

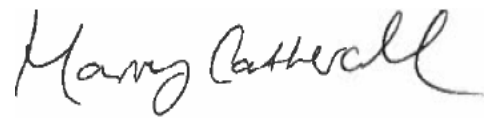
# Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting**  
**Thursday 24 October 2024**

**OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

- 4 To Receive the Report of the Appointments Committee (Pages 1 - 4)  
Report attached

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Harry Catherall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

**Harry Catherall**  
**Chief Executive**



## Report to Council

# Chief Executive Working Arrangements

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council

**Officer Contact:** Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy & Performance

**Report Author:** Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy & Performance

**24 October 2024**

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On behalf of Appointments Committee, this report is moved by Cllr Arooj Shah as Leader of the Council and Chair of the committee, and seconded by Cllr Howard Sykes, Leader of the Main Opposition.

### Recommendations

Appointments committee recommends to Full Council that subject to Tameside Council accepting the proposed Greater Manchester package of support, council;

- Approve the increase in working hours for Harry Catherall, Chief Executive, from four days to five and the appropriate salary implications, with no other changes to his existing terms and conditions.
- Enter into a secondment agreement with Tameside Council for the Chief Executive of Oldham Council to serve as Interim Chief Executive at Tameside Council for four days per week, subject to review after six months.
- Note the internal recruitment process conducted to identify a suitable Acting Chief Executive.
- Appoint Shelley Kipling as Acting Chief Executive, subject to review after six months

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 Oldham Council, as part of a broader support package from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, has agreed in principle with the Mayor of Greater Manchester to assist Tameside Council in stabilising services and supporting their workforce.
- 1.2 Tameside Council has been facing significant challenges, including ongoing issues with their Children's Services and the recent resignation of their Chief Executive and senior political leadership.
- 1.3 Over recent years, Oldham Council has undergone a significant improvement journey, resulting in a refocused and highly skilled management board, a 'Good' Ofsted result for its children's services, and a strong LGA peer review assessment. Consequently, Oldham

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Council was approached to provide support as part of the broader Greater Manchester package of support

- 1.4 A key part of the Greater Manchester support package, and subject to Tameside Council's acceptance, is a proposal that Harry Catherall is seconded to Tameside Council as their Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service for four days per week.
- 1.5 To complement this support package, additional assistance will be available from the other nine authorities and the Combined Authority, including support from the Greater Manchester Director of Children Services network and the Lead for Children and Young People in the Combined Authority.
- 1.6 This innovative approach allows Greater Manchester to support its members ahead of further devolution and work towards single settlement arrangements, ensuring the status and sustainability of all ten authorities.
- 1.7 Appointments committee convened on 21 October and made the recommendations above for consideration and approval by council.

## **2 Current and proposed arrangements**

- 2.1 Currently, Chief Executive, Harry Catherall works four days per week and is available on an on-call 24/7 basis.
- 2.2 As part of these new arrangements, Harry Catherall, will increase his working days to five days per week (full-time). Harry will be seconded to Tameside Council as their Interim Chief Executive 4 days per week and will continue in his substantive role at Oldham one-day per week. He will remain Head of Paid Service for Oldham Council.
- 2.3 A secondment agreement will be drawn up to reflect this. Tameside Council will cover the full, four-day salary costs including national insurance and any pension arrangements.
- 2.4 To ensure Oldham Council continues to have strong leadership, we'll appoint an Acting Chief Executive from within the Management Board group.
- 2.5 As Chief Executive Harry, in his one day per week at Oldham Council will support these new arrangements and the Acting Chief Executive as they provide leadership to the organisation.
- 2.6 Arrangements for the Health Place Lead, which is a role currently held by the Chief Executive will be reviewed following the appointment of the Acting Chief Executive.
- 2.7 This arrangement will be reviewed in 6 months time.
- 2.8 This acting-up arrangement aligns with our ambition to nurture internal talent, a strategy that has proven successful in recent months, as demonstrated by the appointment of the Strategic Director for Children's Services.
- 2.9 Several Greater Manchester authorities are currently undergoing changes to their senior management teams with three local authorities due to recruit a new Chief Executive in what is clearly a challenging market. However, the improvements made in recent years have resulted in a strong calibre of internal management board members who are capable of stepping into the Chief Executive role.
- 2.10 Appointments committee voted to agree the working arrangements.

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- 2.11 Chief Executive, Harry Catherall will remain at Head of Paid Service. These duties will be delegated to Acting Chief Executive, Shelley Kipling in his absence.

### **3 Recruitment of an Acting Chief Executive**

- 3.1 An expression of interest processes, restricted to Management Board members started on 11 October 24 and was run by Wendy Jackson, Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources. Members of Management Board were asked to submit their expression of interests by 5pm on 16 October.
- 3.2 Appointments committee convened on 21 October to consider the expressions of interest received and interview the candidates. A total of three candidates were interviewed and all were deemed appointable on their own merits and are future Chief Executive material. This is testament to the calibre of the leadership in the organisation.
- 3.3 Following interviews, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend to full council the appointment of Shelley Kipling to the role of Acting Chief Executive subject to review after six months in line with Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.
- 3.4 The Acting Chief Executive will be appointed at the bottom of the Chief Executive salary scale - £169,125 (FTE).

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The secondment agreement with Tameside Council to cover the full, four-day salary costs would be approximately £168k.
- 4.2 The new arrangement of one additional day for Harry Catherall, the cost of the appointment of the Acting Chief Executive, and the income received from the secondment agreement would generate a saving of between £75k and £123k excluding any requirement to backfill senior posts as part of the new working arrangements, which is not intended. *(Lee Walsh, Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Management))*

### **5 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The role of Chief Executive position is a statutory Chief Officer role and holds the statutory responsibility of Head of Paid Service as defined by section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, responsible for reporting to Council on the Council's functions.
- 5.2 The report outlines that in the absence of the Chief Executive, the Acting Chief Executive will take up these duties. The Chief Executive is also the Electoral Registration Officer and the Returning Officer for local, regional and national elections and is Place Based lead of the Integrated Care arrangements with the NHS.
- 5.3 The Council's Constitution provides that the appointment of the Chief Executive, is a Council function. Appointments Committee is responsible for agreeing the process for appointing a new Chief Executive and making recommendations to council for consideration. *(Alex Bougateg - Interim Borough Solicitor)*

### **6 Human Resources**

- 6.1 The acting-up role has been advertised and communicated to the entire senior management team to apply via an 'Expressions of Interest'. Candidates were asked to outline the skills and experiences which made them suitable for this role. The closing date was Wednesday

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16 October at 5pm. Interviews were held on Monday 21 October with the Appointments Committee.

- 6.2 A secondment agreement between Oldham Council and Tameside Council will be put in place as part of the GM support package arrangements in line with LGA and ACAS guidelines. (*Wendy Jackson – Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources*)