

Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting
Wednesday 9th April 2025
(Supplementary Papers)**

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

**To: ALL MEMBERS OF OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL,
CIVIC CENTRE, OLDHAM**

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

- 10 Notice of Administration Business (Pages 1 - 6)

Amendments to Motion1 (HMO's) submitted by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat groups

- 11 Notice of Opposition Business (Pages 7 - 12)

Amendments to Motion 2 (WASPI Women – submitted by the Labour Group) and to Motion 3 (Local Government review – submitted by the Conservative Group)

- 12 Update on Actions from Council (Pages 13 - 26)

Appendix 1 (Actions list) and Appendix 7 (letter from Jess Phillips MP) are attached



**Shelley Kipling
Chief Executive**

Conservative Amendment to Labour Motion 1

Proposer: Councillor Beth Sharp

Seconder: Councillor Lewis Quigg

- This Council will immediately implement a Borough wide Article 4 Direction which would require planning permission for a change of use.

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[Proposed: Sam Al-Hamdani](#)

[Seconded: Mark Kenyon](#)

This Council notes with concern the increasing number of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Oldham and the impact this has on local communities, housing standards, and infrastructure. While HMOs can provide an important source of affordable accommodation, their proliferation in certain areas has led to issues including overcrowding, pressure on local services, and a decline in housing quality. In the past 5 years the number of licensed HMOs in Oldham has almost doubled.

[This Council also notes that](#)

- [on 1 November 2023, it resolved to direct officers to “collect and collate evidence on the number of HMOs in each ward across the Borough, identifying clusters and report back to the relevant cabinet member if any case can be made for an Article 4 direction”.](#)
- ~~[This Council further notes that](#)~~ current national planning regulations allow certain HMOs (Class C4, up to six residents) to be established without the need for planning permission. This limits the ability of local authorities to manage their spread and ensure they are appropriately located and regulated.
- [no figures are currently available on the number of HMOs in the borough – only for the number of licenced HMOs \(which meet one definition\) or for HMOs which have received planning permission \(which meet a separate definition\).](#)
- [there are standard tests which allow the Council to define whether any building is an HMO, as defined under the Housing Act 2004.](#)
- [Councillors have been told that they cannot be informed of forthcoming HMOs for licensing, due to data privacy.](#)
- [Councillors have no right to make a representation to the Council on HMO licence applications and renewals.](#)
- [the Council has let licenses for HMOs lapse on multiple occasions, sometimes for up to a year.](#)

This Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Chancellor of an additional £2 billion for social and affordable housing. This funding provides an opportunity to address the shortage of genuinely affordable homes and to ensure that people in Oldham have access to safe, secure, and high-quality housing.

This Council calls on the new Labour Government to reverse the changes introduced by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in 2010 which removed the requirement for planning permission for small houses of multiple occupation.

This council further requests that the Chief Executive writes to the borough's 3 MPs and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, asking for their support in reversing the aforementioned changes.

[This Council calls on the Cabinet Member responsible to provide a report back to Council at the soonest opportunity on the work that has been carried out to establish whether a case can be made for an Article 4 direction; to continue efforts to establish that case, and to report back on a regular basis.](#)

[This Council will wherever possible ensure that any building being used as an HMO is defined as such, with a view to ensuring that any work towards an Article 4 direction is provided with the best available information.](#)

[This Council will provide information on forthcoming HMO applications, with any personal information removed.](#)

[The Council will establish a right for Councillors to make representations to the Council on HMO licence applications and renewals.](#)

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Seconded: Mark Kenyon

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- no figures are currently available on the number of HMOs in the borough – only for the number of licenced HMOs (which meet one definition) or for HMOs which have received planning permission (which meet a separate definition).
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Amendment: Compensation for WASPI

Moved by: Cllr Holly Harrison

Seconded by: Cllr Umar Nasheen

Insert

Delete

The 1995 and 2011 Pension Acts saw the State Pension age for women rise from 60 to 66, the 2011 Act being supported by the Coalition Government and steered through Parliament by the Pensions Minister, Liberal Democrat MP, Stephen Webb.

