internal and external case conference sessions	Strategic investment team	BGH Chamber OET	BGH SLA	Ongoing 2017-2020
<b>Marketing and Promotion</b>  Market the area as a business location and the support services available  Contribution to SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5	Website development: - strengths of the business location - profile key sectors and case study businesses – start-ups, growth, relocations - availability of sites and premises and links to commercial property agents - links to business support and funding available	Strategic investment team to draft content	Internal Business Processing team	Place marketing Budget	Summer 2017
	Prepare sector specific and generic marketing materials to promote the 'Oldham Business Support Offer'	Strategic investment team	Libraries	Place marketing budget	Autumn 2017
	Publish/circulate a Business Events Calendar – streamline networking events and expand audiences using the business database to target particular markets and industries  Assist the delivery of the Oldham Business Awards	Strategic Investment team	BGH Chamber OBLG Sector groups Professional Oldham	Sponsorship	Ongoing  Annual Event
	Work with MIDAS to deliver joint marketing campaigns and host potential inward investor visits	Strategic Investment team	MIDAS MGC Oldham Ambassadors	Place marketing budget.	Ongoing

Table 5.2: Delivering the Business Support Offer

Area of Focus	Key Actions	Lead Delivery Partners	Role of the Council	Funding/ Levers	Timing
<b>Business Information, Advice and Guidance</b>	Undertake business diagnostics with potential growth companies and start ups and assign eligible companies to personal business advisors.	BGH enquiries team OET	Identification of businesses, signposting and referrals	Oldham Council ERDF match £250k	Ongoing  2017-2020
	Deliver business support services (min 12 hours) to Oldham businesses	BGH			
	Manage the BGH contract and monitor the businesses in receipt of assistance from partner agencies (via caseload management and case conference reviews)	Council – SIT	Management and monitoring	BGH SLA	Ongoing
	Use the business intelligence and feedback to identify gaps in provision and work with partner agencies to tailor support to the needs of businesses.	BGH, Chamber, OET, GOW, Colleges	Analysis of business intelligence (Libraries)		Ongoing
<b>Access to Finance</b>	Provide businesses with advice on Accessing Finance	BGH	Marketing and referrals		Ongoing
	Assist businesses to access loans and grant funding for business start-ups and growth (including improvements to sites and premises in target areas)	Business Finance Solutions	Marketing, and referrals	£2m Stoller Trust Funding for Oldham Enterprise Fund	Launch Spring 2017
		Oldham Enterprise Trust		Council capital Funding	Ongoing
		Council		Business Angels	
Develop and promote the Business Rates Incentive scheme, with clearly defined eligibility criteria (based on growth, jobs, sustainability) and use of funding. For example, match investment in:	Council business rates	Development, marketing, administration	Council Business Rates	Summer 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staff training/upskilling</li> <li>- new plant and machinery</li> <li>- innovation in new products and services</li> <li>- relief for bringing vacant premises back into use</li> </ul>				

	Explore options to use TIF to borrow against projected growth in strategic locations to fund targeted investment	Council - SIT	Development	Tax increment financing	2018/2019
<b>Access to New Markets and Research, Development and Innovation (R&amp;D&amp;I)</b>	Development and promotion of effective supply chain linkages – through the meet the buyer events; local capacity registers; use of procurement clauses	Council – SIT Procurement  Sector network groups	Development, promotion and delivery		Ongoing
	Target companies with the potential to benefit from export advice and R&D&I support available from the UKTI (now DIT) and Innovate UK regional advisors based in the Growth Company: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- export services</li> <li>- access to R&amp;D tax credits</li> <li>- funding for emerging and enabling technologies (health and life sciences, manufacturing and materials)</li> </ul>	Business Growth Hub  Innovate UK, DIT regional advisors	Identification and signposting	R&D tax credits  Innovate UK funding	Ongoing
<b>Regulatory Support/ Council Services</b>	Promote the GM ‘Better Business for All’ campaign and undertake business diagnostics to advise on the regulatory requirements needed.	Business Growth Hub	Promotion		2017 Ongoing
	Signpost businesses to relevant support to ensure compliance, via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the business growth hub</li> <li>- internal services – environmental health, trading standards, licensing, fire safety, planning permission, building control</li> </ul>	Business Growth Hub  Council services	Referrals and delivery of advice and support		Ongoing
	Work with procurement to maximise opportunities for employment and training of local residents, creation of apprenticeships and business opportunities for local firms, using contract clauses.	Council SIT Procurement	Development	Council Procurement mechanisms	
<b>Sites and Premises</b>	Commission an audit of the existing stock of sites and premises across the borough to understand the scale, quality and availability/gaps in provision	Council SIT	Commissioning		May 2017
	Bring forward the development of strategic sites and premises – by working with the various joint venture vehicles in place and other	Unity Partnership	Development, delivery and	TIF	Ongoing

