Present: The Mayor – Councillor O Chadderton

Councillors Akhtar, Alexander, Alcock, Ames, Azad, Ball, S Bashforth, Battye, Blyth, Briggs, Brownridge, A Chadderton, O Chadderton, Dawson, Dean, Dearden, J Dillon, P Dillon, Fielding, Garry, Haque, Harkness, J Harrison, Heffernan, Hibbert, Hindle, Houle, Hudson, Hussain, Iqbal, Jabbar, Judge, Malik, McCann, McDonald, McLaren, McMahon, Moores, Newton, Price, Qumer, Rehman, Roughley, Salamat, Sedgwick, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Sykes, Thompson, Toor, Ur-Rehman, Williams, Williamson, Wrigglesworth and M Bashforth

1 THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER TONY LLOYD WILL ADDRESS COUNCIL

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester Mr Tony Lloyd attended the meeting and addressed Council.

The Mayor and Councillors McMahon, Sykes and Hudson, thanked Mr Lloyd for attending the meeting and Mr Lloyd agreed to look at a return visit to update Members.

2 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS FROM THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ON WARD OR DISTRICT ISSUES

Councillor McMahon MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the suspension of the Council procedure rules to allow the time limit for Council to be increased.

RESOLVED – That the time limit for Council be increased and the guillotine to now stand at 9.45pm.

The Mayor advised the meeting that the next item in Open Council would be Public Question Time. Questions had been received from members of the public and would be taken in the order that they had been received.

The following questions had been submitted:

1. Question received from Imran Asghar via email:

   What preventative measures if any are the council taking in PREVENTING residents from littering generally, disposing waste onto the ends of alleyways each week and continually ruining the public/residential areas of Oldham in particular Glodwick?

   Councillor Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Devolved Services, gave the following response:

   “Oldham Council is piloting a new approach to tackling fly-tipping and dumped waste – and is reminding the small minority
of residents that spoil things for their neighbours that it is up to them to dispose of their own household waste responsibly.

Local Authority officers will work with residents to empower communities to help keep their areas clean, green and free of environmental eyesores.

Initially the officers will make door-to-door visits and talk to tenants and residents to see if they have any concerns or questions about how to dispose of their waste properly, for example do they understand the current waste collection rounds or what to do with any bulky household waste they have?

The area will then be thoroughly cleaned-up and a Section 46 Notice will be served on the area – this means it is a legal document posted through residents’ doors explaining their responsibility in relation to household waste disposal.

If waste then reappears in the community the Council is calling on residents to name and shame the culprits. The Council will monitor the area closely and then investigate and take action – this could include issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) or pursuing criminal prosecutions.

There is no doubt that the majority of our residents take care in disposing of their waste properly. Rubbish left out on the streets is not only unsightly but it is a health hazard and attracts vermin. We are asking residents to support us in taking care to use the correct bins and recycle their waste to reduce our costs in sending waste to landfill – costs that ultimately fall on all of the council tax players, and money that could be better spent on services for residents.

Behaviours need to change. The small minority who think they can dump their rubbish anywhere they want and someone else will deal with it for them will find out the hard way that we won’t hesitate to follow up and take enforcement action.”

2. Question received from Imran Asghar via email:

“What aid is there for young people wanting to fix abandoned homes to get them up and running again?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“We work with major contractors in Oldham to provide work experience opportunities for young people on a range of Oldham sites.

For example, with Wates, young apprentices are helping the refurbishment and construction of around 650 homes as part of the Gateways to Oldham scheme. These schemes enhance young people’s work experience and help them to obtain a sustainable job in the construction industry. In these cases we
pay for items such as health and safety tests, CSCS cards and asbestos certificates.

We are also working with Great Places on a £1.8 Million scheme in South Werneth, this scheme will bring 32 long-term Council-owned empty homes back into use by next March. This scheme provides apprentice opportunities, where young people are acquiring a range of skills under close supervision.

The Council is also working on a range of schemes that are intended to bring empty homes back into use in the Borough. For example, we are working with Aksa Homes on a £1.3 Million initiative to bring 75 empty homes back into use between 2012/13 and 14/16. The scheme involves working with owners on a 'lease and repair' scheme where Aksa will undertake repair works to empty homes and then let them to a family in housing need for a number of years. To complete the works, Aksa will include apprentice labour.

The young people are referred by local training providers, such as the Oldham College, a work/employment provider, such as job centre plus or a direct referral from our community outreach/engagement.

I know that this information will reassure the residents of Oldham that this Labour council is intent upon addressing the unacceptable levels of youth unemployment.”

3. Question received from Yvonne Krussmann via email:

“I have today parked on the Tommyfield car park and was dismayed to read a notice board advertising 'three hour's free parking'. Please can we ensure that before any more money is spent on the printing of public notices that the accuracy of the text and punctuation is thoroughly checked?”

Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Town Centre gave the following response:

“Thank you for bringing this to the Council's attention. I can confirm that arrangements are already in place with the Council’s subcontractor to amend the signage at no additional costs to the Council.”

4. Question received from Warren Bates:

“On what authority has the Chief Executive Mr Charlie Parker and the Borough Solicitor Mr Paul Entwistle to make decisions on behalf of our Council before elected Councillors are informed?”

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, gave the following response:

“The Council's Scheme of Delegation, approved by full Council, provides that officers have the powers to make decisions in relation to specified Council functions. The delegated
arrangements given to the Chief Executive and Borough Solicitor are detailed in the constitution."

5. Question received from Bill Barlow via Twitter:

“Who decided that the registrars can't answer their own calls? A call centre to make an appointment to register a death is not good! I have rung call centre this am, the ansa to my request to make an appt to reg a death was "no problem" in a singysongy voice!”

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance, Human Resources and Strategic Partnerships gave the following response:

“The decision to transfer the Registrars calls to the Contact Centre is part of the Customer Service Transformation programme. The programme aims to transform the way in which it serves its customers, and, more radically, to change the relationship it has with customers.

The Registrars service has been struggling to cope with the volume of calls received and transferring the calls for making appointments to the Contact Centre will provide increased capacity to manage calls, extended opening hours and will provide the opportunity for Registrars staff to focus on more complex work.

Prior to the transfer of the calls a great deal of work has been carried out between the Registrars service and the Contact Centre to ensure that the staff handling these calls have all the skills and knowledge required to deal with all areas of the Registrars service.

On the day of the migration all funeral directors were contacted to advise of the change to call handling arrangements and have previously been advised of the availability of the online booking facility to register a death.

The calls for the Registrar’s service migrated into the Corporate Contact Centre on Tuesday 16th April, 47 calls were received for the service, 100% of these calls were answered. The first call to book an appointment to register a death was taken today Wednesday the 17th April. During the conversation with Mr Barlow it was identified that there was an issue with the online booking form. This problem was immediately resolved.

The council apologises to Mr Barlow if he found the tone used by our member of staff to be inappropriate.”

6. Question received from Pepperpotdog via the website:

“When you going to sort out all the potholes?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:
“The Council is continuing to work hard to improve the condition of the highways network in the borough.

Around 4,500 minor repairs have taken place on the highways over the last 12 months.

The Council has made available £10m for a 4 year Highway Investment Programme. This is currently in its fourth year and has seen significant lengths of road resurfaced.

The Council is also utilising the latest technologies in preventative maintenance which includes thin layer surfacing to protect existing carriageway surfaces and the purchase of a velocity patching machine which enables minor repairs to be completed more cost effectively than other traditional methods.”

7. Question received from Donna Gould via email:
“Will council consider removing the car parking charges at Dovestones Reservoir in line with Tandle hill park in Royton, for all the reasons for not implementing them in Royton.