Unfortunately, but the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consistently failed to adequately communicate these changes from 2011 despite the Act bringing forward to November 2018 an increased pensions age for women to 65. As a result, tens of thousands of women were plunged into poverty. A recent survey by the WASPI Campaign of its members found that one-in-four affected women struggled to buy food and one third fell into debt. This was an avoidable scandal.

A landmark Ombudsman report in March 2024 told the Government to pay compensation and apologise to 3.6 million, women born in the 1950 's who were affected by the lack of communication in relation to their State Pension age. The report concluded ministers from the Coalition and Conservative Governments failed to properly notify those impacted by the changes.

However, the DWP – under the new Labour Government - has indicated it does not accept the findings of the report. Compensation to up to 3.5m women ranging from £1,000 to £2,950 each would cost between £3.5bn and £10.5bn. A 2006 survey found that 90% of affected women knew about the planned changes in pension age.

Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) calls for fair and fast compensation for the financial and emotional hardship caused by DWP failures. WASPI argues for the highest level of compensation for the worst affected, i.e., women who had the shortest notice of the longest increase to their state pension. The worst affected women received just 18 months' notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age. WASPI continues to call for: All Members of Parliament to support the urgent delivery of fair and fast compensation to all those affected; and compensation scheme proposals should be brought before MPs to vote on as quickly as possible. However, the Ombudsman's report only addressed the issue of communicating the planned changes and did not recommend compensation for the change itself.

This Council notes that more than 11,600 WASPI women across Oldham Borough stand to lose out on compensation after the Labour Government decided to ignore the independent ombudsman's assessment and go against their long-held policy to support WASPI women. It is estimated that the compensation owed to impacted women across Oldham Borough would be a minimum of £11,642,500.

This Council notes that previous Labour Leaders of this Council have referred to the situation facing WASPI women as "an injustice" and as recently as March 2023, Oldham Labour were still campaigning to put that injustice right.

This Council also notes that despite the parlous state of the public finances and scorched earth policy pursued by the previous Conservative Government, the current Labour Government has committed to the 'triple' lock on the state pension which means the state pensions is rising by £470 a year in April 2025.

This Council reasserts its support for the WASPI women and ~~regrets the previous Conservative Government's delay in responding to the Ombudsman's report leaving the decision of~~ incoming Labour government to ~~decide whether the~~ ~~ignore an~~ independent ombudsman's assessment that compensation should be paid to them.

Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions ~~Right Hon~~ Liz Kendall MP asking her to look again at this decision.

~~Council further resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the three MPs who represent Oldham Borough as well as the Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, calling on them to publicly support justice for WASPI women.~~

Amended motion to read:

The 1995 and 2011 Pension Acts saw the State Pension age for women rise from 60 to 66, the 2011 Act being supported by the Coalition Government and steered through Parliament by the Pensions Minister, Liberal Democrat MP, Stephen Webb.

Unfortunately, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consistently failed to adequately communicate these changes from 2011 despite the Act bringing forward to November 2018 an increased pensions age for women to 65. As a result, tens of thousands of women were plunged into poverty. A recent survey by the WASPI Campaign of its members found that one-in-four affected women struggled to buy food and one third fell into debt. This was an avoidable scandal.

A landmark Ombudsman report in March 2024 told the Government to pay compensation and apologise to 3.6 million, women born in the 1950s who were affected by the lack of communication in relation to their State Pension age. The report concluded ministers from the Coalition and Conservative Governments failed to properly notify those impacted by the changes.

However, the DWP – under the new Labour Government - has indicated it does not accept the findings of the report. Compensation to up to 3.5m women ranging from £1,000 to £2,950 each would cost between £3.5bn and £10.5bn. A 2006 survey found that 90% of affected women knew about the planned changes in pension age.