	site owners / developers to develop, deliver, promote and market key development schemes, including sites identified through the GMSF	Council – SIT	promotion and marketing		
	Develop and implement District Centre Development Plans	Town Centre Team	Signposting and referral to relevant business support		Ongoing
	Delivery, sales and letting of appropriate sites and premises (office, retail, industrial)	Unity Partnership	Signposting and monitoring		
<b>Access to Skilled Labour</b>	Undertake business diagnostics to identify workforce development and other skills/recruitment issues	GOW BGH Skills company	Signposting and referrals		Ongoing
	Assist businesses to access/recruit apprentices	GOW Colleges	Delivery via GOW	Apprenticeship Levy	Ongoing
	Provide upskilling support for businesses o appropriate partner agencies	Manchester skills company			
	Broker relationships between the sector network groups and the training providers to ensure that provision is tailored to the needs of businesses and explore opportunities for collaborative training ventures	Council SIT Sector networks GOW College	Brokerage		Ongoing

**Table 5.3: Targeting Priority Sectors**

To maximise economic output and the creation of employment opportunities for local residents, growth companies will be targeted in addition to businesses in the sectors listed in the table below. For each sector, a high level development plan will be prepared by ‘sector champions’ identified from within the Council (i.e. sector champions) working in conjunction with the appropriate network group.

Identified Growth Sectors	Lead agency responsible for co-ordination/networking group	Key issues to be addressed within the industry locally
<b>Construction</b>	Oldham Construction Group (Chamber; Council)	Skills and progression Apprenticeships Timely notification of procurements Assistance with tenders
<b>Manufacturing</b>	Engineering Forum	Skills Modern high quality sites and premises
<b>Logistics</b>	Mantra Learning – provides an element of co-ordination re training/skills	Sites and premises Skills and Licenses Business regulations
<b>Health and social care</b>	Council health care partnership	Skills Wages Labour mobility – with regard to the provision of homecare Innovation
<b>Leisure and retail</b>	Town Centre manager	Lack of support for retail businesses using public funding (no provision via BGH – sustainability workshops being organised for each area) Consolidation of recent investments
<b>Professional, financial and digital services</b>	Professional Oldham HACK	Creation of an office market (overspill from Manchester) High level skills

## 6 Targets and performance monitoring

### 6.1 Targets

#### 6.1.1 Overall SIF Impacts

The delivery of the Business and Investment Strategy will contribute towards achieving the vision and strategic objectives outlined in the SIF. The business support activities will be delivered in conjunction with place based interventions and support to improve employment and skills, in order to accelerate the growth of jobs, enterprise and GVA within the borough.