If not why?

The issue of parking charges at Tandle hill park was recently discussed at the budget meeting.”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:
“The car park at Dovestones Reservoir is leased by the Council from a charitable organisation. The income received from the parking charges recovers the operating cost of the car park.

A business analysis was carried out on Tandle Hill Park car park earlier this year. It was established that the anticipated income would not recover the setup and operating costs of establishing this as a pay and display car park.”

8. Question received from Richard Marks via Twitter:
“Oldham has a lot of lower paid and weekly paid workers, who live and budget on a weekly basis. Why will Oldham Council not allow people the opportunity to be sure they pay their council tax by automatic means such as direct debit on a weekly basis?

You are our representatives and should be working in our interest yet a monthly only set up for auto payment is not in the interests of people working often long and antisocial hours, not close to a pay point, maybe rather erratic in remembering to pay or those who find rent and food each payday pretty much wipes their money out.

A weekly direct debit option would suit both sides as I am very sure that it would see the tax take improve saving you time, effort and expense chasing up late or non payers.

I know there was a limited window of opportunity to move to 12 payments rather than 10 but that does not address the problems faced by people having to live largely hand to mouth week to
week in being forced to find and set aside a proportion of their weekly income for an enforced monthly bill or an inconvenience to themselves to suit your convenience.

It is also in my opinion a somewhat hypocritical stance in that you; rightly; offer support, advice and information to people on how to manage their money and budget effectively when you yourselves fail to provide a simple option that would help people facilitate this more easily.”

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance, Human Resources and Strategic Planning gave the following response:

“Direct Debit is currently only available to people who pay monthly and the payment dates offered are 1st, 8th, 15th and the 24th. From April 2013 people will however have the option to pay the tax over a twelve month period as well as the traditional 10 month period. The council tax team undertook a pilot to identify the feasibility of paying by direct debit on fortnightly basis to align with how benefit payments are currently paid. This pilot scheme is still ongoing, but so far the take up from our targeted customer group has been low and we are currently reviewing whether fortnightly direct debit should be offered out to all our customers. Weekly direct debit is not a viable payment option as it would not be possible to process the direct debit rejections before the next payment was due. This would mean a customer may be exposed to two separate amounts of bank charges before the Council was aware there was a problem. We do however still offer weekly arrangement plans for cash payers who struggle to pay monthly. Also, with the introduction of the Universal Credit, where customers are going to receive their benefits monthly and will thus need to manage their income monthly, offering weekly payments plans is no longer future proof and the Council will be reviewing whether weekly payment arrangements are still appropriate and supportive to the changes that are being made.”

9. Question received from Melanie Platt via email:

“Are the council aware of the call by the Oldham Council of Mosques to ‘ensure that school dinners are genuinely Halal’? Are the council aware that this call is not about the horsemeat scandal, but a move by many Moslems to have only NON PRE STUNNED SLAUGHTER of meat? Are the council aware that there was a boycott of Halal meat supplied to the Olympic venue and also at Lancashire Councils school dinner provision because the meat was pre stunned? Can the council please give an assurance in the strongest terms that it will not provide nor allow meat produced by the cruellest means without pre-stunning the animal? Will the council condemn such practice?

I prove links to such:
I look forward to your response.

Councillor McDonald, Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding gave the following response:

“Our school catering service holds a silver food for life mark. This accreditation provides guarantee that the food is freshly prepared, free from additives and better for animal welfare.

All of our meat, both Halal and non-Halal is supplied through a Greater Manchester wide contract which has been in operation since January 2010.

Our Halal meat is certified by the HFA (Halal Food Authority) and is pre-stunned before slaughter.

We have not had any requests to change our current meat supplier or change the processes by which meat is slaughtered at this time.”

10. Question received from Katherine Flaherty:

“I have recently had my bin stolen from outside my property. I have requested a new one and have been told that this will cost £26. Please can you tell me when this policy was introduced and also why victims of theft are being penalised by the council? I pay my council tax and expect a bin as part of this provision.”

Councillor Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Devolved Services gave the following response:

“Since the introduction of wheeled bins a charge has been made for their replacement. Residents are encouraged to mark their waste bins with their address and to bring them back within their own property as soon as possible after being emptied. All recycling bins are currently supplied free of charge.”

11. Question received from Katherine Flaherty:

“I was wondering when you might get round to dealing with some of the very large pot holes on our roads. In particular, outside Shaw Asda, on Ship Lane near Grains bar and also High Lee Lane. They are causing damage to my car.”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“The Council is continuing to work hard to improve the condition of the highways network in the borough. Around 4,500 minor repairs have taken place on the highways over the last 12 months.”
The Council has a planned inspection regime where all actionable defects are identified and repairs scheduled. The Council has made available £10m for a 4 year Highway Investment Programme. This is currently in its fourth year and has seen significant lengths of road resurfaced. The Council is also utilising the latest technologies in preventative maintenance which includes thin layer surfacing to protect existing carriageway surfaces and the purchase of a velocity patching machine which enables minor repairs to be completed more cost effectively than other traditional methods.

12. Question received from Katherine Flaherty:

I was recently given a parking fine for having parked for approximately 4 minutes on Market Street in Shaw (no double lines). This fine is for £35. That equates to £8.75 per minute. Can I ask why this penalty has been introduced, why it is not applied consistently and how the council can justify such disproportionately high fines for such small offences?

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“All charges relating to the issue of Penalty Charge Notices are determined nationally, by central government and are not at the discretion of local councils. Where an individual wishes to appeal against the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice they may do so by following the advice on the Council’s website or on the reverse of the ticket which has been issued. Councillors are not able to comment on individual cases.”

The following questions were submitted by Councillors on Ward or District Matters:

1. Councillor McLaren to Councillor Hibbert:

“To what extent will the Council be able to address resident’s concerns about the loss of open space at Foxdenton (and elsewhere in Chadderton), if, and, when the Foxdenton site is developed for industrial / commercial use as well as housing?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“I thank Cllr. McLaren for his question. I have been contacted by approximately thirty residents on this matter. They have expressed perfectly reasonable and understandable concerns. I have reassured them, and I now reassure Cllr. McLaren, that all material planning issues to which they referred will be carefully examined. When a planning application is submitted, the extent and nature of public open space would be fully addressed as part of any planning application for the site, and also be considered in accordance with the policies set out in the Councils adopted Local Development Framework by the members of the Planning Committee. I have constantly, and
continually, offered to work closely with residents. That offer remains on the table."

2. Councillor Ball to Councillor Hibbert:

“In St James we have a problem with speeding traffic on some side roads. What is the criteria for making roads into 20mph zones?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning responded by informing Council that historically, Oldham Council has introduced a number of successful 20mph Zones across the Borough, particularly in residential areas to help in meeting the Government’s previous White Paper, “A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone”. Consequently, these existing safety schemes were implemented to address Oldham’s most serious child pedestrian accident problems in and around residential areas at the time. Most of these schemes incorporate some form of speed controlling “Traffic Calming” feature, whether it be provided by the existing alignment or from the introduction of new speed humps etc. Councillor Ball has asked for the criteria for making roads into 20mph zones and as the response is quite complicated I will provide a written response.”

3. Councillor Fielding to Councillor McMahon:

“The A62, Oldham Rd meets the border with the City of Manchester in my ward of Failsworth West. Motorists unfamiliar with the area would, at present, be forgiven for not noticing that they have crossed the border into another town, let alone another borough. Can the Cabinet Member responsible advise Council what, if any, improvements are planned for this important gateway to Oldham?”