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This Council reasserts its support for the WASPI women and regrets the previous Conservative Government's delay in responding to the Ombudsman's report leaving the incoming Labour government to decide whether the independent ombudsman's assessment that compensation should be paid to them.

Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Right Hon Liz Kendall MP asking her to look again at this decision.

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Conservative Group Motion - Local Government Review

Council – 9th April 2025

AMENDMENT TO CONSERVATIVE MOTION

Proposer: Councillor Lewis Quigg

Seconder: Councillor Beth Sharp

- 1) Formally write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England inviting them to carry out a review of:
 - A. The number of councillors needed at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, but with a specific focus of reducing members.
 - B. Formally request that they look at reducing the number of Councillors by 20. This will save £220,000 per annum.
 - C. The warding arrangements in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council with any change or reduction in Councillors to better reflect their makeup as well as reviewing the electoral cycle.

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Actions from Extraordinary Council (2 meetings) on 12th February 2025


Actions / Issue	Responsible officer	Update	Completed? (✓, ●)
<p>Opposition Motion (Conservative) -Request for a National Public Inquiry that Investigates the Scourge of Child Sexual Exploitation. (as amended)</p> <p>This Council RESOLVES to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 2. Write to the Home Office to request that His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account. 3. Request that an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust. 4. Seek confirmation from the inquiry leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward. 	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>(Appendix 2a) Letter from Acting Chief Executive to the Home Secretary, Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, 14th February 2025 presenting Council decision.</p> <p>(Appendix 7) Letter from Jess Phillips MP, Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girl, is circulated with the supplementary agenda papers).</p> <p>(Appendix 2b) Baroness Louise Casey to lead a national audit of existing evidence on group-based CSE offending in order to gain a comprehensive national understanding of the scale, nature and characteristics of these crimes. That work is well underway and will report back in due course.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference have been published https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-audit-on-group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-terms-of-reference/national-audit-on-group-based-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-terms-of-reference</p>	<p>✓</p>

<p>5. Engage with survivor support organisations, legal experts, and national agencies to guarantee that all testimony is collected safely, ethically, and with appropriate safeguarding in place.</p> <p>6. Call upon the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to publicly support granting statutory powers to the local inquiry, reinforcing the need for full transparency and accountability.</p>			
<p>Opposition Motion (Liberal Democrat) Oldham Council Requests to Withdraw from Places for Everyone</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government requesting that they remove Oldham Borough from the 'Places for Everyone' development plan.</p>	<p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>(Appendix 3a)</p> <p>Letter from the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief Executive to The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Housing, dated 19th February 2025 presenting Council decision.</p>	<p>✓</p>

Actions / Issue	Responsible officer	Update	Completed? (✓, ●)
<p>Administration Motion 1: Get Britain Working</p> <p>This Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organise a Get Britain Working summit as soon as practicable to brief partners on the White Paper and to work through the opportunities from the Labour Government's investment, including the trailblazer, to design a Get Britain Working Plan for Oldham. 2. Review the impact of Get Oldham Working and consider how Get Britain Working can enhance our local offer building on the good links with 800 local employers, integrated and personalised advice, guidance and skills support and mental health therapy already available. 3. Do everything possible to ensure Oldham residents benefit from the opportunities offered by Get Britain Working, including ensuring that our young people make the most of the 'Youth Guarantee'. 	<p>Deputy Chief Executive – Place</p>	<p>Update</p> <p>Option 1 - Propose GBW summit to be scheduled in tandem with Oldham Skills Fair (day before). Will involve representatives from VCSFE, public and private sector to review and commit to supporting key elements of the white paper.</p> <p>Option 2 – To propose to commission external evaluation – funded by GOW budget.</p> <p>Option 3 – GM did not get the Youth Guarantee trailblazer. Work will continue to develop the Youth Hub – but preference is to focus on Economic Inactivity Trailblazer which is a 12 month pilot which seeks to support residents (aged 19+) to make progress towards employment and will be underpinned by the VCFSE sector and the Council.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Administration Motion 2: Bee Network</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Council continues to work alongside our Greater Manchester partners, including the GMCA, Transport for Greater Manchester and the other 9 GM authorities to ensure that decisions made around public transport are focused on improving the resident experience. 2. That the Council continues to engage pro-actively with the Network Review in early 2025, ensuring that all residents voices are heard in the process. 		<p>The Strategic Transport team work very closely with our GM partners of TfGM, GMCA and the other 9 local authorities on a regular basis. Emerging strategy, policy, delivery plans and funding bids are jointly developed and consulted on to meet the aims and objectives of both the GM and Oldham transport strategies, and we always work to ensure the maximum investment in Oldham to promote growth, an improved environment and accessibility to good public transport.</p> <p>The 'Bee Network' in general, and particularly buses now that they are back in public control, has the experience of the customer at its core. Oldham are developing and delivering several schemes across the borough that look to improve residents' experiences in both accessing and waiting for public</p>	<p>✓</p>