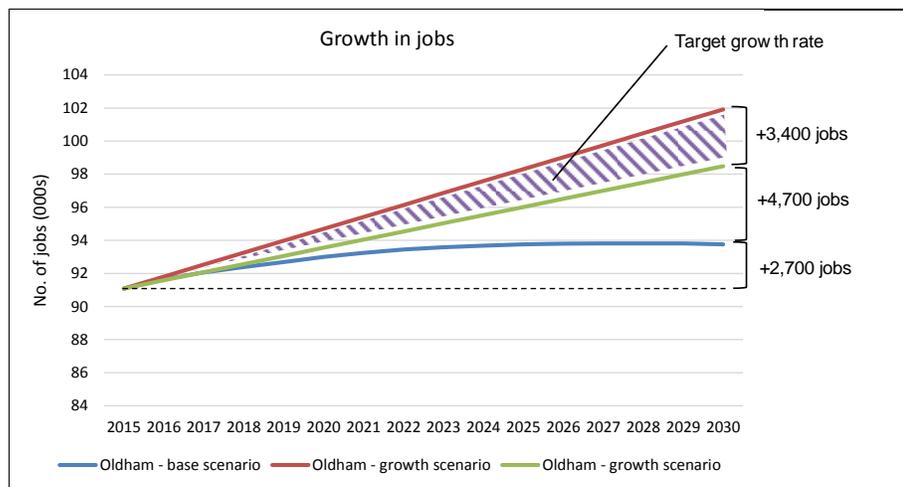
As outlined in the SIF and Figures 6.1-6.3 below, closing the gap with the GM average will require:

- the creation of an additional 4,700 or more jobs above the base forecast (+2,700) to narrow the employment rate gap by 2030; and
- the creation/attraction of an additional 340 enterprises, above the base forecast (+190 businesses) to close the enterprise gap by 2030.

The economic impact model developed to demonstrate the benefits of Oldham reducing the gap with GM has modelled two scenarios:

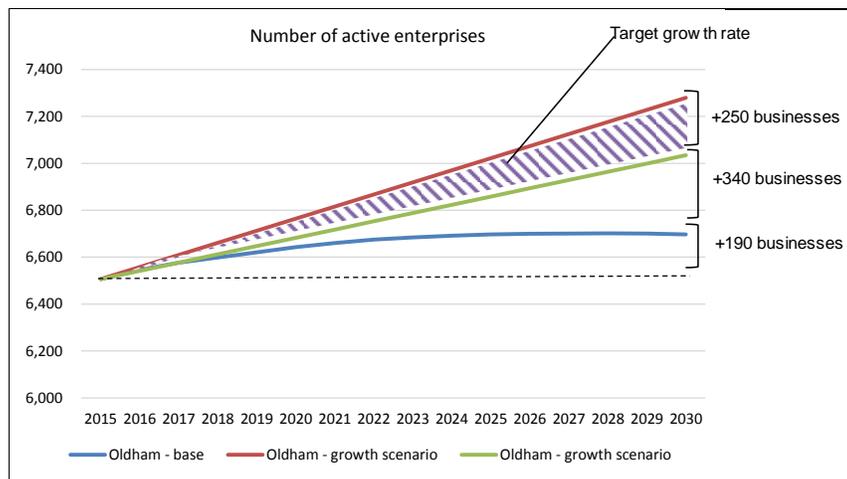
- matching the GM growth rate (which is described above and shown by the green line on the graph); and
- higher than GM growth rate – which would be sufficient to remove the gap (and is shown by the red line and shaded area in the graphs). The higher growth rate would require a further 3,400 jobs and 250 businesses over and above the figures outlined above.

**Figure 6.1: Projected employment growth scenarios in Oldham (2015 - 2030)**



Source: GMFM, AMION Economic Impact Model

Figure 6.2: Projected enterprise growth scenarios for Oldham (2015 - 2030)



Source: GMFM, AMION Economic Impact Model

### 6.1.2 Measuring strategic business support outcomes

In order to assess the extent to which the business and investment strategy is achieving its objectives, the following outcomes will need to be measured on an ongoing basis, to identify whether Oldham is closing the gap with the GM average. As there are so many agencies involved in delivering business support, it will be difficult to attribute change or impact to individual partner agencies or individual strands of activity, as they will all contribute through the provision of the business support offer. Furthermore, it is also envisaged that the people and place based initiatives will also contribute towards enterprise and employment growth. However, performance will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the collection and analysis of output and outcome data.