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, gave the following response:

“I agree that there is a need to prioritise spend in relation to the key gateways to the Borough and the routes which lead through to the Town Centre. I have therefore instructed a group of officers from a range of disciplines to coordinate a programme of work which will secure a long term improvement. The A62 is the first of the main routes which will benefit from this approach and the work will include general road repairs which includes working with the utility companies to undertake their responsibilities, renewal of road markings, a localised road safety and parking improvement scheme, removal of redundant street furniture, working with partners to improve the general environment and street lighting improvements.
Obviously what is essential with such a comprehensive programme is the scheduling to prevent wasted spend and we are work with utility companies to future proof the schemes wherever possible and ensure that there are no plans to take up part of the route subsequent to the planned work. Officers are due to report back shortly with a comprehensive schedule of work.

When completed the work will be supported by a higher service standard to ensure a swift response to highway repairs and this will help to maintain the positive impact of the investment. This whole approach will then be used to form a blueprint for improving over time each of the main routes into the Borough and make sure that the impact of crossing into the Borough is recognised by visitors, businesses and residents in a positive way.”

4. Councillor Sedgwick to Councillor Akhtar:

“Can the Cabinet Member tell me whether there are currently any plans in place to revitalise Lees Village centre? Chadderton and Failsworth centres have both been improved through investment in public buildings and public spaces. Lees – despite being a conservation area and the gateway to Saddleworth – is now looking a little tired, and I think it is high-time that the village had some money spent on it.”

Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Business Skills and Town Centre, gave the following response:

“There are currently no plans for Lees Village Centre. Major budget reductions imposed upon the Council and the people of Oldham by the Coalition Government have resulted in a significant reduction in the ability of the Council to invest in neighbourhood regeneration schemes. I would welcome Cllr Sedgwick’s support in our efforts to persuade her Government to invest in Northern neighbourhoods such as these.”

5. Councillor Harkness to Councillor Hibbert:

“In areas where potholes regularly recur, for example on Sugar Lane in Dobcross, where the same potholes are repaired every few weeks, will the council consider using a seal on the potholes which, although more expensive initially, will be more cost-effective in the long-run?

Also I understand that an approach has been used elsewhere in other parts of the borough, such as Huddersfield Road, Diggle whereby failed carriageways, as a result of inadequate works has involved the contractors being ordered to repair free of charge. Could this be used in this instance? “

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:
“The Council recognises the need to implement the most cost effective method for repairing and maintaining the network across the borough. It may be necessary to undertake repairs to a particular road on multiple occasions while a longer term solution is developed. The condition of the carriageway on Sugar Lane in Dobcross is life expired and therefore it is necessary to undertake short term repairs. The introduction of new technology, such as the Velocity Patcher, will inevitably lead to greater efficiencies and reduce the need for fewer repeat visits.

Poor workmanship across the borough is not tolerated and as indicated, all contractors and utility companies are required to undertake the necessary remedial works to ensure the appropriate quality is achieved. Penalties are applied where applicable.”

6. Councillor Alcock to Councillor Akhtar:

“Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell us what support is going to be or is being given to improve and enhance the market in Shaw?”

Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Business Skills and Town Centre gave the following response:

“The Markets Team has trialled a number of initiatives in Shaw in recent months. These include a rental discount scheme and free entertainment during some school holidays. The 'lazy' car boot, it starts later than most car boots, was held for the first time last August and was delivered most recently on 14 April, combined with the 'Shaw Producer's Market'. All of these initiatives were advertised and additional signage has been installed on the fixed huts to advertise market days. These initiatives have failed to increase footfall and sadly, the market struggles to retain and attract traders. The Markets Team, in conjunction with the District Co-ordinator, has recently undertaken a survey within Shaw to establish how people use the town centre and market and what changes they would like to see. The deadline for completion of surveys has just passed and work is currently underway to collate the results.”

7. Councillor Thompson to Councillor Hibbert:

“It was a great relief to residents of Greenacres that the winning bid for Greenacres Lodge was from a buyer wishing to preserve and live in this much-loved building, rather than from one who wished to demolish and redevelop, as the terms of sale invited. Residents are now getting very concerned that, after some initial weatherproofing work by the council, the building and grounds have been neglected for over a year. Will the cabinet member please say:

- Has the sale been completed?
- If it has, will the council press the new owner to comply with his obligations to maintain the place?”
- If it has not, when will it be, and will the council please tidy the site, especially the hedge which is encroaching on the road?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“The property was advertised for sale via a 250 year lease in order to ensure that the Council retained some control over and above that available under Planning.

An Agreement to Lease was exchanged in October 2012, and, subject to satisfactory completion of an agreed Schedule of Works within 12 months, the lease will be completed.

I can confirm that the Council will press the purchaser to comply with his obligations to maintain the property.”

8. Councillor Hindle to Councillor Stretton:

“The East Oldham District Partnership has recently allocated a substantial amount of money into reinstating, making good and protecting a number of grassed verges in the Derker area. Within days of this work starting, some of the protecting bollards were vandalised and/or removed, presumably as a deliberate act of wanton vandalism. Over this last weekend, I was sent some photographs from a constituent showing what appear to be lorry tyre tracks cutting the corner near to the Keepmoat development site at Crabtree Road / Harcourt Street. Can the Cabinet Member assure me that this vandalism is being investigated and if the culprits are found, further action will be taken against them?”

Councillor Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Devolved Services, gave the following response:

“It is really sad to hear that local improvements and investment through the District Partnership in East Oldham have been vandalised in such a way. This incidence is being investigated and any progress will be reported back to the ward members.”

9. Councillor Blyth to Councillor Stretton:

“Could the Leader tell me why, after spending £1 million and a £350,000 overspend to refurbish Dunwood Park, drainage, a major problem in the park, is now worse since refurbishment has taken place than before; surely this cannot represent good value for money? When will the drainage problem be solved so that the park can be used to its full extent?”

Councillor Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Devolved Services, gave the following response:
“The scheme to restore Dunwood Park has made a very significant improvement to a local facility that is once again being enjoyed by both the residents of the local community and visitors to the area.

Essentially the project was too ambitious for the budget allocated. The landscape works were re-tendered with a lot of significant planned improvements removed from the scheme to bring it in line with the budget allocated. Cabinet at its meeting on the 24 April 2011 approved this approach.

Much of the work excluded from the contract was subsequently re-instated in order to deliver a coherent overall project.

The issue of drainage and flooding at the Ampitheatre is acknowledged, however we had a very wet summer, the ground has remained sodden and it is not therefore appropriate to tackle the issue now as having plant and work on the soft ground could potentially compound the problem. Works to rectify the drainage and flooding problems will therefore be undertaken at the earliest suitable opportunity. Working collaboratively with the people of Shaw has been at the heart of this project. The project was developed following a process of two year’s public consultation with park users including the ‘Friends of Dunwood Park’ who were proactive in supporting the securing of HLF funding. Whilst the project has overspent we do now have a comprehensive refurbished park which still requires some tweaking and rectification of defects by the contractor but not the piecemeal and incoherent approach previously adopted. Dunwood Park will now be able to enjoy it’s second 100 years.”

10. Councillor Williamson to Councillor Hibbert:

“At the last Council meeting I asked whether the Council could work with local residents and Crompton House School regarding the issues relating to the parking problems.

As problems are still persisting could I ask that OSCAR the camera car visits the area more frequently than at present to address residents concerns about road safety and irresponsible parking. Will Council commit to highlighting this area as one that needs continual/regular monitoring rather than targeting those dropping off items at the charity shops on Market Street, Shaw?”

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“I can confirm that Parking Service have included Crompton House School as a ‘hot spot’ area for the School Safety Vehicle. The vehicle will visit the area 2-3 times per week over the next 3 week period to address parking behaviour concerns. I can also confirm that the Council is committed to working with schools, parents and children across the borough to improve the safety of children and the purchase of a second school safety vehicle
named KES (keeping everyone safe) has taken place and this is also in operation across the borough. Finally, when the vehicles are not deployed at school start and finish times, they will operate in other areas of the borough affected by problem parking.”

