

OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

10TH OCTOBER 2007

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Wingate)
Councillors:

Ahmad	Heffernan	McMahon
Akhtar	Hibbert	Miah
Alcock	Hindle	Pendlebury
Ali	Hulme	Quinn
Anchor	Hussain	Qumer
Ball	Iqbal	Rogers
Barrow	Jabbar	Roughley
Bashforth	Johnson	Salamat
Beeley	D Jones	D Shaw
Bell	J. Jones	G Shaw
Buckley	Judge	Stanton
Butterworth	Knowles	Stretton
Chadderton	Larkin	Sutcliffe
Dawson	Lord	Sykes
Dean	McArdle	Thompson
A J Dillon	McCann	Uddin
P Dillon	McDonald	UrRehman
Harrison	McLaren	Wheeler
		Wrigglesworth

M45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Blyth, Greenwood, Knox and Sedgwick.

M46 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18th July 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to an error in M34 – Joint Authority Minutes ‘Councillor Anchor’ in paragraph 3 to be amended to read ‘Councillor Knowles’.

M47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

M48 URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor announced that she would adjourn for 10 minutes at an appropriate point in the proceedings, to allow a number of Councillors to break their fast.

M49 MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor announced that with reference to M61 - Saddleworth and Lees By-Election Results, she would like to take the opportunity to welcome Councillor Barbara Beeley to the Council.

M50 PETITIONS

RESOLVED - That the list of petitions received since the last meeting of Council be noted as follows:-

Executive Director, Environmental Services

1. Traffic Calming – Osborne Street, Oldham
(received 6th September 2007) (27 signatures)
2. Rights of Way Issue – Ashton Road East, Failsworth
(received 17th September) (8 signatures)

Executive Director, Adult and Community Services

1. Development of Crossley Estate – Against Provision of Access from Broadway to Denton Lane
(received 24th July 2007) (399 signatures)

Executive Director, Regeneration

1. Congestion Charging Proposals
(received 19th August 2007) (92 signatures)
2. Re-Housing Improvement Grant
(received 17th September 2007) (22 signatures)
3. Regeneration Scheme – Glodwick Area
(received 17th September 2007) (97 signatures)

M51 TOPICAL ISSUES AGREED BY THE MAYOR

There were no topical issues agreed by the Mayor for this meeting.

M52 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following public question was received from Mr B. Matthews. Mr R. Hicks a representative for Mr B. Matthews was in attendance to ask the question:-

“I have been asked by the Hon Secretary of Saddleworth Rangers ARLFC, Mr Colin Clare, to communicate our dismay at the condition of the Churchill Playing fields which are used by many of our sixteen teams ranging from under 8s to Open age and including girls' teams. If you were to attend any of the matches, or the training nights, you would be alarmed to see the conditions under which these enthusiastic youngster have to play.

Over the years I have travelled around the north west and seen the far superior facilities which other authorities provide for their youngsters. Recently, even though the weather has been relatively mild, we have had to use facilities in Tameside because we have been unable to play or train at Churchill because of the condition of the pitches. Many

parents are understandably reluctant to let their youngsters train/play in such conditions and some youngsters will be lost to us and this at a time when the government is telling us how young persons need to engage in sports.

This, as you are probably aware, is a long standing problem. We cannot just wait and hope for mild, dry winters which will gloss over a deep rooted problem. We as a Club are dedicated to providing facilities for the youth of the area and as such have asked that we be allowed to purchase the land we lease from Oldham MBC at Shaw Hall Bank Road so that we have more control over the development of sporting facilities at the Club. To help us in this objective it would be advantageous to all concerned if the maintenance of your facilities are Churchill are kept up to the required standard so that we don't have to go out of the authority at additional cost to the Club, to find suitable facilities. Your views would be appreciated”.

Councillor Heffernan and Councillor Hibbert gave a verbal response to the submitted Question.

In accordance with the Constitution a written response would be sent to Mr B. Matthews within five days of the date of this meeting.

M53 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE LAST MEETING

There was no outstanding business.