Table 6.1: Measuring Strategic Outcomes from Improved Business and Investment Support			
Measure of Success	Oldham Baseline	GM Baseline (Local Authority Range)	Oldham Target
Increase in the number of active enterprises (per 10,000 population)	290	354 (276-501)	Rate of improvement at or above GM average
Increase in the number of business births (per 10,000 population)	38	52 (37-73)	
Proportion of employment within the private sector	72%	76% (68% - 86%)	
Increase in average GVA per employee	£36,700	£39,900 (£35,800 - £42,600)	

## 6.2 Monitoring Framework

Monitoring and reviewing both outputs and outcomes will form an important part of improving the business and investment support offer in Oldham and provide evidence to demonstrate the best use of public resources and achievement of value for money. A range of tools and protocols

will be put in place to record and analyse the engagement and performance of businesses on an ongoing basis. This will include:

- establishing a baseline and comprehensive database of businesses for the area and use of the CRM system (Tractivity) to track companies;
- improved data sharing among business support providers and the use of a case conference approach to monitor the delivery of support and benefits realised; and
- delivery of an annual business survey – to gather feedback from businesses regarding their satisfaction with the support being delivered and impacts achieved. The survey will also provide the opportunity to gather more qualitative information regarding business needs which will be used to ensure that interventions remain relevant.

An indicative list of the projected outputs and outcomes that will require monitoring is given in the table below, in addition to the organisations that will be responsible for collecting the data.

<b>Table 6.2: Output/Outcome indicators to be monitored</b>	
<b>Output/outcome measures</b>	<b>Partner agencies involved in monitoring</b>
No of businesses engaged and enquiries received by type of business type (start-up; existing business/growth company; inward investors) and sector	All – BGH; Council; Chamber; OET
No of businesses signposted from the Council to business support providers - BGH; Oldham Enterprise Trust; GOW	Oldham Council
No of businesses assisted/referred for full support (minimum 12 hours) by type and sector, of which: - No of businesses assisted with digital technologies	BGH
No of mentoring relationships	BGH
No of clients advised on starting a business	BGH; Chamber; Council; OET
No of inward investment pipeline projects/jobs	Council; MIDAS
No of jobs created and safeguarded	BGH; Council; OET
No of inward investment projects, new jobs, safeguarded jobs	Council; MIDAS
No of businesses in receipt of funding – grants; loans; business rate reductions (start-ups, existing businesses, inward investors) No facilitated by Access to Finance service No accessing the 'Oldham Enterprise Trust Fund'/other sources	BGH OET BFS Oldham Council
No of businesses introducing new to firm/market products	BGH, Innovate UK
No of businesses co-operating with research entities	SIT, Innovate UK (MGC)
No/Evalue of business wins (export orders)	BGH, DIT, Chamber
No of business start ups	BGH; OET; GOW
£ total increased GVA /GVA from inward investment	BGH; SIT; DIT

## 7 Delivery recommendations

The following actions are required as a matter of priority, to strengthen Oldham’s central business support co-ordination function and ability to work with internal departments and external partner agencies to deliver the business and investment strategy:

- review the capacity and focus of the Strategic Investment Team and associated business support functions, to enhance delivery of:
  - the management and oversight function;
  - business intelligence, monitoring and evaluation;
  - business engagement – including account management and liaison with sector forums;
  - marketing and promotion; and
  - strategic investment and sector development.
- establish/populate a new business database and profile the existing companies – to begin awareness raising, targeted marketing, and account management;
- develop internal council procedures for enquiry handling (including initial recording on the CRM system, referral to council teams and external providers) and provide training for frontline and other business facing staff; and
- agree the mechanisms for sharing data and monitoring businesses being assisted by external delivery agencies. For example, convene a ‘case conference’ review with the wider business support team including the Oldham Enterprise Trust fund manager, designated BGH advisors (growth and workforce development), and relevant internal officers (for example, Town Centre Manager; Business Rates Manager; GOW).



# Appendix A - Title of Appendix