		<p>transport and that the journey itself is as reliable and comfortable as possible.</p> <p>Examples of ongoing work include bus stop upgrades, improvements around transport hubs and the Quality Bus Transit corridor improvements. We will continue to develop schemes of this nature over the upcoming funding period. These will include ensuring new developments are well-served by public transport.</p> <p>In addition, we welcome and actively promote the wide-ranging ticket options that are now available across the Bee Network, which have brought real savings and benefits to our residents.</p> <p>An additional benefit of bus franchising is the opportunity to review current bus services and develop a more coordinated and consistent transport system that meets the needs of our residents. This process will allow Oldham residents, businesses, partners, and councillors to discuss and feedback on the key challenges in Oldham's current transport network and the ways in which the Bee Network could improve local bus services.</p> <p>This feedback will help shape recommendations for improving local bus services and, whilst not every suggestion can be implemented, TfGM are committed to considering all input and delivering practical improvements that benefit passengers and communities.</p> <p>This process of gathering information is ongoing and there are several ways to share feedback which have been communicated with Members over recent weeks.</p>	
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<p>Opposition Motion 1 (Liberal Democrat) – Social Care Funding Crisis: National Insurance Contributions (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED: Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to urge them to consider the potential impact of NIC on the cost of commissioned social care services when confirming the Local Government Finance Settlement, as social care services make up such a significant proportion of local government spending and welcoming the government's recognition in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement that "Reform and prevention are critical if we are to turn around the cycle of system failure and cost escalation." 2. To write to local MPs Jim McMahon, Debbie Abrahams, and Lucy Powell to inform them that Oldham Council is exploring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the cost implications for funding health and social care in Oldham of the NIC increase. • the implications for budget setting to meet the demand for social care funding. • And seek their support to lobby government to minimise any potential adverse impacts from NIC rises. 3. Ask the Deputy Chief Executive (Health & Care) and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing to investigate the potential impact on existing and future GP services in the Borough. 	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>(Appendix 4)</p> <p>Reply from Jim McMahon OBE MP Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution. Dated 17th March 2025</p>	<p>✓</p>
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<p>Opposition Motion 2 (Oldham Group)– Ethical Investment: Divestment from Fossil Fuels and Arms by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED: This Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Step up divestment: Request that the Leader of the Council write to GMPF and the Mayor of Greater Manchester, urging GMPF to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within 12 months develop a clear plan to divest from fossil fuels and arms. • Align with GMCA's 2038 net-zero target (instead of GMPF's current 2050 target) and establish a medium-term milestone for 2030. • Commit to divesting the millions it invests in companies involved either directly or indirectly in arms production. 2. Ensure Transparency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request GMPF to implement robust and transparent reporting mechanisms, including annual updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments in fossil fuels, arms, and companies operating in occupied territories as defined in international law. • Progress towards divestment. 3. Empower Representation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandate Oldham's representative on GMPF to advocate for divestment from fossil fuels and arms and provide regular updates to this Council on progress. 4. Collaborate Regionally: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the Leader of the Council to write to the other nine Greater Manchester councils, urging them to join Oldham, Manchester, and other councils in advocating for ethical investment reforms at GMPF. 	<p>Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Letters were forwarded to Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Greater Manchester and a reply is awaited.</p>	
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Appendix 1