M54 OPPOSITION BUSINESS

Councillor Anchor MOVED and Councillor Heffernan SECONDED that:-

“1) The Council expresses its concern that the Green Paper does not have a clear regional dimension and is focused on southern issues and the perceived need for large scale development in that area.

2) The Council is concerned that although the Green Paper talks about so called “growth points” in the north of England, there is a lack of clarity concerning policy for areas which are not considered to be “growth points.”

3) The Council notes that Government policy remains rooted in the assumption that home ownership is the “preferred” form of tenure, even though it is clearly not appropriate for everyone.

4) The Council notes that there is no positive mention of the role of the private rented sector as a tenure option.

5) The Council is disappointed that there is an unclear view of the role of areas requiring urban regeneration and is concerned that urban regeneration is seen as a separate issue to “growth”.

6) The Council instructs the Chief Executive to convey its concerns to the Housing Minister, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and to the Borough's Members of Parliament.

7) The Council wishes to see a Housing strategy which focuses on the needs and aspirations of the north of England, as well as the south east. Such a strategy should integrate the need for regeneration with the supply of affordable housing. Affordable housing supply should relate to all tenures – owner occupation, social renting and private renting”.

AMENDMENT TO OPPOSITION BUSINESS

Councillor Dean MOVED and Councillor Harrison SECONDED the following amendment:-

“AMENDMENT 1

Paragraph 5). Delete “is disappointed” and insert “notes”.

AMENDMENT 2

Paragraph 6) Delete all after “concerns “ and insert “in response to the consultation on the Green Paper which closes on 15th October, 2007”.

AMENDMENT 3

Paragraph 7) Line 1 Delete “strategy” and insert “policy”. Line 3 Delete “strategy” and insert “policy”.

Revised resolution should read:

Housing Green Paper

1) The Council expresses its concern that the Green Paper does not have a clear regional dimension and is focused on southern issues and the perceived need for large scale development in that area.

2) The Council is concerned that although the Green paper talks about so called “growth points” in the north of England, there is a lack of clarity concerning policy for areas which are not considered to be “growth points”.

3) The Council notes that Government policy remains rooted in the assumption that home ownership is the “preferred” form of tenure, even though it is clearly not appropriate for everyone.

4) The Council notes that there is no positive mention of the role of the private rented sector as a tenure option.

5) The Council notes that there is an unclear view of the role of areas requiring urban regeneration and is concerned that urban regeneration is seen as a separate issue to “growth”.

6) The Council instructs the Chief Executive to convey its concerns in response to the consultation on the Green Paper which closes on 15th October, 2007.

7) The Council wishes to see a Housing policy which focuses on the needs and aspirations of the north of England, as well as the south east. Such a policy should integrate the need for regeneration with the supply of affordable housing. Affordable housing supply should relate to all tenures – owner occupation, social renting and private renting”.

Councillor Anchor accepted the amendment.

Councillor Stanton responded.

Councillor Dean responded.

Councillor Uddin responded.

On a vote being taken, the amendment was unanimously CARRIED.

Councillor Pendlebury spoke on the Substantive Motion.

Councillor D. Jones responded.

RESOLVED: That the Motion, as amended, be CARRIED.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes at this point in the proceedings.

M55 JOINT AUTHORITY MINUTES

Minutes of Joint Authorities were submitted as follows:-

Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (Council)	29 June 2007 (Annual)
Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority	22 June 2007 (Annual) 22 June 2007 27 July 2007
Greater Manchester Police	15 June 2007 (Annual) 20 July 2007
Greater Manchester Fire and Civil Defence Authority	7 June 2007 (Annual) 2 August 2007
Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority	15 June 2007 (Annual) 29 June 2007 20 July 2007
Oldham Partnership Executive Group	19 July 2007

The following questions in respect of the Joint Authority Minutes were asked at the meeting:-

Councillor Anchor spoke in respect of Minute 16 of the Greater Manchester Police Authority Minutes of 15 June 2007 and asked if Councillor Ur-Rehman could inform the Council how many dispersal orders are currently operating in Greater Manchester, how many dispersal orders have been operating during 2006/07 and what work had the Police Authority undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of dispersal orders in Greater Manchester. He commented that there was a dispersal order in the Waterhead Ward to help assist with dealing with problems in the area on a Friday and Saturday night, he expressed his concern that he felt the Police do not have enough resources to implement the dispersal orders, as the Police have other incidents that they are required to attend, and the dispersal orders just move the trouble to other areas.