3  TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beeley, Shah and Larkin.

4  TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2013 AND 27TH FEBRUARY 2013 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th and 27th February 2013 be approved as correct records.

5  TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY MATTER TO BE DETERMINED AT THE MEETING

No declarations of interest were received.

6  TO DEAL WITH MATTERS WHICH THE MAYOR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor informed the meeting that no items of urgent business had been received.

7  TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

The Mayor informed the meeting that no communications had been received.

8  TO RECEIVE AND NOTE PETITIONS RECEIVED RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

The Mayor advised the meeting that four petitions had been received for noting by the Council.

RESOLVED – That

The following list of petitions received since the last meeting be noted:

Executive Director Neighbourhoods

1. Maintenance of Bridleway from Lower Oozewood Farm on Oozewood Road to the Royton Boundary at Hough Farm (received on 20 February 2013) (54 signatures) (Ref 2013-002)

2. Proposed Foxdenton Development (received on 13 March 2013) (629 signatures) (Ref 2013-004)

3. Road Safety Patrol Officer in Failsworth (received on 19 March 2013) (185 signatures) (Ref 2013-007)

Executive Director, Commercial Services
4. Sale of Car Park at Hereford Street and Gloucester Street, Werneth (received on 6 March 2013) (52 signatures) (Ref 2013-003)

9 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Mayor informed the meeting that there was one item of Outstanding Business from the last Council Meeting:

2. Notice of Administration Business Motion 2 – Replacement of GCSEs with the English Baccalaureate Certificates - Councillor Moores, MOVER of the Motion, requested the consent of Councillor Wrigglesworth, as SECONDER of the MOTION and also that of Council that this item be withdrawn.

On being put to the vote it was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that the Motion be WITHDRAWN.

RESOLVED – That the Motion be withdrawn.

10 YOUTH COUNCIL

Youth Councillors Jessica Entwistle and Dylan McAughey spoke to the recommendation put before Council in relation to Bullying stating that as a Youth Council they were deeply concerned that despite many local, regional and national organisations carrying out high level anti bullying campaigns, and, despite many programmes and projects tackling the issue Bullying remains the number one concern for young people in Oldham and was having long term effects on all young people.

Members welcomed the recommendation and Councillors McDonald, Williamson, Ur Rehman, Hudson, Shuttleworth, McMahon and Sykes all spoke in support of the recommendation and thanked the Youth Council for their hardwork on this serious issue.

Councillor McDonald informed the meeting that in the past he had met with a number of School Heads on this issue; he assured the Youth Council Representatives that the recommendation would be passed on to the Director of Children’s Services and requested that those Elected Members who had expressed an interest in looking into school bullying policies, be involved in taking the issue forward.

RESOLVED – That Council support the Youth Council in their Anti Bullying Campaign and the recommendation be referred to the Director of Adult and Children’s Services for consideration.

11 LEADER AND CABINET QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Sykes, raised the following questions:

1. Oldham Diving Pool:

“Oldham Council has for the second time this week attracted negative publicity regionally and nationally – this time in
connection with the lack of provision of a pool for board and scuba diving at either of the two new replacement swimming pools in Oldham and Royton. A petition with 1,350 signatures demanding that this Council: Save Oldham’s Diving Pool, was received in May 2012. Both the Sub-Aqua Club and Divers have for 30 years used this facility at the Oldham Stadium and apparently their campaign has the support of Olympic diver Tom Daley. During public consultation, the Council has been less than truthful with these users, and, for nearly a year, they have been strung along with the false expectation that their needs were being looked into and might be catered for. I say a false expectation as the specification for the leisure re-provision never included a diving pool within the proposed scope of works. And latterly the sites chose for the Oldham replacement facilities were physically not big enough ever accommodate a replacement diving pool.

Would the Leader not agree that failing to provide a replacement facility is very regrettable, especially given Oldham’s past association with diving at the highest level, with Naomi Bishop competing in the 1988 and 1992 Olympic Games? Does he also agree the actual decision to not have a diving pool was taken some time ago and he and his colleagues could have and should have shared that with the current users of the diving pool before now?”

Councillor McMahon advised that the revenue budget was not available to support this. Two issues existed – firstly was diving valuable and important? Secondly would it be a good use of tax payers’ money to provide a facility for a specialist sport that would only benefit a handful of people? A full and proper review had been undertaken; this was the reason why it had taken so long to reach a conclusion. The Council wanted something that would become a legacy, whilst at the same time a project that was affordable; we have listened to the people of Oldham and now have the best deal that we can afford.

2. High Street Innovation Fund

“Mary Portas – a successful high street retailer and the so called Queen of Shops – was appointed by the Government to conduct a review about the future of the high street. Following this review, around 400 towns across the UK were offered Government money from the High Street Innovation Fund to reinvigorate their high streets. Oldham received £100,000 from this fund a year ago in Spring 2012.

Will the Leader tell me why is it, when this administration is always claiming to be poor, that after a year we have yet to spend a penny of this money?

No one would suggest we should spend this cash wastefully however I do find it hard to believe some or most of it could not have been used so far to support our hard pressed High Streets. In addition the failure to spend does undermine Oldham’s case for cash/better treatment when we fail to spend such amounts.
And we do not even detail how and when we will spend it or why it takes so long to spend it or is the best idea to wait, if it actually is?

And can he also tell us how this Administration will use this money to support the Oldham retail economy, and the other district centres in our Borough, and when is it planned to use this cash to support our colleagues in the retail sector?”

Councillor McMahon advised that £200m had been invested in the town and alongside this the town centre would need a new function. The whole dynamic of the town centre was changing and a long term vision was needed; one which was not dominated by betting shops and charity shops; one which was not just retail but included a leisure and heritage centre and a town centre that people felt safe in day and night. The town centre would be transformed for the next generation; the fund would be used wisely and in five to ten years time Oldham town centre would be one to be proud of.

3. The Scrap Metal Dealers Act

“Metal theft has become an increasing problem with the rise in metal prices. The Local Government Association has reported that 9 in 10 Councils have been affected by metal theft. This has included manhole covers putting road users and pedestrians at risk of a serious of life threatening accidents. Even more shockingly parts of war memorials and plaques installed in churches and the grounds of crematoria to remember loved ones have been removed. In the past many of these crimes have gone unpunished as stolen metal was bought by unscrupulous scrap yards, and such activity was ineffectually regulated.

The Scrap Metal Dealers Act to regulate the industry has recently received Royal Assent. Local authorities will be given the power to refuse to grant a licence to ‘unsuitable’ persons, to revoke licences and to carry out on-site inspections with police officers. I am sure that Council officers, the Police and the many responsible, law-abiding scrap dealers who operate in Oldham will welcome the legislation.

Will the Leader outline how this Council intends to use the powers of this Act to more effective regulate the scrap metal business in Oldham?”

Councillor McMahon informed the meeting that this had indeed been an issue with metal theft becoming an increasing problem but the Council were working to minimise the consequences. Part of the work that was being carried out in the town centre was for the 100th anniversary of the cenotaph and Councillor McMahon provided some details of this for members. There had been problems with enforcement in the past; but work with Trading Standards had not gone far enough.
McMahon agreed to issue a briefing note to all Members outlining how this would be dealt with in the future.

The Minority Opposition Leader, Councillor Hudson, raised the following question:

“Could the Leader inform the meeting how the changes that had been brought about by the transfer of responsibility for policing the Whit Walks from GMP to Oldham Council would affect local residents?”