<p>5. Promote Ethical Reinvestment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with GMPF to explore reinvestment in industries aligned with Oldham's ethical and environmental priorities, such as renewable energy, social housing, and sustainable infrastructure. <p>6. Engage the Public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with residents, advocacy groups, and trade unions to build awareness and support for ethical investment in Greater 			
<p>Opposition Motion 3 (Independent)– The Old Failsworth Library (as amended) RESOLVED: Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to keep the current tenant of the former library on Main Street up to date with information regarding the lease and potential repairs to the building. 2. That Council officers will keep all Failsworth Councillors up to date potential renovations and future uses of the former Failsworth library building. 3. Explore opportunities to renovate the former Failsworth Library on Main Street so that it can be used by other local community groups and or businesses subject to funding. 4. That all Failsworth Councillors are given opportunities to be involved in plans to potentially renovate this building for future community use. 	<p>Director of Communities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

Actions / Issue	Responsible officer	Update	Completed? (✓, ●)
<p>Administration Motion 1: Increasing Pension Credit Take-up</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 That the Council launches an Awareness Campaign – to develop a targeted campaign to educate residents about Pension Credit, including its eligibility criteria, application process, and potential benefits. 2 That the Council collaborates with Local Organisations to partner with community groups and local charities to disseminate information and assist residents with applications. 3 That the Council increases capacity to support residents – to identify and temporarily re-prioritise staffing capacity to support residents with applications where they may struggle to apply themselves and do not have anyone who can help them. 4 That the Council monitor and report – to establish a system to monitor the impact of the awareness campaign and report back to the council within six months, providing data on the increase in Pension Credit applications and any feedback from residents. 	Chief Executive	<p>1 The Council launched a pension credit campaign in early October. The focus of the campaign is threefold – increasing awareness amongst potential claimants and their friends and family, reducing any stigmas of claiming and to support residents to make an application ahead of the cut-off to claim Winter Fuel Allowance on 21 December.</p> <p>Over 5000 leaflets have been distributed to council and partner organisations and have been placed in buildings including Libraries, Town Halls and GP surgeries. We have also posted key campaign materials on social media channels, targeted at those over pension credit age.</p> <p>2. In November the Council and Age UK jointly wrote to 179 residents who from our records were likely eligible to receive pension credit and 309 within £1k above the threshold for claiming.</p> <p>The council's Welfare Rights Team have provided training on pension credits to Action Together.</p> <p>In late November to early December the council's Helpline team made a follow-up phone call to each resident who received a letter. The Helpline team asked whether a resident had received a letter and provided additional information about claiming. They made referrals into our District Teams who have provided one to one home visits to complete an application with a resident. As part of the call, the Helpline Team also undertook a Winter Welfare check with a focus on making sure no pensioner living in Oldham on a low-income goes cold or hungry this winter. Multiple referrals have been made to Warm Homes Oldham to support with fuel costs and winter warm packs and to Citizens Advice and the Support and Inclusion Team to support with personal budgeting and income maximisation. The team have also made foodbank referrals</p>	✓