Councillor Buckley spoke in respect of Minute 16 of the Greater Manchester Police Authority Minutes of 15 June 2007 he commented on the performance comparison statistics for the period June 2006 to May 2007 compared with June 2005 to May 2006 as the figures relating to vehicle crime and burglary had not improved. He also expressed his concern that the Police only respond to 999 calls, and the staff who answer the calls are not aware of the local areas. He also felt that a stronger police presence is required within the borough, and the majority of residents within the borough were dissatisfied with the current police service.

Councillor AJ Dillon spoke in respect of Minute PTA/07/182 of the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority Minutes of 27 July 2007 and took the opportunity to thank the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority for the reinstatement of the 428 bus service. He also thanked the relevant Councillors and members of the public for their support in getting the service reinstated.

Councillor Dean spoke in respect of Minute 16 of the Greater Manchester Police Authority Minutes of 15 June 2007, he stated that crime within the borough had reduced and there was currently more Police on duty than in 1997. He commented that the Police have a hard job and they require the co-operation of the public and that the Council are working with the Police to assist in the reduction of Anti Social Behaviour.

The relevant Spokespersons responded as follows:-

Councillor D. Jones spoke in response to the question raised relating to Minute 16 of the Greater Manchester Police Authority Minutes of 15 June 2007, he took the opportunity to thank the Police on behalf of the Council for their hard work in implementing dispersal orders in certain parts of the borough.

Councillor Ur-Rehman spoke in response to the question raised relating to Minute 16 of the Greater Manchester Police Authority Minutes of 15 June 2007, he stated that a response would be sought to the technical question asked by Councillor Anchor and circulated accordingly. He took the opportunity to thank Councillor Dean for his comments relating to the crime statistics. He commented that Greater Manchester Police was working towards reducing crime throughout Greater Manchester.

Councillor Sutcliffe spoke in response to the observation raised relating to Minute PTA/07/182 of the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority Minutes of 27 July 2007, he thanked Councillor AJ Dillon for his comments relating to the reinstatement of the 428 bus service.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes and comments be noted.

M56 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

There were no written questions to Cabinet Members submitted.

M57 CABINET MINUTES

The following Cabinet Minutes were submitted:-

- a) 16 July 2007;
- b) 30 July 2007;
- c) 3 September 2007;
- d) 17 September 2007;
- e) Urgent Key Decisions taken by Cabinet from 1 July to 30 September 2007.

Councillor Thompson spoke in respect of Item 10 of the Cabinet Minutes of 16 July 2007. She expressed her concern regarding various aspects of the sites that had been identified for Building Schools for the Future (BSF). She commented that parents had concerns regarding the sports facilities for the schools and whether these be allocated on a split sites therefore making children travel to the facilities. She also commented that parents were disappointed with the last consultation meetings that took place regarding Building Schools for the Future, and these should be improved for future meetings.

Councillor Sykes spoke in respect of Item 11 of the Cabinet Minutes of 30 July 2007. He stated that he was pleased that the Council had adopted a Corporate Property Strategy, as he felt that it was important that the Council knew the value of its property and that space is used to its full potential.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

M58 CABINET MEMBER COMMENTS

Cabinet Members responded to the comments made in M57 above as follows:-

Councillor McDonald reported that consultation meetings would take

place with the primary sector on the revised proposals for BSF. He commented that the Orb Mill site had been identified for the academy and that all Councillors would receive a document that would outline the approved sites for BSF.

Councillor Hibbert thanked Councillor Sykes for his support of the Corporate Property Strategy.

Councillor D. Jones stated that the Orb Mill site had been an issue for the residents of the Waterhead Ward for some years and the acquisition of the site would assist in the regeneration of the area. He commented that this was a timely decision and all Councillors should join together to support BSF.

M59 NOTICE OF MOTION

1. Councillor Sutcliffe MOVED and Councillor Hibbert SECONDED that:-

“This Council congratulates the Government for introducing free off-peak bus travel for the over 60’s and disabled people in England. We are also delighted that GMPTE and AGMA have agreed to extend this provision in Greater Manchester to trams and trains.

Council now calls on the Government to give support to families by examining the possibility of introducing a national concessionary bus travel scheme for children and young people in full time education.

Council asks that the Government consider the following 3 options:-

i) The introduction of a standard 50p bus fare for children and young people in full time education across England;

ii) An acceptance of a long term objective of free bus fares for those same children and young people; and

iii) An extension of the ‘Yellow Bus Scheme’ to all secondary schools”.

Councillor Knowles spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sutcliffe responded.

On a vote being taken, the Motion was unanimously CARRIED.

RESOLVED: That the Motion, be CARRIED.

2. Councillor Lord MOVED and Councillor Stanton SECONDED that:-

“Concern is expressed about the recent announcement to close the Community Centres at Springhead and Stoneleigh and at the impact the loss of those facilities will have on their local communities.

In addition, the failure to consult with the community before a closure announcement was made and, the manner in which the decision was communicated should be utterly deplored.

This Council therefore resolves to:-

i) Withdraw the recent closure announcement in respect of the facilities at Springhead and Stoneleigh; and

ii) Instruct the Executive Director Adult and Community Services to commence immediate discussions to examine the possibility of the communities of Springhead and Derker operating the facilities for and, on behalf of, their communities”.

Councillor Beeley responded.

Councillor McDonald spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Harrison spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Hibbert spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Lord responded.

On a vote being taken, the Motion was LOST by 30 votes against, 26 votes in favour.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be LOST.

3. At this point the Mayor MOVED that consideration of the third Motion be deferred to the next ordinary meeting of Council.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the Closure of Post Offices, be deferred to the next meeting of Council.

M60 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Councillor D Jones MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services which sought approval to amend the Council’s Constitution as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the following amendments to the Council’s Constitution, be approved:-

(a) the current Contract Procedure Rules be deleted and replaced with those detailed in the report;

(b) the Whistleblowing Policy be amended to include the following and insert as paragraph 3.10 in the Policy:-

“The Council recognises that there are instances when an employee will feel legally and morally obliged to report a very serious matter, such as an assault in a care home, at once to the police. It is desirable that they also report the matter to management but employees are not expected to put themselves in breach of the law, and are entitled to the same protection as if they had raised the matter through Council managers”.

M61 SADDLEWORTH WEST AND LEES BY-ELECTION – 5TH JULY 2007

RESOLVED: That the election of Councillor Barbara Beeley at the By-Election held on 5th July 2007 in respect of Saddleworth West and Lees Ward, be noted.

M62 REVISED MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES FOR 2007/08

RESOLVED: That the following amendments to the Membership of Committees for 2007/08, be approved:-

(a) That Councillor Beeley be appointed as substitute to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to replace Councillor McArdle, and the order of substitutes now be as follows:-

Councillor Knox
Councillor Stanton
Councillor Beeley
Councillor Uddin

(b) That Councillor Beeley be appointed to the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee to replace Councillor Heffernan.

(c) That Councillor Heffernan be appointed as 1st substitute to the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee and Councillor Uddin be removed from the Committee as a substitute.

(d) That Councillor Beeley be appointed as substitute to the Ethnic Minority Panel to replace Councillor Wingate, and the order of substitutes now be as follows:-

Councillor J. Dillon
Councillor Beeley
Councillor Alcock
Councillor Sedgwick

(e) That Councillor Beeley be appointed as substitute to the Voluntary Sector Panel to replace Councillor D. Shaw.

(f) That Councillor D. Shaw be appointed as 3rd substitute to the Voluntary Sector Panel and Councillor Stanton be removed from the Panel as a substitute.

The meeting opened at 6.00 p.m. and closed at 8.30 p.m.