Councillor McMahon asked Councillor Steve Bashforth to respond to the question. Councillor Bashforth advised that this was a concern of everybody and that he was part of a group of three AGMA members who would be attending a meeting on 18th April to discuss the situation and he agreed to inform Councillor Hudson of the outcome of the meeting.

The following questions were raised, advance notice of which had been given:

1. Question from Councillor Shuttleworth:

“At the recent by-election in Royton South, the Liberal Democrat Party, in a last desperate attempt to win the seat, distributed a leaflet that stated on the cover ‘A message from Labour Oldham Council Boss Councillor Jim McMahon’, when the Leader of the Council sent out no such message, and quoted percentage tax increases that were misleading at best and nothing other than a cynical attempt to mislead the residents of Royton South. As the Liberal Democrat candidate polled a mere 221 votes they have once again failed to convince the electorate that they are the Party to lead Oldham forward. May I ask the Leader of the Council to contrast such tactics with those of all other parties in the by-election and to express his views on how he feels about his name being used in the way it was?”

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, stated that, as a personal view, being very realistic and reflective, most members of the public did not read the material that was handed out in the run up to an election. Taking a more serious view the Leader pointed out that this highlighted a broader issue, if a member of the public picked up such a leaflet they could easily think that the leaflet had been issued by the Labour Group. A leaflet that had intended to be humorous had failed. Councillor McMahon stated that the figures included in the leaflet had been incorrect and completely misleading.

2. Question from Councillor Blyth

“Major gas deposits held underground in shale have been discovered around the world in recent years. An engineering process called Fracking – fracturing rock by the use of explosions and the injection of water, sand and chemicals at high pressure – is used to release the gas. Lancashire is one
county in the UK with estimated reserves of 2 trillion cubic feet of shale gas. Exploratory tests at a site in Blackpool were stopped in June of last year following two earthquakes in the locality. And industry professionals have concerns that water tables can be contaminated by the extraction process.

Can the Leader tell us:

If there are any known or suspected deposits of shale gas at sites in the borough?
Whether the authority has received any enquiries from prospecting companies interested in extracting them?
What policies the authority has in place to maintain public safety, should Fracking subsequently take place?"

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“I thank Councillor Blyth for his question which raises the following three points
(1) Are there any known or suspected deposits of shale gas at sites in the borough?
The exact location of any shale gas deposits is currently unknown.

(2) Has the authority received any enquiries from prospecting companies interested in extracting them?
The Minerals and Waste Planning Unit has received no enquiries for any extraction of unconventional gas resources in Oldham.

(3) What policies does the authority have in place to maintain public safety should fracking subsequently take place?
The Minerals Plan Policy 6 - Unconventional Gas Resources provides a planning framework within which applications for the extraction of unconventional gas can be considered.
If Cllr. Blyth requires any further information, I will be happy to provide it.”

3. Question from Councillor Hindle:

“Councillors of every party will be pleased to hear of recent reduction in deaths and injuries resulting from road accidents across our borough. Yet in all parts of the borough I see road markings that have been worn away and not replaced. Painting road markings is a relatively cheap way to help maintain road safety. Can the Leader tell us how much is spent on the replacement of road markings every year, what the budget allocation is for this, and how often road markings are replaced?”
Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing Transport and Planning gave the following response:

“The current revenue budget for road markings across the borough is £45,000 per year. However, in 2012/13 £119,000 was spent on renewing/replacing road markings across the borough, £50,000 of which came from reserves to facilitate the effective enforcement particularly around schools in the borough. In additional significant areas of road markings are replaced as part of the £10M highways investment programme together with the LTP capital works. There is not a regular programme in place for the renewal/replacement of road markings; it is carried out on a priority basis throughout the year.”

4. Question from Councillor Alcock:

“Can the relevant Cabinet Member say when the new pool in Royton will open and when will you be closing Shaw baths?”

Councillor McDonald, Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding gave the following response:

“The new Royton Leisure Centre is now expected to be open in May 2015. As outlined in previous cabinet reports it is planned that Crompton Pool will permanently close once the new pool is open. This Council is however working with Friends of Shaw Baths so they can understand the feasibility and make a judgement on potentially keeping the pool open through a community asset transfer.”

At this point in the meeting the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

RESOLVED – That –
1. The questions raised and the responses given be noted.


The following Cabinet Minutes were submitted:

28th January 2013
25th February 2013
25th March 2013
8th April 2013 (Budget)

The following questions and observations regarding the Cabinet Minutes were raised at the meeting:
1. Councillor Blyth to Councillor Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Devolved Services, regarding Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28th January 2013, Page 48, Item 12 – Dunwood Park – “Can the Cabinet Member confirm that the officer formerly in charge of the refurbishment project at Dunwood Park no longer works for the authority and left with an enhanced redundancy package?”

Councillor Stretton advised that “To provide a substantive response to the question would necessarily involve the disclosure of personal information relating to an identifiable individual, and, without seeking the consent of the individual concerned, may contravene the provisions of the Data Protection Act. If a Member requires any information involving personal data they are requested to contact the Head of People Services who will consider the request.”

2. Councillor Heffernan to Councillor McDonald, Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding regarding Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March 2013 Page 60 Item 8 – Capital Investment Programme 2012/13 Month 9 - “In reference to the Leisure Review detailed as part of the report submitted to Cabinet by the Borough Treasurer, I was pleased to note that new swimming facilities will be provided. However it is disappointing that the capital investment will only provide pools that are 25 metres in length. We will not have an Olympic sized swimming pool anywhere in Oldham as a legacy of the Olympics and regrettably there are no plans to provide diving facilities, a sport at which Oldham has excelled. Will the Cabinet Member please reconsider these decisions?”

Councillor McDonald advised that as outlined in the Cabinet Report an extensive feasibility options assessment has taken place and a significant number of options have been considered to provide the best possible facilities for the people of Oldham and create a lasting sporting legacy. As part of the feasibility work, demand has been considered and the capital and revenue implications have been fully assessed. Consideration has also been given to facilities in neighbouring local authorities. The key additional facilities that have been considered are an additional 4 court hall, 50M pool and also deep water for diving. Following the review and consideration of the facility mix by officers, and Cabinet Members it is proposed to enhance the previously agreed baseline facility mix with the addition of a further 4 court hall making the sports hall into an 8 court hall. The provision of an 8 court sports hall will provide for a lasting legacy, attracting regional competition within the Borough’s indoor priority sports including netball, basketball and handball. It will enable Oldham to secure its position on the regional map as a destination venue to host regional level competition. It will provide greater flexibility in programming and the increased area will enable the hosting of large revenue generating events, such as Sky Sports boxing that have benefits to Oldham in both perception and added value driven by additional visitors to the Borough. Affordability is a critical factor and decisions on overall priority of spend needed to take place.
The following question regarding the Cabinet Minutes was raised at the meeting:

3. Councillor McCann to Councillor McDonald, Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding, regarding Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8th April 2013, Page 70 Item 7 – Department for Education Capital Funding 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 – Requesting an update on the latest position

“In relation to the new proposed Saddleworth School, I and many others are aware of the time pressures and the at-present dearth of clear information available to, it seems, all parties including Oldham Council and the problems this is creating. Can I therefore ask the portfolio holder to provide an update on the latest position regarding the funding and site of any new school & to also outline the nature of the consultations that will be undertaken with ward councillors and other interested parties before any final decisions are made in respect of the proposed school?”