		<p>and have issued emergency support to access food and essentials through supermarket vouchers.</p> <p>Cllr Jabbar, Cllr Dean, Cllr Taylor and Cllr Mushtaq have all visited the Helpline Team to listen in to some of the outbound calls made and digital communications have been developed following on from the visits to continue to raise awareness of applying for pension credit.</p> <p>3. Pension Credit applications can be made over the phone and on paper and sent by post as well as completing online. Paper forms have been printed for residents to collect from the Customer Service Centre and we have also posted forms for residents to complete at a pace that suits them. Engagement Officers from the District Teams have received training and have provided additional capacity to support with applications. All requests for support have been met with a minimum of 22 visits to date with residents to support a digital application to be made.</p> <p>4. We are closely monitoring the impact of the campaign and will report back to the council within 6 months sharing the impact of our support. The phone calls we have made and home visits to complete applications have been much valued from residents. The Helpline team have received fantastic feedback with residents particularly grateful for the support received and linkage into wider council and partner services to support this winter.</p>	
<p>Administration Motion 2: Supporting Kinship Carers (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>The Council resolves to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instruct the Director of Children's Services to urgently review the new statutory guidance and ensure that the Council is compliant, particularly in making available the Kinship Local Offer on the Council's website. 	Strategic Director of Children's Services	<p>1 & 4 - The statutory guidance has been reviewed and process commenced of completing the Kinship Local Offer. Corporate Parenting Panel in January will receive an information report, with a Kinship Local Offer published on the Council website by March 2024. This will be a whole system offer with contributions across the partnership and all areas of Children's Services. In addition, financial support, respite, training and therapeutic support will be key features. Alongside developing the Kinship Local Offer, the service will provide policy reviews</p>	✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a Kinship Friendly Employer as soon as is practicable, working towards achieving the Gold Standard. • Record its thanks to all those who provide Kinship Care and mainstream Foster Care in Oldham. • Make sure the policy will have adequate financial support to implement all the aforementioned policies that the Council should already be adhering to and that a report will be made available at the next Council meeting on the implementation of this policy. 		<p>on foster carer Skills and Allowances and the Special Guardianship Order Policy.</p> <p>2 - The Local Authority is a Foster Friendly Employer which includes Kinship carers. Officers attended a launch event for GM authorities celebrating all councils being Fostering Friendly. The service is listed on The Fostering Network website confirming our approval as a Fostering Friendly employer. Gold standard offer on kinship.org is being achieved by the service and under continual review.</p> <p>3 - Thanks to carers have been recorded.</p>	
<p>Opposition Motion 1: Stop the Winter Fuel Payment Cuts (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council agrees to re-confirm its resolution to launch a targeted Awareness Campaign to maximise the uptake of Pension Credit; to collaborate with local organisations to inform and to assist residents with applications; to identify and prioritise staff to help residents complete application; and to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the campaign. • Council request that the Acting Chief Executive be authorised to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express Council's view that the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit receipt should be reviewed and a new threshold to determine eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments be considered. Council further requests the Acting Chief Executive write to the Borough of Oldham's three MPs asking them to give their formal support to a new threshold to determine eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments be considered. 	Acting Chief Executive	<p>Letters forwarded to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the three MP's who represent the Borough in Parliament, following Council on 6th November.</p> <p>(Appendix 5) Government response from Torsten Bell MP Minister for Pensions dated 20th February 2025.</p>	✓

Appendix 1

<p>Opposition Motion 2: The Budget Challenge (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>This Council resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To request that the Leader of the Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to congratulate her on being the first woman to deliver a budget in the history of our country. • That the Acting Chief Executive be requested to write to Oldham's three MP's asking them to give their support to a new threshold to determine eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments be considered. • That the Council will do all it can to help alleviate those struggling paying for winter fuel bills this winter, given the Energy Price Cap has increased by 10% also adding £150 to the average fuel bill, including implementing the agreed Awareness Campaign. 	<p>Leader of the council</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>The Leader of the Council wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 12/11/24 as instructed by Council. The Acting Chief Executive wrote to Oldham's three MPs as instructed by Council</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Opposition Motion 3: Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza (as amended)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Council calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, urging all parties involved to halt hostilities, prioritise the protection of civilian lives and the immediate release of the Israeli hostages taken on 7th October 2023. • That the Council support the rapid entry of humanitarian aid to address the urgent needs of the population affected by the ongoing conflict. • That the Council support the UK Government's decision to withdraw export licences to Israel, preventing equipment that would be used in the conflict in Gaza from reaching the front line • That the Council condemn the decision by the Israeli Knesset to ban the UNWRA from 		<p>A letter has been forwarded to the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer MP, in line with the resolutions passed by Council on 6th November and a reply is awaited</p>	<p>✓</p>