Councillor McDonald gave the following response:

“This is very good news for Saddleworth School and Oldham as a whole and as a result of concerted work by the Council reflecting our commitment to education and quality schools. Funding for the construction of the new school has been approved via the Priority Schools Building Programme. Saddleworth School is currently in the programme for 2015, the Council however is doing everything it can working with the Government in the hope of bringing this timescale forward. As a result of this good news, officers have recently revisited the site appraisal work that was originally undertaken as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme. This work includes appraisals of sites both within Council and private ownership. Some of the sites could potentially be immediately discounted; for planning, access or engineering reasons and, once this initial site appraisal has been carried out, a shortlist of sites would be created. If the shortlist includes sites which are within private ownership, it would be necessary to speak with the landowners and confirm that the land is available and that, in principle they would be prepared to negotiate with the Council. Once viable site options are known, officers will discuss with Portfolio Members and Ward Members and ascertain their views. It would then be possible for the Council to share the sites with members of the public through the use of the District Partnership and public meetings, when ideas can be developed and ultimately this will be subject to public consultation.”

The following observations regarding the Cabinet Minutes were raised at the meeting:

1. Councillor Hindle made the following observation regarding Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March 2013 Page 63, Item 14 – Sheltered Housing PFI:
Could assurance be given that if a Deed of Variation was entered into with ORHP it would not have a detrimental impact on what the Council could claim in the future around quality of work.

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing Transport and Planning advised that as the question dealt with a legal and contractual issue he would provide a written response.

2. Councillor Roughley made the following observation regarding Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8th April 2013, Page 70 Item 7 – Department for Education Capital Funding 2013/2014 and 2014/2015:

“The three Ward Councillors for Saddleworth North had written to Michael Gove regarding the relocation of Saddleworth School asking where and when this would be taking place” Councillor Roughley was delighted that Councillor McDonald was supporting this.

Councillor McDonald, Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding, stated that the Council was looking at obtaining the best possible scheme. It was important that we take a uniform stance on this and make a good case for Saddleworth.

3. Councillor Roughley made the following observation regarding the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th February 2013, Page 53 Item 7 – Health and Wellbeing Board: Arrangements for Appointing a Chair:

“The rate of remuneration paid to the Independent Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board at £300 per day, plus expenses, is in stark contrast to that paid to the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee. The current Chair of Audit is an excellent individual who is paid at a distinctly inferior rate. Where the Council uses Independent Chairs then similar rates should apply. Audit is a very important function, particularly now as the Audit Commission is no longer in existence.”

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, gave the following response:
“The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board is paid at the same rate as the Chair of the Safeguarding Board and the actual amount paid has been reduced from that agreed by the previous Administration. At certain times when appointing Independent Chairs we have to look at appointing someone with specialist skills with legal obligations and in my opinion the balance is correct and does not need a review.”

4. Councillor Roughley made the following observation regarding the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25th March 2013, Page 64 Item 16 – Supporting Oldham Town Centre – Options for Free Parking:
“Why was this item treated as Urgent Business? Councillor Roughley asked for an assurance that in future simple matters such as this should not be treated as urgent business but dealt with within the normal schedule.”

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, advised that the issue of car parking had been tied into the budget process which it had taken time to work through; when the budget was being set we did not know if we could afford it or not. Work has now been done and we have evidence to support best value for the scheme. This is the scheme that has been introduced and one which will help the Borough through the recession.

RESOLVED: That –

i) The Minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 28th January 2013, 25th February 2013, 25th March 2013 and 8th April 2013 (Budget) be noted.
ii) The questions put forward at the meeting and the responses given be noted.
iii) The observations and responses given be noted.
iv) The Urgent Key Decisions taken between 28th January and 8th April 2013 be noted.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Motion 1.

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Ball SECONDED the following motion:

“Oldham is a Borough with above average rates of Child and Family Poverty.
In 2010 36% of Oldham families were receiving working tax and child tax credits (national average 24%).
In 2010 27% of Oldham children were living in families which were in poverty (national average 20%).
The Government has capped all working benefit increases at 1%, this will substantially increase poverty rates in Oldham causing increasing stress and increased threats of homelessness.
This Council Resolves to ask our 3 Members of Parliament to lobby the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to take steps to reduce child poverty by asking him to reaffirm the Coalition Government’s commitment to implement the Child Poverty Act 2009 thereby meeting the 4 targets on poverty reduction by 2020 as set out in the Act.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Williamson MOVED and Councillor Sedgwick SECONDED the following amendment:

“Line 1, delete “above average”, at end of line 1, insert “that have historically been above average”.”
After 13 years of Labour Government, this Government inherited a situation where:

In 2010, 30% of Oldham families were receiving working tax and child tax credits (national average 24%)
In 2010, 27% of Oldham children were living in families which were in poverty (national average 20%)

The Department of Work and Pensions has identified that securing employment is the reason most families move out of poverty. Once in employment, work provides a route to increasing household income through a pay rise, working longer hours or securing a promotion. Commendably, therefore Government is seeking to address household poverty through providing greater incentives to work, including:

Providing greater incentives for households who are claiming Universal Credit to take up work by allowing them to keep more of their earned income
Increasing the level of childcare support by £200 million to those taking up work whilst in receipt of Universal Credit, introducing a £1 billion tax-free childcare scheme worth up to £1200 per child,

Significantly raising the income tax personal allowance within the lifetime of this Parliament to £10000 per annum to take low paid employees out of tax altogether.”

However, it is unhelpful that as
will significantly raise stress and increased threats of homelessness.

Oldham is a Borough with rates of Child and Family Poverty that have historically been above average.
After 13 years of Labour Government, this Government inherited a situation where:

In 2010, 30% of Oldham families were receiving working tax and child tax credits (national average 24%)
In 2010, 27% of Oldham children were living in families which were in poverty (national average 20%)

The Department of Work and Pensions has identified that securing employment is the reason most families move out of poverty. Once in employment, work provides a route to increasing household income through a pay rise, working longer hours or securing a promotion. Commendably, therefore Government is seeking to address household poverty through providing greater incentives to work, including:

Providing greater incentives for households who are claiming Universal Credit to take up work by allowing them to keep more of their earned income
Increasing the level of childcare support by £200 million to those taking up work whilst in receipt of Universal Credit, introducing a £1 billion tax-free childcare scheme worth up to £1200 per child,
and improving access to out-of-hours nursery provision to make it easier for parents to work
Significantly raising the income tax personal allowance within the lifetime of this Parliament to £10000 per annum to take low paid employees out of tax altogether.
However, it is unhelpful that the Government has capped all working benefit increases at 1%, as this will increase poverty rates in Oldham.
This Council resolves to ask our 3 Members of Parliament to lobby the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to take steps to reduce child poverty by asking him to reaffirm the Coalition Government’s commitment to implement the Child Poverty Act 2010, thereby meeting the 4 targets on poverty reduction by 2020 as set out in the Act”

Councillor Battye spoke against the Amendment
Councillor Thompson spoke in support of the Amendment

Given the importance of this item the Leader of the Council asked the Mayor if it was permissible to extend the time allowed for this item by 10 minutes to enable the debate to continue.

In response the Mayor advised that a further 15 minutes could be added to the time for this item to allow for a longer period of discussion.

On being put to the vote it was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that the time for this item be extended by a further 15 minutes.

Councillor Fielding spoke against the Amendment
Councillor Hudson spoke against the Amendment
Councillor McMahon spoke against the Amendment.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.
Councillor Williamson exercised her right of reply.

On being put to the vote THIRTEEN VOTES were cast IN FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT with FORTY ONE VOTES cast AGAINST with ONE ABSTENTION. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

A vote was then taken on the ORIGINAL MOTION where ALL VOTES were cast IN FAVOUR of the MOTION. The MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That –

1. The three Members of Parliament be requested to lobby the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to take steps to reduce child poverty by asking him to reaffirm the Coalition Government’s commitment to implement the Child Poverty Act 2009 thereby meeting the four targets on poverty reduction by 2020, as set out in the Act.
Councillor Hibbert MOVED and Councillor Houle SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This Council is concerned about the traffic flows on Broadway, Chadderton. The road is currently designated as a ‘trunk road’ and its maintenance is the responsibility of the Highways Agency. The Highways Agency regards Broadway as being an intrinsic section of the motorway network that links the M60 to the M62. Consequently, heavy goods vehicles and others that are destined for Rochdale, Stakehill Industrial Estate and Yorkshire, are directed to leave the M60 at Semple Way to travel through the three Chadderton Wards and to join the A627 (M) at Royton leading on to the M62.

Oldham Council considers this to be an intrusion and to be detrimental to the quality of life of Chadderton residents and dangerous for the pupils of the schools that are located along that route.

This Council calls upon the Highways Agency to install direction signs on the M60 instructing drivers to remain on the motorway system when travelling to the aforementioned destinations and for those travelling in the opposite direction.”

AMENDMENT

Councillor Roughley MOVED and Councillor J Dillon SECONDED the following Amendment:

“1st paragraph insert after ‘on’: “A663”, insert after ‘Chadderton’: “and the A672 Ripponden Road, Denshaw”.
2nd paragraph, 1st line, delete: “The road”, insert: “Broadway”. Insert new 3rd paragraph: “Ripponden Road is also heavily used by heavy goods vehicles coming to and from Oldham town centre and the mail order distribution centres in Shaw. Ripponden Road intersects with Junction 22 on the M62 motorway. The Highways Agency which has responsibility for signage on the motorway has erected signs on the Manchester-bound carriageway indicating that drivers heading for Oldham should turn off at Junction 22, rather than remaining on the motorway to Junction 20 to join the A627(M) at Royton”.
Former 3rd paragraph, now 4th paragraph, 2nd line, insert after ‘Chadderton’: “and Saddleworth”. Delete after residents: “and”, instead insert full stop. Start new sentence by inserting: “In the case of Broadway, this traffic is also” before ‘dangerous’.
Replace former 4th paragraph, now 5th paragraph, with a new paragraph to read as follows:

“This Council resolves to:
Write to the Highways Agency requesting that direction signs on the M60 be installed instructing drivers to remain on the motorway system when travelling to the aforementioned destinations and for those travelling in the opposite direction
Write to the Highways Agency requesting the replacement of the sign at Junction 22 on the M62 to instead direct drivers bound for Oldham to remain on the M62 motorway until Junction 20
Ask the Greater Manchester Joint Road Safety Group within Transport for Greater Manchester to support these actions”.

The Motion would then read as follows:

“This Council is concerned about the traffic flows on A663 Broadway, Chadderton and the A672 Ripponden Road, Denshaw.
“Broadway is currently designated as a ‘trunk road’ and its maintenance is the responsibility of the Highways Agency. The Highways Agency regards Broadway as being an intrinsic section of the motorway network that links the M60 to the M62. Consequently, heavy goods vehicles and others that are destined for Rochdale, Stakehill Industrial Estate and Yorkshire, are directed to leave the M60 at Semple Way to travel through the three Chadderton wards and to join the A627 (M) at Royton leading on to the M62.
“Ripponden Road is also heavily used by heavy goods vehicles coming to and from Oldham town centre and the mail order distribution centres in Shaw. Ripponden Road intersects with Junction 22 on the M62 motorway. The Highways Agency which has responsibility for signage on the motorway has erected signs on the Manchester-bound carriageway indicating that drivers heading for Oldham should turn off at Junction 22, rather than remaining on the motorway to Junction 20 to join the A627(M) at Royton.
“Oldham Council considers this to be an intrusion and to be detrimental to the quality of life of Chadderton and Saddleworth residents. In the case of Broadway, this traffic is also dangerous for the pupils of the schools that are located along that route.”

“This Council resolves to:
Write to the Highways Agency requesting that direction signs on the M60 be installed instructing drivers to remain on the motorway system when travelling to the aforementioned destinations and for those travelling in the opposite direction
Write to the Highways Agency requesting the replacement of the sign at Junction 22 on the M62 to instead direct drivers bound for Oldham to remain on the M62 motorway until Junction 20
Ask the Greater Manchester Joint Road Safety Group within Transport for Greater Manchester to support these actions.”

On being put to the vote the Amendment was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Without further debate Council moved to the vote on the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION.
On being put to the vote the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

RESOLVED – That –

1. Council write to the Highways Agency requesting that direction signs on the M60 be installed instructing drivers to remain on the motorway system when travelling to the
aforementioned destinations and for those travelling in the opposite direction
2. Council write to the Highways Agency requesting the replacement of the sign at Junction 22 on the M62 to instead direct drivers bound for Oldham to remain on the M62 motorway until Junction 20.
3. Council ask the Greater Manchester Joint Road Safety Group within Transport for Greater Manchester to support these actions.

NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS

Motion 1

Councillor J Dillon MOVED and Councillor Heffernan SECONDED the following resolution:

“This Council strongly supports the retention of public houses and is greatly concerned at continued pub closures. Well-run pubs play an invaluable role at the heart of local communities, providing safe, regulated and sociable environments in which people can interact whilst enjoying a drink responsibly. The new National Planning Policy Framework and the Localism Act 2011 establishes new responsibilities and tools for local councils to promote and protect local pubs. This has been welcomed by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), which has also published:

Model Planning Policies to assist local authorities in adopting pro-pub policies

The Public House Viability Test to support local authorities when making a determination on a change of use or demolition application involving a pub

This Council resolves to:

1. Ensure Local Plans provides adequate planning protection for pubs

2. Support communities to list pubs as Assets of Community Value

3. Ensure that pubs of historic or architectural interest without a statutorily listing are included on the Council’s Local Heritage List

4. Investigate the use of Article 4 Direction powers to prevent valued pubs being converted to small supermarkets, betting shops and other uses without the need for planning permission

5. Investigate the use of the CAMRA Public House Viability Test as a tool when considering planning applications involving pubs

6. Write to the Community Pubs Minister, The Rt. Hon Brandon Lee MP, and the Under Secretary of State at DCLG, The Rt Hon Don Foster MP, urging the Government to close the loophole
that allows pubs to be converted or demolished without planning permission so that any change of use or proposal for demolition is subject to planning approval.

Write to the three local MPs urging them to sign Early Day Motions 1035 and 1171 which condemn the action of the British Beer and Pub Association in seeking a judicial review of pro-pub planning policies adopted by Cambridge City Council and McDonalds in seeking pub sites for conversion to restaurants.”

In accordance with Procedural Note 10.11 g of the Council’s Constitution, during the debate Councillor McDonald MOVED that the matter be referred to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

Councillor J Dillon as MOVER of the Motion and Councillor Heffernan as SECONDER of the Motion both gave their consent.

On being put to the vote the MOTION to refer the item to Overview & Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED – That –**

The matter be referred to Overview and Scrutiny for consideration with the proviso that all Members who wish to take part in the discussions be allowed to do so.

**Motion 2**

Councillor Harkness MOVED and Councillor McCann SECONDED the following Motion:

“This Council notes the provisions of the Localism Act that permits voluntary and community groups to ‘stop the clock’ on the rapid sale of properties valued by the host community.

Using Community Right to Bid powers, such groups can nominate an ‘asset of community value’ (such as a pub, post office, or village shop). This prevents the commercial sale of such assets for six months to enable communities to put together a bid of their own.

This Council also notes the recent establishment of the Community Shares Unit. Backed by the Department of Communities and Local Government, this unit assists communities to raise community-backed finance to buy such assets.

This Council resolves to:

Develop a register of ‘assets of community value’ based on nominations from community leaders and voluntary and community groups

Promote awareness of the Right to Bid provisions, the register and the help available from the Community Shares Unit, via the Council’s website and at District Partnerships.”
In accordance with Procedural Note 10.11 g, of the Council’s Constitution during the debate Councillor McDonald MOVED that the matter be referred to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration. Councillor Harkness as MOVER of the Motion and Councillor McCann as SECONDER of the Motion both gave their consent.

On being put to the vote the MOTION to refer the item to Overview & Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** – That –

The matter be referred to Overview and Scrutiny for consideration with the proviso that all Members who wish to take part in the discussions be allowed to do so.

**TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING JOINT AUTHORITY AND OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS AND THE RELEVANT SPOKESPERSONS TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Minutes of the Joint Authorities were submitted as follows:

- **Police and Crime Panel** 25th January 2013
- **Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority**
  - 14th February 2013
  - 21st March 2013
- **Transport for Greater Manchester Committee**
  - 11th January 2013
  - 15th February 2013
  - 15th March 2013
- **Unity Partnership Board** 9th January 2013
- **Peak District National Park Authority** 1st February 2013
- **Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Executive**
  - 25th January 2013
  - 22nd February 2013
- **Greater Manchester Combined Authority**
  - 25th January 2013
  - 22nd February 2013
- **Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority**
  - 23rd November 2012
  - 8th February 2013

The following questions and observations were raised in relation to the Joint Authority Minutes:

1. Councillor Blyth referred to the Minutes of the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority held on 14th February 2013 – Page 84 – Minute 79 – Chief Officers Activity Report (Quarter 3 – 1st October to 31st December 2012) – Operational Incidents and queried if the “Drive to Arrive” policy was still in place. He referred to the fatal accident which had occurred recently in Manchester.
Councillor Williams advised that the Policy was still in existence – it had been introduced in 2005 and accidents were minimal.

2. Councillor Thompson referred to the Minutes of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee held on 11th January 2013 – Page 94 – Minute 12/77 and asked for an assurance that the matters that members of the public were currently complaining about, in particular with relation to the reliability of Metrolink – people were being made late for work because of trams not turning up and secondly the ticket prices. Can the travelling public be assured that these matters will be dealt with?

Councillor Dean replied that there had been occasional difficulties which had been mainly due to the infrastructure in the centre of Manchester; this was due to be completed shortly. Reliability had increased significantly and at peak times was almost at capacity. The next stage would be to extend the trams that come in to Oldham to accommodate more passengers. This has been an enormous scheme which has far exceeded expectations; every scheme has teething problems and Councillor Dean was looking forward to the opening of the Town Centre phase.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The Joint Authority Minutes, as listed above, be noted.
2. The questions and observations on the minutes and the responses

16 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014/2015 (ADDITIONAL)

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer which outlined the final tranche of the Administration’s budget proposals for 2014/15. The report detailed the Administration’s further proposed budget savings; building upon the reports which had been agreed by Council in December 2012 and February 2013 and took into account of the effects of the Local Government Finance Settlement and other matters which had resulted in an increase in the budget gap from the £12.976m already approved for 2014/15, by a further £7.528m.

Opposition Members commended the Administration for dealing with the budget in this way but expressed concerns with the proposals which related to the reduction in costs associated with the Terms & Conditions of Employment for the workforce in relation to bank holiday remuneration and sickness entitlements. Concerns were expressed that this could be a departure from National terms and Conditions.

Councillor McMahon responded that this was the most forward thinking budget that had ever been produced and this would not be a departure from National Terms & Conditions.

RESOLVED - That –
1. The options as detailed in summary at Appendix A to the report and in detail at Appendix B to the report, towards the savings target for consultation, where needed, be approved.
2. The results of the consultation and Equality Impact Assessments, where appropriate, be noted and submitted to a later PVFM, for commendation to Cabinet for final approval prior to approval of the final budget by Council in March 2014.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION CAPITAL FUNDING
2013/2014 AND 2014/2015

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer which advised of the announcement of Department for Education (DfE) capital grant funding for 2013/14 and 2014/15 and the implications for the capital programme.

RESOLVED – That –

1. The change in the capital programme to incorporate ring-fenced 2013/14 Devolved Formula Capital grant of £537,580, Maintenance capital grant for 2013/14 of £2,301,667 and Basic Need capital grant of £1,461,114 split equally over 2013/14 and 2014/15 be approved.
2. The use of the Basic Need capital grant resource to support the Council capital priority of increasing school capacity that was identified in the 2013/17 capital strategy be approved.
3. The initiation of work to bid for targeted basic need grant subject to detailed officer and Member review prior to submission to the DfE be approved.

HONORARY FREEMAN OF THE BOROUGH - REPORT OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor which sought approval for the nomination of the Right Honourable Michael Meacher MP to be considered for the title of Honorary Freeman of the Borough.

RESOLVED – That-

1. In accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council nominate the Right Honorable Michael Meacher MP to receive the title of Honorary Freeman of the Borough in recognition of his outstanding service and dedication over 43 years to the local community as Member of parliament for Oldham West and Oldham West and Royton.

THE RESULT OF THE ROYTON SOUTH BY-ELECTION AND REVIEW OF THE COMPOSITION OF POLITICAL GROUPS

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor which detailed the results of the recent Royton South By-Election and the subsequent review of the composition of political groups that had resulted.

RESOLVED – That –

1. The result of the recent By-Election in Royton South be noted.
2. The composition of the political groups, as outlined in paragraph 2.1 of the report, be noted.
3. The allocation of seats to the political groups, as detailed in the report, be noted.
4. The political balance rules be waived to allow cross party representation on the Selection Committee for the Municipal Year 2012/13 with the membership being 3 Labour Councillors, 1 Liberal Democrat Councillor and 1 Conservative Councillor. This arrangement in relation to the Selection Committee will not affect any duty imposed by virtue of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 on a relevant Authority or Committee to review the representation of different political groups on the Selection Committee and accordingly, such arrangements to cease to have effect when any such duty arises.
5. Any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and the spokesperson for the Conservative Group.

20 CHIEF OFFICER REMUNERATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive requesting approval of Chief Officer remuneration. Members were informed that as a result of on-going implementation of the new organisational framework and the resultant restructuring at the most senior levels within the Council a number of appointments had been made by the Selection Committee, which, in accordance with the Council’s Pay Policy statement, require approval from full Council.

RESOLVED – That –

1. Approval be given to a salary of £100k per annum being applied to the following posts:
   a) Director of Adults and Children’s Services
   b) Director of Development and Infrastructure.

21 ADOPTION OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER MINERALS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director Neighbourhoods requesting Council to adopt the Greater Manchester Minerals Development Plan Document, which had been produced for AGMA by the Minerals and waste Planning Unit, as part of the Borough’s Statutory Development Plan.

RESOLVED – That –

1. The Greater Manchester Minerals Development Plan Document, together with the main and minor modifications as recommended by the Inspector, be approved, with effect from 26th April 2013.
2. The existing Proposals Map be amended to reflect the adoption of the Minerals Plan.

22 MUNICIPAL CALENDAR - REPORT OF THE BOROUGH
SOLICITOR
Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor which set out the revised calendar of meetings for the 2013 -2015 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED – That –

1. Subject to the date of the Budget Council 2014 being amended from 26th February 2014 to 5th March 2014, the current version of the Council’s Calendar of Meetings, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, for 2013 -15 be approved.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL
Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor informing Members of actions from previous Council meetings.

RESOLVED – That –

1. The report be noted.

The meeting started at 5.45 pm and ended at 9.50 pm