Appendix 1

<p>operating in Israeli controlled territory, including Gaza, the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem, noting that this has been met with widespread international condemnation, including from the United States government and the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the Council condemn both Hamas and Hezbollah for their terrorist attacks on civilians and the taking of hostages by Hamas on October 7th 2023 and support calls from the international community to lay down arms and instead work with international partners to reach a diplomatic solution that safeguards innocent civilians in Lebanon, Palestine and Israel.• That, furthermore, the council requests that the Chief Executive write to the Prime Minister, urging the UK government to:• Re-iterate calls for an immediate Ceasefire in both Gaza and Lebanon and work with international partners to achieve this.• Facilitate the rapid entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza and Lebanon.• Continuously review export licences for international Arms Sales and suspend any that could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of International Humanitarian Law. <p>Through these actions, the council seeks to contribute to the restoration of peace and the protection of human rights in the region.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>		
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Ms Shelley Kipling
Acting Chief Executive
Oldham Council
Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street, Oldham
OL1 1UG

DECS Reference: MIN/1283869/25

7 April 2025

Dear Ms Kipling,

Thank you for your letter of 14 February to the Home Secretary regarding Oldham Council's request for a national public inquiry into child sexual exploitation. I am replying as the Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls and I am sorry for the delay.

Thank you for sharing the requests of Oldham Council, as agreed in your Council meeting on 12 February. I am aware that the Home Secretary has since written to you on 12 March setting out her commitment to tackling child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) and her support for Oldham's decision to lead an independent local inquiry. As the Home Secretary outlined in her letter on 12 March, the Government has set out funding to support local inquiries and help strengthen local responses to CSEA. I am pleased that the Home Office will be making a direct award to Oldham Council, contingent upon your support in identifying and adopting the best practice principles outlined in our developing framework.

I understand that your work to set up an inquiry is progressing, and the Council has appointed an independent chair since we last met in February. I share the Home Secretary's support for Oldham Council, and my officials and I will continue engaging with the Council as you progress your inquiry.

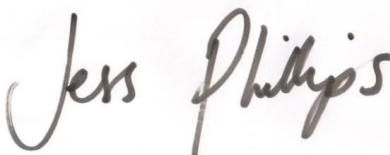
As you have mentioned in your letter, accountability mechanisms are important for effective local inquiries. The Home Secretary explained that the Government is drawing up a Duty of Candour as part of the Hillsborough Law. We are committed to strengthening the accountability mechanisms that can support and follow up local inquiries, ensuring that those who are complicit in cover-ups or who try to resist scrutiny are always robustly held to account and truth and justice are never denied. I would like to reiterate the offer made by the Home Secretary that our officials would be happy to engage with you to ensure shared understanding of expectations around candour.

You will also be aware that the Home Secretary has appointed Baroness Louise Casey to lead a national audit of existing evidence of group-based child sexual exploitation offending in order to gain a comprehensive national understanding of the scale, nature and characteristics of these crimes. The audit is well underway and will report back in due

course. I understand that Oldham Council may be disappointed that the Government has not commissioned a national inquiry. However, victims and survivors have expressed that they want to see action now, and we know that effective local inquiries can delve into far more local detail and deliver more locally-relevant answers and change than a lengthy nationwide inquiry can provide.

Thank you again for sharing the views of Oldham Council, and I would also like to express my thanks for your leadership in this vitally important area. I look forward to continuing to engage with the Council as you progress your inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jess Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jess Phillips MP
Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls