

**Present:** The Mayor – Councillor Qumer (Chair)

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, A. Alexander, G. Alexander, Ali, Azad, Ball, Bates, Briggs, Brock, Brownridge, Chadderton, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Dean, Fielding, Garry, Gloster, Goodwin, Haque, Harkness, Harrison, Hewitt, Hudson, A Hussain, F Hussain, Iqbal, Jabbar, Jacques, J Larkin, Malik, McCann, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Phythian, Roberts, Salamat, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Sykes, Toor, Turner, Ur-Rehman, Williamson, Williams and Wrigglesworth

1            **CIVIC APPRECIATION AWARD**

A presentation took place for Reverend Jean Hurlston in recognition of her outstanding service and dedication to Oldham.

Councillors Stretton and Sykes gave congratulatory speeches to Rev. Hurlston.

Rev. Hurlston was then presented with her award and made a short acceptance speech to the Council.

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

The Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda in Open Council was Public Question Time. The questions had been received from members of the public and would be taken in the order in which they had been received. Council was advised that if the questioner was not present, then the question would appear on the screens in the Council Chamber.

The following questions had been submitted:

1.        Question received from Syed Maruf Ali via email and Facebook:

“Can you please raise this question at the full council meeting.

There seems to be an endemic problem of Fly-Tipping in Coppice/Werneth/Primrose Bank and I’m not sure if anyone have been prosecuted to date in Werneth Ward? It’s not difficult to gather evidence from the rubbish that is dumped to link it back to the culprits. I think it’s crucial that the Council is prepared to prosecute and then publicise it in the local media to deter others. Once someone is prosecuted in Werneth Ward, the word would soon spread. The policy of ‘Naming and Shaming’ has worked in other local authority areas. A short walk around Coppice and it is easily noticeable that a significant number of alleyways are affected by fly-tipping.

It's almost as if the culprits believe that it is normal to dump their rubbish on alleyways or that there is a perception that they can do it with impunity as the chances of being prosecuted is so small. I think the key is for the Council to send out a message to the Community of zero tolerance if they are serious about addressing this issue. To my knowledge there's hasn't been anyone prosecuted for Fly-Tipping from the Coppice/Werneth and Primrose area, however there has been prosecution in other wards. As with a lots of things, I know the Council works hard at resolving issues which the public aren't always aware of. I think the new reporting system is a great idea, but this needs to be followed up with more awareness and communication with the Local Community. Maybe a leaflet can be distributed at local Mosques / Churches and Imams playing their part in informing residents etc will help. Can I ask what the value of the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) is or is it dependant on the individual case? Maybe it's one for Cllrs to review and see if an increase would be more effective. I understand that there is a range of fines that Local Authorities can impose up to a max of £400. The current FPN fine is £80, or £50 if paid within the first two weeks. I'm sure all of us would agree that £50 fine isn't much of a deterrent and needs to be increased significantly to be effective. Just a thought - before the budget cuts began, I'm sure the Council use to provide a free bulk collection service whereas now there is a charge of £17 for up to three items, so someone clearing a house, it would obviously cost them a lot more. I'm just wondering if there's any mileage in considering bringing the free service back and the costs recouped from increased penalty charges. At the moment it must be costing the Council more in increased call out to fly tipping incidences, therefore if the costs of providing a free service can be offset with increased penalty charges and less call out for fly tipping, then I think a viable argument could be made. Thoughts ??”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that there had been a number of prosecutions in Werneth and the surrounding area. The enforcement team checked flytipping on site for evidence. There were many occasions where no evidence was found that enabled a fixed penalty notice to be issued. There was publicity via social media and via press release. Naming and shaming was possible for convicted offenders but this was not possible where a fixed penalty was issued as this alone was not proof of guilt. It was agreed that the dumping of waste was an eyesore and totally unacceptable. Anyone who had information was asked to report it. There was a lot of work and awareness raising with the local community and the ideas in terms of working with local mosques and churches was appreciated. The penalty charge would be reviewed. In

respect of the removing the charge for bulky waste, this would not cover the costs and other considerations to be taken into account. Dumped waste was not bulky in nature and just general waste and when clearing a house, this was part of the cost of the landlord operating a business and would be regarded as trade waste and it was not appropriate to subsidise that service.

2. Question received from Chris Ackroyd via email:

“It has been reported in the media that Shaw and Crompton Parish Councillor Shaun Duffy has allegedly taken charity money from the Mayor of Oldham. Would Oldham Council confirm that they are aware of such an allegation and what action is Oldham Council taking?”

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that it would be inappropriate to comment at this stage so as not to potentially jeopardise any police investigation.

3. Question received from Ms. Donna Gould via email:

“As this is Councillor Warren Bates’s last meeting would the Council Leader answer a couple of questions please? Apparently Cllr Bates put on his election material that if elected he would donate half of his allowance to charity could I ask if he has done this in his time in office? In addition he also put forward a motion in which he called on councillors to have their allowances reduced by 50% the motion was lost but Cllr Bates being a man of principle and the first to attack council officers for their pay did he voluntarily reduce his by 50%? if he did not ‘In my opinion’ I believe this is wrong.”

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that during his term of office Councillor Bates had received his allowance but that Council was not privy to that information and invited Councillor Bates to respond. Councillor Bates explained that under data protection it was private money, if he personally contributed to charities, that was no one’s business.

4. Question received from Hazel Gloster via email:

“Can I ask the relevant Cabinet Member to place pressure upon TfGM to ensure that Metrolink platforms and car parks are adequately gritted during periods of sub zero temperatures. As a witness to a lady suffering an horrific fall on the ramp at Shaw and Crompton Metrolink tram stop due to sheet ice on the ramp, compounded by a car park that would have served as a makeshift skating rink, it was evident that no gritting had taken place despite TFGM’s assurances that gritting does take place.”

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services responded that the TfGM's Metrolink had been contacted regarding this issue. Full details were provided on their approach for winter preparation which included the Metrolink operator, KAM, reviewed the forecast twice daily, ice breaker trams deployed overnight and teams deployed through the evening to grit and clear the snow from all customer areas of the network. It was possible, however, for grit to be washed away and become less effective if it rained after it has been laid. Logs were kept of all gritting activities each day and KAM would like to investigate the incident at Shaw and Crompton. The lady involved has been contacted to see if she was willing to provide further details to TfGM.

5. Question received from Louis Hamblett via email:

"With the latest report stating that London's and the South East housing market is in decline and that the shift is now on the North particularly the North West could the relevant cabinet member tell me what the administration is doing to ensure that any new builds are affordable meaning that they are in line with current prices and that areas will not be gentrified to out price residents in the area as is the current trend with London, Birmingham and Manchester."

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that Affordable Housing was defined by Central Government as 'social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs were not met by the market'. Intermediate housing offered people on low wages a chance to get their foot on the housing ladder through models such as Shared Ownership or Rent to Buy. A balance needed to be struck in order for affordable housing provision to be sought from as many developments as possible without adversely affecting the viability of the development. It was therefore considered that the target of affordable housing provision should provide an opportunity for the specific circumstances of a development proposal, which included location, impact on regeneration, objectives and site specific issues to be considered on a site by site basis. In Oldham, the affordable housing target was 7.5% of the total development sales value. Partners were currently working on site on a number of significant schemes at the moment delivering over 200 new affordable homes. This included Great Places building 42 new affordable homes as part of a larger development at Rose Mill. First Choice Homes Oldham were on site delivering 156 new affordable homes at sites in Royton, Sholver, Derker and Bardsley.

6. Question received from Stephen Kenyon via email:

“Is there any point in making a complaint about Oldham council or it's councillors as, from my experience, it will just be ignored and/or swept under the carpet?”

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that complaints against members were taken very seriously and were considered in accordance with the process approved by Council and the Standards Framework in the Localism Act. It was not accurate to say that complaints were swept under the carpet as there were many examples where investigations following complaints had been undertaken. The Council took all complaints seriously and each complaint was considered according to the regulations that applied, for example, corporate complaints were considered under the process set out within the Local Government Act 1974. The Council received and considered around 1250 formal complaints each year. Of all the complaints received, approximately 45% were upheld. Where complaints were upheld, the council sought to apply service improvements to help ensure that the same problems did not rise again for others. For this reason principally, the council saw complaints from residents as a key way to listen and change on the basis of what people told us about the services provided. The Council's Complaints team could be contacted at 0161 770 8122 or at [customer.feedback@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@oldham.gov.uk). If the complainant was not happy with the decision there was recourse to the Local Government Ombudsman.

7. Question received from Steve Kessell via Twitter:

“Are you intending on refurbishing the thoroughly disgusting Oldham Market public toilets, or are you quite satisfied with the present conditions?”

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise, responded that the toilets were starting to show their age. There was a commitment to make Tommyfield Market an attractive and welcoming place for shoppers and that work was shortly to get underway to improve toilet provision and this should be started at the start of summer. It had been announced that Tommyfield Market would be redeveloped over the next few years as outlined in the Town Centre Master Plan. Modern toilets would be installed in the temporary as well as the new Market Hall.

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

The Mayor reminded Members that the Council had previously agreed that questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council. The following

questions were submitted by Councillors on Ward or District matters:



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1. Councillor Chadderton asked the following question:

“I welcome the £6.2 million being invested by Oldham Council to improve the roads across the borough including, for example, resurfacing St Phillips Drive in Royton South. However, the recent severe weather has worsened the condition of many roads and the LGA estimates that £12 billion is needed across the UK to deal with repairs. Can the Cabinet Member for Transport tell me what further steps are being taken to improve roads such as Perth Street in Royton South?”

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services responded that the £6.2m investment programme was designed to make a substantial impact to improving the roads across the Borough, but ideally significantly more investment would be required in the future for all roads in the Borough to be improved to that similar overall standard. This meant that the programme of schemes actually being carried out within the £6.2m investment programme had gone through a detailed prioritisation process which included a number of factors from a much longer identified condition list of all roads in the Borough. This overall condition list was constantly updated according to seasonally changing road condition and priorities were revised accordingly, helping to inform future programmes of works according to possible available funding levels. Members would receive information as to which roads would be included in their wards.

2. Councillor Toor asked the following question:

“I am concerned about the practices of some of the developers who are building homes in Oldham: roads, footways, and open spaces can be left in an incomplete or substandard condition for many years after the development has been occupied. Examples include Borough Mill Triangle Development and adoption of open space on Neild Street, which is just being transferred to the Council as Countryside Homes have been unable to deliver the site to a required standard for over 3 years. I would like the Council to have robust procedures including binding deadlines in place with regards to highways, streetlights, and green spaces when: negotiations with developers take place; planning applications are made, and section 38 agreements are reached. Should deadlines be missed or work fails to reach the required standard, the developer should be penalised financially. Please can you advise us on what action we will take to rectify the ongoing issues and what we will do to ensure that these delays do not happen in the future?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that the issues referred to existed as part of the S.38 process where there would be financial security that the Council could call upon if and where required. The issues experienced previously such as incomplete or substandard works had been due to one of many factors for example, the developer had not signed their S38 agreement but had decided to carry out all or parts of the work at risk; the developer had carried out works which contradicted approved Highway drawings; the works had been completed to a substandard condition; the developer had utilised land to construct the highway that was not within their ownership and/or other associated factors which had not been adequately considered by the developer. The Council could not prevent a developer from working on their own land at risk nor is the Council obligated to adopt a new highway by default. The Council could request that any unsatisfactory works were rectified prior to being considered for adoption and this was generally what caused delay in completion. There were many reasons why developers completed works at risk, predominantly though due to the need to meet target completion and handover dates for dwellings. Care needed to be taken to ensure that handover dates applied to developers were not pursued such that one didn't take precedent over the highways work completion. Minor changes to the S38 procedure had been identified to encourage developers to follow the procedure correctly. These changes would be presented to the Council in due course. Public Open Space (PoS) was not specifically related to Highway Adoption. PoS was adopted and maintained separately with the exception of any footpaths.

3. Councillor McLaren asked the following question:

“It has been pleasing to see that FCHO are carrying out a scheme of work to improve their properties in the Taylor Street area of Chadderton Central Ward. It would be much appreciated if the Cabinet member responsible for housing could advise on the nature and extent of the work being undertaken, how long the programme of work will take to complete and whether any thought was given to the possibility of allowing owner occupiers to buy into the scheme so that they too could benefit from the purchasing power of a large organisation, for items such as gates and fences.”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that the works being undertaken in the area were a FCHO environmental scheme and included front and rear fencing, gates and flagging. The work was undertaken on a need basis so existing components if they were in

good condition were not necessarily replaced, therefore the exact schedule of works would vary on a property to property basis. Private residents could avail themselves of the products and services used on the scheme, however, to avoid any conflict with FCHO's charity status this needed to be done through a direct arrangement with the contractor. Residents had been contacted prior to the commencement of the works. The contract in Central Chadderton was scheduled to be completed in the next few days, however, the works would be moving to North Chadderton where works would continue until December and the offer to private residents in Central Chadderton would remain open until that time.

4. Councillor Gloster asked the following question:

“Residents of Shaw and Crompton joining the tram often experience incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour being committed by a small irresponsible minority who think nothing of terrorising and intimidating their fellow passengers. Now with three brutal attacks on individuals at or near Metrolink tram stops across Oldham in recent days - an attempted murder by three youths of a man at Freehold and hammer attacks at the Oldham King Street and Derker stations - this situation has gone from bad to worse. Many of my constituents, and those of my ward colleagues in Crompton, are growing increasingly fearful about the advisability of travelling by tram when it appears to be such a frightening prospect. I am sure that many will now be inclined to take to their cars, go by bus or simply not contemplate the journey. Can the Leader or responsible Cabinet Member please outline the steps that are now being taken by the relevant authorities to apprehend these offenders and what is going to be done long-term to make travelling by Metrolink tram safe again?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that the Council was working closely with Greater Manchester Police in addressing the issues related to the attacks on and around the Metrolink system. People had been arrested and charged. In the short term, the Metrolink Travel Safe Unit and local neighbourhood policing teams were targeting additional staff on the Metrolink line through Oldham, particularly around places which were hotspots for crime and anti-social behaviour. This was being supported by the Council's Community Safety Officers and detached youth team. Further targeted operations were also planned. The Leader of the Council had written to the Chief Constables and the Mayor of Greater Manchester asking for an urgent meeting to ask what could be done with the unacceptable situation.

5. Councillor Roberts asked the following question:



“At the March meeting of Royton’s Community Forum, a resident raised the issue of how policing priorities were set in Royton. Could the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods please tell us what influence both we as a council as well as residents have over how the GM Mayor sets policing priorities?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives, responded that the Greater Manchester Mayor had published his first plan, Standing Together, for the police, criminal justice services, community safety and the people who live in Greater Manchester. This had put the emphasis on the individual citizen. There had been a full and thorough consultation process that had incorporated the views of community and voluntary groups, supports services and local people. There had also been extensive engagement with people who used the services and also those who provided them including all ten authorities across Greater Manchester. All responses received during the consultation had helped to shape the three priorities set out in the plan.

6. Councillor Briggs asked the following question:

“Under the Community Support Officers Designated Powers, as defined in Schedule 4 of the Police Reform Act 2004. Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have Standard National Powers. According to the act there are twenty categories of power that PCSOs have. Could the cabinet member responsible please provide me with data as to how many times in the last 12 months have the PCSOs who operate within the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Executive Area exercised these powers in each of the twenty categories.”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had 20 standard powers which included, for example, issuing certain fixed penalty notices and requiring individuals to supply their name and address if they believed they had committed an offence. Greater Manchester Police were not able to provide a breakdown of how many times in the 12 months the powers had been used in the Failsworth and Hollinwood area. Officers were seeking additional clarification from Greater Manchester Police about the extent to which the various powers were used, even if the question could not be answered exactly as requested. Information would be provided when it was available.

7. Councillor Mushtaq asked the following question:

“Queens Road has a number of care homes caring for a significant number of elderly people. During times of adverse weather including the recent Beast from the East

the road, like many others becomes very difficult to negotiate. I received several calls informing me that ambulances that had been called out to a care home were stuck. It took fantastic local residents who pushed the ambulance up the road to enable the paramedics to do their job. I'd like to thank the residents and ask if a separate cold weather strategy should be in place for Queens Rd given the number of care homes which frequently call out an ambulance.”

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services responded that Oldham Council gritted its highway network on a priority basis. In events of severe snowfall it was essential that the Council worked continuously to keep the priority routes opened to ensure that as far as reasonably practical, traffic could continue to move throughout the Borough. The Council took a strategic approach by gritting in routes which ensured that the journey destinations remained accessible. By widening the approach to cover care homes (of which there were many similar locations to Queens Road) would divert resources away from the priority routes which would increase the risk of those routes becoming blocked due to snow or by traffic unable to reach its destination. There were procedures in place to respond to gritting requests in emergency situations when requested by the emergency services. Councillor F. Hussain expressed his thanks to the local residents. Councillor F. Hussain also expressed his appreciation to the efforts of the gritting team in keeping the roads open during in horrendous conditions.

8. Councillor McCann asked the following question:

“The recent high winds caused several trees to fall, sometimes causing disruption but fortunately no loss of life or injury. Could the Cabinet Member outline the procedure that members of the public and indeed councillors should follow if they wish to report 'dangerous' trees on their land, or on Council land, or other private land? In the case of the latter, and I appreciate that sometimes ownership of this land is unknown, what enforcement action will the Council take to remove any unstable/diseased trees?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that during the recent bad weather close to 1000 trees had been lost across the town. All trees that needed to be reported should be emailed to [environmentalservices@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalservices@oldham.gov.uk) 24 hours a day or during officers by contacting 0161 770 4067. A report would be taken and an inspection would follow depending on the priority determined by officers. When the weather conditions were reported to be an issue out of hours the Council endeavoured to place a team on standby. First

Response were informed and would take details which would be passed to the team on call. The trees would be managed on a priority basis dealing with those that were a threat to life, causing or had caused damage to buildings or blocking the highway. If the trees were not in Council ownership, the immediate issue would be dealt with first than cost would be recovered at the earliest opportunity through enforcement/rechargeable action.

9. Councillor G. Alexander asked the following question:

“Further to the development which is occurring on Haven and Havenside Close - I have been informed that the local farmer has damaged the culverts and altered the waterways. This has caused flooding issues to properties on Haven Lane, Havenside Close, Haugh Hill Road, and Turf Pitt Lane. Can I be assured that there will be no building works taking place on Haven Lane till this has been rectified? Can the Council ensure that the builders take flooding into consideration when building the new properties?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that common law required landowners used their land in such a way that it did not increase the risk of flooding to a neighbouring property. If this was found to be the case, either the Environment Agency, United Utilities or a neighbour would have the option or right to consider legal (civil) action. Related to future development of the site, the Haven Lane scheme was granted on appeal on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 subject to a number of conditions. One of the conditions (Condition 9) required further details of the disposal of surface and foul water from the site prior to commencement of the development. The duly approved scheme needed to be implemented before any of the dwellings were first occupied. To date the condition had not been discharged and no material start at the site had occurred to the Council’s knowledge.

10. Councillor Salamat asked the following question:

“Can the Cabinet Member responsible update us on the situation with the LINK Centre and outline arrangements have been made to support user groups while the centre is being refurbished?”

Councillor Harrison, Cabinet Member for Social Care and Safeguarding responded that an information briefing was held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 which informed people who used the centre of the planned closure which would enable a programme of works to take place on the building. During the planned closure, which would take place from late March to September 2018, groups were informed that meeting rooms would be unavailable. Unfortunately the meeting had ben originally planned to take place on

28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 which would have provided approximately four weeks notice of the closure, but due to the bad weather the briefing had to be rearranged for the following week. Sixty-one people attended the briefing who represented 16 organisations or groups, including Carers Drop-In, Gamblers Anonymous, Oldham Arts Group, Age UK, U3A, Deaf Club, Parkinsons Society, CLEO and Alcoholics Anonymous. At the briefing the groups were informed about the support available which included: staff working with group leads to identify alternative venues for their meeting; an information drop-in event which included attendance from a range of organisations who could provide support to access alternative meeting rooms on locality meeting facilities with accessible places; and the intention to provide regular updates on the works on our web page which had now been updated to reflect the timescales and planned works. In addition, one-to-one meetings to support individual groups were offered and these had been held with group leads. A full guide of available meeting rooms across the borough was provided to groups. Staff had already visited a number of locations to identify appropriate alternative locations depending on the groups' needs. Staff then worked with group leads to arrange booking these venues or meeting with the organisations who managed the venues. One of the biggest barriers had been the need for groups, in some locations, to pay for meeting rooms. However, this had always been a requirement at the Link Centre, although not fully endorsed due to historical informal arrangements. Throughout the development of new offer at the centre, it had been communicated to the groups of the need to pay for meeting rooms going forward. This had been clearly articulated over 12 months with the first briefing taking place to inform groups of changes on 12 and 14 December 2016. Through early engagement and highlighting the need to pay for meeting rooms, it was hoped to minimise the impact on groups and enable them to plan for future funding arrangements. Where funding could have been an issue, work has taken place with individual groups to identify venues which were free and in some cases, identify funding to support their transition to an alternative venue. Groups would continue to be supported where required during the period of works.

11. Councillor Phythian asked the following question:

“Residents in Royley, Royton North have complained to me about the poor service provided by the 412 bus. It runs in the morning every one and a half hours until 2pm and then not until 7.45 in the evening. If you miss the lunchtime bus back from Oldham you have to wait several hours to get home and is of no use to school children returning home. The bus operators say this is for commercial reasons but surely putting on a bus service that only operates half the day means it is unlikely to be

well used. Please can the Cabinet Member responsible take up this issue and press for a sensible bus service that meets the needs of residents?"



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Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, responded that bus services were currently run on a commercial basis and if the operator chose not to run a service, there was a limit on what could be done. The only option at present was for TfGM to fund gaps in the network left by commercial operators. The Bus Services Act 2017 had provided the Mayor with new powers to reform bus services in Greater Manchester with the potential to allow greater local control over routes, frequencies, timetables, fares and quality standards. These powers were currently being considered, but in the meantime, the funding available for TfGM to provide a subsidised bus service was under great pressure and had been reduced. It was TfGM that funded all journeys on the 412 service. The contract for the daytime journeys was renewed in January 2018 and the service maintained during the part of the day when it was most used. TfGM had subsequently looked at moving resources from lightly used evening services to fill the daytime gap but this idea had not been well received as it just moved the problem. A commitment had been secured from TfGM to revisit the proposal again to see if they could provide a sustainable and affordable option that covered a wider span of operation.

12. Councillor Sheldon referred to a recent visit from Councillor F. Hussain to discuss transport and traffic issues in Saddleworth where they had witnessed the aftermath of an accident. Councillor Sheldon asked if there were any plans to reduce the speed limit at the Manchester Road Junction near the Royal George Pub from 40 to 30 mph?

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services responded that the visit to Saddleworth had been informative. The location of the junction was near Tameside and would not be a simple response for the speed to be reduced. Unity would be asked to look at the request and an update would be provided to Councillor Sheldon.

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

**RESOLVED** that the questions and responses provided be noted.

### **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M. Bashforth, Councillor S. Bashforth, Councillor Heffernan, Councillor Kirkham, Councillor Price and Councillor Rehman.

4 **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 13TH DECEMBER 2017 AND 28TH FEBRUARY 2018 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 be approved as a correct record.

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

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, elected members declared the following interests:

Councillor G. Alexander declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of her appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Harrison declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of her appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Chauhan declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor McCann declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board and the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Jabbar declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Dean declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Stretton declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of her appointment to the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Sykes declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Ur-Rehman declared a personal interest at Item 15a by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Board.

Councillor Brownridge declared a personal interest at Item 15b by virtue of her appointment to the Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Gloster and Councillor Garry declared a pecuniary interest at Item 15b, Police and Crime Panel Minutes.

Councillor Haque declared a personal and pecuniary interest in Item 14, Motion 3 by virtue of his ownership of a takeway.

Councillor Haque left the room during the discussion of this item and took no part in the discussion or vote thereon.

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

The Mayor informed the meeting that he had agreed to accept an item of Urgent Business in accordance with the Council's Constitution which was a report related to the External Auditors. The report would be considered at Item 18.

7 **TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor made reference to the recent deaths of Councillor Susan Dearden, Councillor Brian Ames and former Councillor and Mayor Joe Farquhar.

Councillors Jabbar, Roberts, Toor, Moores and Williamson paid tribute to the work of Councillor Dearden.

Councillors Williams, Stretton and Murphy paid tribute to the work of Councillor Ames.

Councillors Hudson, Dean and Sykes paid tribute to the work of former Councillor and Mayor Farquhar.

Council held a minute's silence.

The Mayor advised that two Councillors would be retiring at the end of the current Municipal Year, namely Councillors Wigglesworth and Kirkham.

Councillors Ur-Rehman and Haque paid tribute to the work of Councillor Wigglesworth.

Councillor G. Alexander paid tribute to the work of Councillor Kirkham.

The Mayor also advised that Maggie Kufeldt, Executive Director – Health and Wellbeing had now left the authority. Councillors Stretton and McCann paid tribute to the work of Maggie Kufeldt.

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

The Mayor advised that three petitions had been received for noting by Council:

Petition related to Persimmons Homes and the Adoption of Northgate Lane (St. James Ward) received on 29 January 2018 with 60 signatures (Ref: 2018-01)

Petition related to Objections to Yew Tree Primary School Planning Application (Chadderton South Ward) received on 7 February 2018 with 203 signatures (Ref: 2018-02)

Petition related to the Sale of Land at Nimble Nook (Chadderton Central Ward) received on 21 February 2018 with 752 signatures (Ref: 2018-03)

**RESOLVED** that the petitions received since the last meeting of the Council be noted.

## 9 **OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Mayor informed the meeting that there was one item of outstanding business from the previous ordinary meeting.

Motion 1

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Chadderton  
SECONDED the following motion:



“This Council notes that Oldham, together with thousands more, will celebrate International Women’s day on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Oldham Council has already agreed to mark the centenary of the Women’s Suffrage Act by supporting the Suffrage to Citizenship Campaign throughout 2018 and this will include marking the actual anniversary in November. Working with the Youth Council and local organisations, activities will focus on ways of encouraging young women (and men) to be more actively involved in the local community, an aim that fits well with our ethos as a Co-operative Council.

Oldham Council has previously affirmed its commitment to women’s equality; acknowledged the unequal impact of austerity on women and supported the aims of the WASPI campaign for fair access to pensions.

Oldham Council further notes that the Government continues to put forward proposals which threaten vital services for women, this time the funding of refuges for women escaping domestic violence. The Government consultation paper ‘Funding Supported Housing’ includes proposals to remove the payment of Housing Benefit to women living in refuges, which provides over 50% of their funding, and replace this with a ring fenced grant to local authorities which will also have to pay the short-term supported housing for older people, homeless people, people with mental illnesses and drug addicts.

This council is extremely concerned that this threatens the sustainability of refuges, which are already unable to meet demand.”

#### AMENDMENT

Council were informed that the names of the mover and seconder of the Amendment were transposed. Council AGREED the mover and seconder be amended as requested.

Councillor Turner MOVED and Councillor Williamson  
SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

“End the first paragraph in line 4 after the end of the second sentence.

Insert a new paragraph as follows:

‘Council notes with pleasure that four Oldham women, Lydia Becker, Annie Kenney, Marjory Lees and Sarah Lees were included within a list of notable women suffrage pioneers recently announced by the Women’s Local Government Society as inspirational examples to the women of today. It is especially notable that the contributions to the struggle of two of these women, Lydia Becker and Annie Kenney, were seen as ‘so immense’ that they deserved ‘special recognition’. Council will be proud to celebrate the historic contributions made by all four of these Oldham women in fighting to secure the vote for all of the women of Britain as part of the ‘From Suffrage to Citizenship’ campaign’.

The amended motion would then read:



“This Council notes that Oldham, together with thousands more, will celebrate International Women’s day on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Oldham Council has already agreed to mark the centenary of the Women’s Suffrage Act by supporting the Suffrage to Citizenship Campaign throughout 2018 and this will include marking the actual anniversary in November. Council notes with pleasure that four Oldham women, Lydia Becker, Annie Kenney, Marjory Lees and Sarah Lees were included within a list of notable women suffrage pioneers recently announced by the Women’s Local Government Society as inspirational examples to the women of today. It is especially notable that the contributions to the struggle of two of these women, Lydia Becker and Annie Kenney, were seen as ‘so immense’ that they deserved ‘special recognition’. Council will be proud to celebrate the historic contributions made by all four of these Oldham women in fighting to secure the vote for all of the women of Britain as part of the ‘From Suffrage to Citizenship’ campaign.

Working with the Youth Council and local organisations, activities will focus on ways of encouraging young women (and men) to be more actively involved in the local community, an aim that fits well with our ethos as a Co-operative Council. Oldham Council has previously affirmed its commitment to women’s equality; acknowledged the unequal impact of austerity on women and supported the aims of the WASPI campaign for fair access to pensions.

Oldham Council further notes that the Government continues to put forward proposals which threaten vital services for women, this time the funding of refuges for women escaping domestic violence. The Government consultation paper ‘Funding Supported Housing’ includes proposals to remove the payment of Housing Benefit to women living in refuges, which provides over 50% of their funding, and replace this with a ring fenced grant to local authorities which will also have to pay the short-term supported housing for older people, homeless people, people with mental illnesses and drug addicts.

This council is extremely concerned that this threatens the sustainability of refuges, which are already unable to meet demand.”

The Mayor informed the meeting that the time limit for this item had expired.

A vote was then taken on the AMENDMENT.

On being put to the vote, the AMENDMENT was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

On being put to the vote, the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be asked to write to the Minister for Local Government and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance

to express concern and to ask for continuation of the existing system of paying Housing Benefit to women living in refuges.

2. The Borough's three MPs be asked to press for the continuation of the current system and to seek more secure funding for refuges.
3. The Council's representatives at the LGA be urged for the LGA to lobby against this proposed change.

10

## **YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Youth Council PROPOSED the following MOTION:

"Vaping or the use of e-cigarettes is becoming a more and more common sight. More and more people can be seen using these products. I'm sure we all know someone who vapes, and I'm sure most of us saw someone vaping today.

Some people welcome vaping as a 'safer' alternative to smoking tobacco products but let's be honest the jury is out on that one. We do not know how safe these products are Cancer research UK have published reports calling for further research into the effects of vaping on health and to increase our knowledge on how 'safe' these products are.

We at Oldham Youth council have concerns that vaping is becoming an attractive activity for young people. We know anecdotally of young people who began vaping without ever having been a smoker. These are not just alternatives to tobacco but are becoming a nicotine addictive habit for non-smokers too.

We strongly believe this is in large part due to the advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes and vaping.

We believe that E-cigarette companies and the tobacco industry are targeting young people;

They present their marketing in such a way that it uses attractiveness, coolness, colours and innovative packaging – with a wide range of 'fun' flavours that is particularly aimed at a youth market. With flavours like candy apple and tutti fruity with bright packaging that looks like confectionary how can this not be aimed at the youth market?

They use social media and celebrity inspired styling and endorsements

They sponsor big sports events

And they portray their products as socially attractive

All this is particularly appealing to a younger audience and to non-smokers.

Over recent years we have seen the regulation of tobacco promotion with the introduction of smoke free public spaces, advertising bans, age restricted sales, a de-normalisation of smoking industries, plain packaging and point of sale restrictions. Vaping products however are not controlled in this way. And this great work at reducing the likelihood of young people (and older people) from smoking) is being undermined by this.

These control policies were introduced to prevent people from taking up smoking and rightly so. But if we don't want people to

smoke and we certainly don't want young people to take up smoking would we want them to start vaping.

In November 2017 Committees for Advertising Practice have introduced some new rules that will prevent e cigarette advertising from targeting non-smokers including children and young people, these restrictions will also prevent TV advertising attempting to tap into youth culture. We are particularly pleased to see that an emphasis has been placed on protecting young people and we welcome these new rules but they don't go far enough.

A study by Moreon et al found that flavoured e cigarette liquids such as fruits and alcohol flavours are most frequently used by young people. And studies in the US have found that young people who vape are far more likely to smoke. Studies like these and the fact that the 'safety' of vaping is yet to be truly determined causes us great concern.

We want to prevent young people from these potentially harmful practices and we feel more needs to be done to prevent vaping from being seen as fun, acceptable and a 'cool' thing to do.

We would like to see the same controls on vaping as there are on tobacco products. We would like to see advertising banned, we would like to see plain packaging controls in place and we would like to point of sale restrictions. We believe that these restrictions on the promotion of vaping will further reduce the likelihood of people taking up vaping and in turn smoking.

The Youth Council ask Council to resolve:

That the Chief Executive writes to the minister of Health and asks for these restrictions to be put in place for vaping products."

Councillor Moores **MOVED** the Motion and Councillor Williamson **SECONDED** the Motion.

On being put the **VOTE**, the **MOTION** was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**RESOLVED** the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Youth Council, write to the Minister of Health to ask for restrictions be put in place for vaping products.

**NOTE:** Councillor Roberts left the meeting during this item.

11

## **LEADER AND CABINET QUESTION TIME**

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

Question 1:

"For my first question tonight I want to refer to the report published last month by the campaigning coalition End Child Poverty into child poverty across the UK. Overall the report found that Oldham was the local authority with the 7<sup>th</sup> worst estimated prevalence of poverty in the UK. Most shockingly Coldhurst was identified as the electoral ward with the highest estimated level of child poverty in the country, with over six in ten children living in poverty. Regrettably, Werneth, St. Mary's and Alexandra also featured highly with over fifty percent of all

children in poverty. But child poverty is not simply confined to these areas – there are children living in poverty everywhere in our Borough. Sadly, you will also find pockets of economic deprivation in Shaw, Saddleworth, Chadderton and Royton – all are a criminal indictment of the indifference of policy makers and financiers in the affluent nation that is 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain. Of course, much of the blame for the increase in poverty must be laid at the feet of a Conservative Government which continues to insist on austerity and has punished the poor with a benefit freeze. Yet there were previously investments amounting to tens of millions of directed at our most deprived neighbourhoods, Coldhurst, Glodwick, Derker, Fitton Hill, Hathershaw, Limeside, Werneth and Westwood during previous Government's including Labour. I will mention just four.

- The Single Regeneration Budget
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- The New Deal for Communities
- Housing Market Renewal

Despite their high sounding titles, very little seems to have changed on the ground. This Administration talks a lot about the 'game changer' that the redevelopment of our town centre will represent, but for the children of these neighbourhoods who are hungry or ill-shod a real 'game changer' would be having enough food to eat and decent shoes and clothes to wear right now.

My first question to the Leader tonight is this – does this Administration along with its partners have a practical strategy, a 'game changer', with real achievable, measurable targets to address the poverty, and therefore the life chances of these disadvantaged children? This is one league table we need to get off the top of and better still Oldham needs relegated to a lower division. At least 4 wards in the top flight of poverty is not where we need to be. If there is not such a strategy, does she not think it is about time that we put one in place as a top priority – for I can tell her now the Liberal Democrats stand ready to help or is another generation to be condemned to poverty?"

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council, responded that unfortunately it was not new that Oldham was a low wage, low skilled economy with pockets of deprivation. Much of the blame was at the door of the Conservative Government with persistent benefit caps and cuts to benefits. Austerity was a benign term for the vicious attacks on local government and the people it served. Budgets had been cut by over 50%. As much as it would have been liked to put in a range of initiatives, the ability to do this was constantly attacked. Local government and the LGA had made representations to government for adequate funding for adults and children's services. There were a range of strategies about improving lives of the people of Oldham which included the Town Centre Masterplan which would bring more investment and this would take time. The Leader agreed to meet with colleagues from the Liberal Democrats for joint discussions to take forward to officers.

Question 2:

“I would now like to return to another very important issue for many residents in our Borough – access to modern primary care facilities in their locality. The NHS Clinical Commissioning Group has recently consulted on proposals to create five local ‘clusters’, each to service approximately 50,000 patients at which local GP practices will be concentrated, along with a range of high-quality primary care services that will be tailored to the especial needs of the host community. I am confident that patients and carers in Chadderton, Saddleworth and Shaw and Crompton will be excited to hear this news as they are currently obliged to attend health centres that are well past their best to say the least. In fact their facilities are so poor that I would suggest that if a patient presented in such a condition they would be immediately referred for emergency treatment by triage. They are quite literally falling to bits. If we do indeed have a National Health Service that provides everyone with access to equal treatment at their point of need, why do we not have a Local Health Service that does the same? Certainly the hard working tax payers in Chadderton, Saddleworth, Shaw and Crompton are being seriously short-changed with their current provision. We have been promised new health centres in these areas for years; it would be nice to see this finally happen – and soon. The recent appointment of our own Chief Executive Dr Carolyn Wilkins, to a key position and leading role in our local NHS gives me some hope that things may now finally move in the right direction. With this in mind my second question to the Leader tonight is when can we expect to see new health centres in all areas of our Borough that are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?”

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council, responded that the information was not immediately available. There would be more influence on decision making than there was previously and welcomed the appointment of the Single Accountable Officer who would lead on the decision making. It would be a priority to ensure all areas had to public health services which were as good as it could be.

Councillor Hudson, Leader of the Conservative Group, asked if the Leader would speak to Cabinet members and officers would look into the openness and transparency and referred to Westminster, Local government or Parish. It was asked if the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny System could be improved by asking what other authorities did and make sure that scrutiny was done by members of the opposition parties and not the ruling group. Councillor Hudson referred to the scrutiny process at Tameside Council. This was not condemning any labour members, but was in the interest of openness by letting people know that if the authority believed in Overview and Scrutiny, then the policies should be scrutinised by those other than whose policies were being put into action.

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council, responded that she was not sure what arrangements were in other Councils. The Leader was confident that Overview and Scrutiny Committees were well led and members who served on them took their responsibility seriously and they were not used for party political

issues. The comments related to Tameside Council, where the Conservative Group were the Opposition were noted. All members across the board respected the Overview and Scrutiny function. Councillor McLaren and Councillor Wrigglesworth were able members who led the function and every member was able to have their say with no undue favouritism.



The Mayor reminded the meeting that Council had agreed that, following the Leaders' allocated questions, questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council.

1. Councillor Brock asked the following question:

"The Budget and the Spring statement did not do anything to address the funding problems in local government and offered nothing for our staff who have had many years without a pay increase. Does the Cabinet member for Finance share my disappointment at the government's refusal to acknowledge the damage this continues to do to Oldham's services and residents and does he have any further comments to make about this?"

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and HR responded that he had been disappointed in the Chancellor's announcement. There was no money to meet statutory responsibilities and included children's social services or adult social care which were the two areas under greatest pressure. There had been more than 40% increase in demand for children's social care and funding had been put in place to meet the additional demand. Representations had been made to the Government and the Chancellor but the Council did not get anything. The Council was allowed to increase the council tax by an additional 1% to address the pressures. Council tax for the authority was already too high, the additional 1% delivered £830K, but the pressures in children's services was £8.6m. The Government were putting the burden to local level which Oldham could not deal with. It was hoped that the Green Paper on Adult Social Care would provide adequate funding for statutory responsibilities. There was no idea of the local government funding plan beyond March 2020, therefore future planning could not be done. As part of the review of revenue funding an appeal would be made as to what was happening.

2. Councillor Jacques asked the following question:

"The Metrolink Tram stops at Failsworth and Hollinwood have yet again been subjected to mindless acts of vandalism resulting in assaults on individuals, ticket machines and glass panels being smashed. When are TFGM going to realise and act against anti-social behaviour, where a small but growing minority can act with impunity wrecking stations. It's a downright disgrace

that innocent passengers are being challenged by Travel Safe officers if they have a valid ticket, when they obviously cannot purchase one, whilst gangs of youths use the line unchallenged in the evening and subject innocent communities to yobbish behaviour in the streets, leaving residents feeling vulnerable and unsafe. The true economic and social cost of not having Travel Safe officers on stations and trams goes way beyond staffing costs. Is TFGM ignoring this issue and happy to pass on the real cost of a lack staffing onto our communities and police force. TFGM are aware of the issue but have failed to take effective action. I would like to ask the cabinet member responsible if there is an expensive lesson to be learnt here.”

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services assured that addressing anti-social behaviour was a priority for Transport for Greater Manchester and they were as concerned about it as the Council was, but they could not deal with this alone. Metrolink staff, no matter how many there were, did not have the powers of arrest so they needed the help and support of GM Police, and TfGM were working with them. Even before the most recent serious assault at Freehold, the new Metrolink operator, KAM, had increased staff presence in the area with patrols of Travel Safe Officers and Customer Services staff. TfGM have funded GM Police in terms of the Travel Safe Unit, further warranted officers and now almost 50 PCSOs. Furthermore intelligence was being shared with local police and working together with police on the overall strategy and provided really good CCTV evidence to police working on several other cases in the area. Arrests had also been made in the Freehold case.

3. Councillor A. Alexander asked the following question:

“Could the relevant Cabinet Member inform me, how many people are awaiting housing in Oldham and how many can truly afford to buy their own homes? Is there a breakdown of these figures?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that as at Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 there were 5,778 households in housing need on the Council’s Social Housing waiting list, an increase of 245 since December 2017. As the Council operated an ‘open waiting list’, there were also a further 16,056 households who were not in housing need but could bid for a percentage of homes that were advertised for rent on a ‘first come first served’ basis. How many households on the waiting list who could afford to buy their own home could not be confirmed. New applicants were asked to provide their household income, it was not a mandatory questions and the vast majority chose not to answer it. The Council collected the information which enabled landlords to establish whether

prospective tenants were able to afford a tenancy and not to assess whether they were able to buy their own home. Research had suggested that nearly 40% could only afford social rented accommodation.



4. Councillor Harkness asked the following question:

"I welcome the launch of the Council's new online reporting system for fly tipping. It is clear that fly tipping has increased. There appears to be two issues:

- A reduced capacity for residents as a result of the three weekly bin collections
- An increase in commercial dumping of waste; this is a particular problem in my ward where there are isolated spots which fly tippers take advantage.

What is being done to support those who have large families and no transport to utilise Arkwright Street for their excessive waste?

What strategies are being considered to address the increase in commercial fly tipping?"

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives responded that the three weekly bin collection had led to an increase in fly tipping. There were hotspots for fly tipping in the town which had been in existence for a long time. If it had been as a result of the introduction of the three weekly collection it would have been expected that the problem would have been more widespread. Fly tipping was a national problem caused by a number of concerns. Different measures were being tried to deal with this issue and were currently being evaluated. Tribute was paid to the people of Oldham on the introduction of the three weekly collection scheme which had gone smoother than anticipated and the recycling rate was up to over 45%. The introduction of the three weekly bin collection had had a real benefit with recycling. Additional provision was available to large families by making a request which would be assessed. In terms of commercial fly tipping, this was a huge problem where operators did not want to pay the fee to dispose of waste properly. Work was ongoing locally to prosecute offenders. This was also a national problem with the Environment Agency tracking down perpetrators.

5. Councillor Shuttleworth asked the following question:

"A Care Quality Commission (CQC) report published in August 2016 rated The Royal Oldham Hospital "Inadequate", I understand that the CQC carried out a more recent inspection in autumn 2017. Could the relevant Cabinet Member please advise us of the outcome of this inspection, and give us and the residents of Oldham some assurance that the Royal Oldham Hospital is on a journey of improvement that will ensure



that the hospital delivers the highest standard of care in every department.”



Councillor Moores, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing responded that on 1<sup>st</sup> March, the CQC published its findings and final report following the latest inspection of the services for the Pennine Acute Trust carried out in October and November 2017. The findings of the inspection for Pennine Acute Trust were:

- Safe –moved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement
- Effective – stayed at Requires Improvement
- Caring – stayed at Good
- Responsive – stayed at Required Improvement
- Well-led – moved from Inadequate to Good.

The overall rating for the Trust had also improved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement. Services at the Royal Oldham Hospital had also improved from Inadequate to Requires Improvement. The Royal Oldham Hospital had also seen:

- Maternity care and Urgent and Emergency services had improved significantly with overall rating of Good
- A&E working with CCG and partners to further develop urgent care services to Good
- Rating in Safe services for urgent and emergency care had improved to Good
- Surgical services were rated Good for Caring, Responsive and Well led
- Critical Care services had improved as had services for children and young people.

An improvement plan was being developed to continue the Trust’s improvement journey. The Health and Wellbeing Board had agreed to write to Sir David Dalton welcoming the improvement to the Royal Oldham Hospital and the Trust as a whole.

6. Councillor McLaren asked the following question:

“Over recent weeks I have witnessed severe delays to traffic travelling from Oldham to Chadderton via Middleton Road, this is due to the traffic flow being restricted by vehicles wishing to turn right from Middleton Road onto Featherstall Road. Could the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways, please arrange for Officers to look into this issue and find a solution to a problem that is frustrating many road users.”

Councillor F. Hussain, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services responded that the Council’s Highways Team had been in contact with Transport for Greater Manchester who were responsible for all the traffic signal operation and optimisation within Greater Manchester and so within Oldham too. As regarded whether this junction would benefit at all from alternative

arrangements, for example a right turn filter arrow from Middleton Road onto Featherstall Road. This would only be beneficial if other works to lane markings / separation on Middleton Road were introduced too and the matter was being considered. It was also likely that the immediate congestion issues along Middleton Road were being compounded significantly currently by the major necessary bridge works on Oldham Way / Middleton Road bridge. It might be possible for alternative diversion routes which were currently being considered to be installed. It was hoped that the possible introduction of such a diversion arrangement would ease the existing congestion at the Middleton Road/Featherstall Road North junction.

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

**RESOLVED** that the questions and the responses provided be noted.

12

**TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE UNDERMENTIONED DATES, INCLUDING THE ATTACHED LIST OF URGENT KEY DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, AND TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS OR OBSERVATIONS ON ANY ITEMS WITHIN THE MINUTES FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, AND RECEIVE RESPONSES FROM CABINET MEMBERS**

The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 were submitted.

There were no questions or observations on the Cabinet meeting minutes.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 be noted.

13

**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Modern Slavery

Councillor Moores MOVED and Councillor Haque SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This Council notes:

- Though slavery was abolished in 1833, there are more slaves today than ever before in human history. Figures from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggest that there are more than 40 million people in modern slavery across the world, with nearly 25 million held in forced labour.

- There were 3805 victims of modern slavery identified in the UK in 2016. A rising number but still well below the 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims estimated by the Home Office.
- Modern Slavery is happening nationwide. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. This can include sexual and criminal exploitation.

This Council believes

1. That action needs to be taken to raise awareness of modern slavery and the fact that it is happening all over the UK.
2. That the current support for victims is not sufficient and needs to go beyond the 45 days they are currently given by the government.
3. That Councils have an important role to play in ensuring their contracts and supplies don't contribute to modern day slavery and exploitation.

Councillor Mushtaq spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sykes spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor McCann spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Hudson spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Hudson MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED the MOTION be put to the VOTE.

On being put to the VOTE, 41 votes were cast in FAVOUR of proceeding to the VOTE and 8 VOTES were cast AGAINST with 0 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore MOVED to the VOTE.

Councillor Moores exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED that:**

The Co-operative Party's Charter against Modern Slavery to ensure our procurement practices don't support slavery be adopted.

Oldham Council would:

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.

5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing system which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.

### Motion 2 – Housing Strategy

Councillor Brownridge MOVED and Councillor Chauhan SECONDED the following motion:

“This Council notes that whilst the government’s recognition that the housing market is broken is welcome there is grave concern about the concentration on increased numbers alone. It is essential that the policy supports the creation of good quality homes that meet the needs of local communities. In Oldham the existing supply is unbalanced with a heavy preponderance of properties in the lowest council tax bands and at the same time a lack of actual affordability with almost half the population only being able to afford social rents. The numbers on the housing waiting list are growing as are the number of people who are homeless and who are rough sleepers.

Current Government policy promotes continued growth in house prices to support continued consumer spending and this does not address the accommodation issues in areas of lower property values. This is exacerbated by the fact that social housing supply is at its lowest level since the 1930s and owner occupation is decreasing. Due to the increase in prices the measure of need based on income may not longer be appropriate both because the levels of income need to be higher to be eligible for a mortgage but also because many jobs are no longer secure.

The Council believes that the current strategy to increase numbers is not appropriate for areas like Oldham with low property and land values and Government’s proposals to amend the planning system undermines our desire to improve the quality of accommodation and the local environment.

Government also proposes penalties against Local Authorities if housing numbers are not delivered, failing to recognize that while Councils determine planning applications, private companies are largely responsible for building houses.”

Councillor McCann spoke in support of the MOTION.

Councillor Brownridge did not exercise her right of reply.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.



**Oldham**  
Council

**RESOLVED that: (CHANGE TO MINUTED RESOLUTIONS)**

- Lobbying be continued through the borough's MPs and the LGA for a formal recognition that new housing must meet the needs of the local community by including a wide range of tenures and to resist the attempt of Government to impose in appropriate penalties on local authorities
- The GMCA's efforts to secure financial assistance for the remediation of previously developed land which is often not financially viable in areas of low value without this subsidy be supported.
- The Government be urged to recognise that the planning system has an important role to play in protecting the quality of new housing and of the wider environment but new homes cannot be delivered by the planning system alone.

Motion 3 – The TUC

The Mayor informed the meeting that the time limit for this item had expired. Councillor Fielding as MOVER of the Motion and Councillor Hewitt as SECONDER of the Motion requested the Council permit the following motion be rolled over for discussion at the next Council meeting.

“The Council notes that the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TUC is in June 2018. Council also notes that the history of the TUC is intertwined with that of Greater Manchester, with the first meeting of the TUC taking place in 1868 at the Mechanics Institute on Princess Street in the City Centre.

Council recognises the improvements to the quality of life of working people in Oldham and across the United Kingdom that have been delivered by Trade Union campaigning, particularly on pay, conditions and safety at work.

Council resolves to:

- Write to the General Secretary of the TUC, Frances O'Grady, reaffirming this Council's commitment to Trade Unionism.
- Offer a venue and support to the North West TUC who themselves are organising a programme of events across the region to ensure that the anniversary is marked in Oldham.”

**RESOLVED** that the Motion be rolled over to the Council meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Making Oldham a 'Single Use Plastic-Free' Local Authority

Councillor Murphy MOVED and Councillor Harkness  
SECONDED the following motion:



“Council notes that:

- The introduction of the 5p bag charge has already seen use of single-use plastic bags drop by 85%.
- However, most families still throw away about 40kg of plastic per year, which could otherwise be recycled.
- The amount of plastic waste generated annually in the UK is estimated to be nearly 5 million tonnes, which has a catastrophic effect on our environment, particularly our marine environment

Council welcomes the commitment of some major businesses to reduce their use of plastic packaging and encourages all local businesses to respond positively to the Government’s recent call for evidence on reducing plastic waste.

However, Council recognises that is only in eliminating single-use plastic materials that we can achieve a significant reduction in plastic waste.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Cabinet to:

- Develop a robust strategy to make Oldham a ‘single-use plastic-free’ authority by the end of 2018 and encourage the Borough’s institutions, businesses and citizens to adopt similar measures
- End the sale and provision of single use plastic products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws in Council buildings, or council supported venues, wherever possible; promoting the use of non-plastic recyclable alternatives e.g. paper straws to ensure our venues remain accessible to those with additional needs.
- Encourage traders across the Borough to sell re-usable containers and invite customers to bring their own.
- Consider the merits and practicalities of introducing a ‘window sticker’ scheme to accredit local businesses that are committed to reducing plastic waste through, for example, offering free water bottle refills.
- Investigate the possibility of requiring pop-up food and drink vendors at council supported events to avoid single-use plastics as a condition of their contract; with a view to phasing out all single use plastics at markets and events in the Borough by the end of 2018.
- Work with tenants in commercial properties owned by Oldham Council to encourage them to phase out single use plastic cups, bottles, cutlery and straws.

Councillor Bates spoke in support of the MOTION.

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Fielding  
SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the  
motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

On being put to the vote, that the MOTION be REFERRED to  
Overview and Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** that under Council Procedure 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.



**Oldham**  
Council

### Motion 2 – Land Value Taxation

Councillor McCann MOVED and Councillor Gloster SECONDED the following Motion:

“This Council believes that Land Value Taxation (LVT) offers a credible means for local authorities to raise public revenue to fund local public services by making an annual charge upon landowners, based on the rental value of their land. This is typically levied against the unimproved value of that land, not taking into account any buildings, services or on-site infrastructure.

Council notes that:

- LVT could be revenue-neutral; that is the revenue raised could replace taxation levied through Council Tax and Business Rates. This would lift some of the burden of meeting the cost of Council services from our Borough’s low-income households and small businesses;
- LVT would encourage owners of vacant sites, particularly brown-field sites, to develop them for businesses or residential use more quickly, where planning permission has been granted, so as to generate an income rather than pay an annual charge on the unused land;
- This would discourage developers from land-banking and lead to more house building and the creation of more businesses and jobs, meaning a more vibrant Borough and less pressure to build new homes on our irreplaceable green belt;
- LVT is cheap to collect and very difficult to evade.

Council further notes that:

- Some form of LVT is already successfully in operation in over 30 countries (including Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and several US states);
- The International Monetary Fund, the Institute of Economic Affairs and the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development have all come out in favour of the tax;
- A Private Members Bill was introduced in Parliament by Caroline Lucas MP supporting LVT, and the proposal has cross-party support in principle;
- The Scottish and Welsh Governments are currently investigating the options for implementing such a tax;
- The Parliamentary Communities and Local Government Committee have just conducted an enquiry into the efficacy of various taxation methods to ‘capture’ increases in land value;
- The Government has appointed a panel of experts, chaired by Sir Oliver Letwin, charged with carrying out a review to ‘explain the gap between the number of planning permissions being granted (for houses) against those built in areas of high demand’

This Council recognising the merits of introducing Land Value Taxation, resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to:

- Sir Oliver Letwin as Chair of the Review outlining the Council's position and asking the panel to give serious consideration to recommending to Government that LVT be introduced as a means to discouraging land-banking and accelerated housing development.
- Our three local Members of Parliament asking for their support for this position.”



Councillor Brownridge spoke against the Motion.

Councillor McCann exercised his right of reply.

Councillor Sykes MOVED and Councillor Harkness SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

On being put to the vote, that the MOTION be REFERRED to Overview and Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** that under Council Procedure 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

### Motion 3 – Restricting New Hot Food Takeaways near Schools

Councillor Haque declared a pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of his ownership of a takeaway. Councillor Haque left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion or vote thereon.

Councillor Williamson MOVED and Councillor Turner SECONDED the following motion:

“This Council notes that:

- Childhood obesity has risen to epic proportions. In October 2017, the medical journal, The Lancet, reported one in every ten young people, aged 5 to 19, in the UK are classed as obese;
- In Oldham, sadly the situation is even worse. The Public Health England profile for the Borough, published July 2017, reported that 21.9% of children at Year 6 (660 in total) were classed as obese;
- Obese children are more likely to become obese adults, putting them at risk of developing serious health conditions (such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer);
- Takeaway food, where it is unhealthy, so called junk food, is undoubtedly a contributing factor in the increase;
- Although the Oldham School Meals Service is a Gold standard provider, regrettably some pupils chose to eat at or from takeaways;
- In June 2016, the Royal Society for Public Health called for a ban on the delivery of takeaway meals to school



gates. A survey conducted by the RSPH amongst young people found half had ordered takeaways on their smart phones and a quarter had paid for fast food to be delivered to the school gates;

- At least 22 local authorities have adopted Supplementary Planning Document and Local Plans that include a prohibition on new fast food takeaways within 400 meters of local schools (a buffer zone);
- In July 2012, Oldham Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document which placed restrictions on the density of hot food takeaways, but which did not include any restriction on new takeaways within a specified buffer zone.

Council resolves to ask the Planning Committee to investigate the desirability and practicality of:

- Introducing a prohibition on new takeaways within a 400 metre buffer zone as part of the Local Plan;

Council shall also contact all schools within the Borough to seek reassurances they:

- Enforce a 'stay-on-site' policy at lunchtimes;
- Ban the delivery of takeaways to the school gates for collection by pupils;

And ask them to do so; if they do not.”

Councillor Moores MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

On being put to the vote, that the MOTION be REFERRED to Overview and Scrutiny was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** that under Council Procedure 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

**NOTE:** Councillor Chauhan left the meeting during this item.

- a To note the Minutes of the following Partnership meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members

The minutes of the following Partnership meetings were submitted as follows:

Health and Wellbeing Board	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
Unity Partnership Board	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2017 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
Oldham Leadership Board	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
MioCare Board	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2017

There were no questions or observations on the Partnership meeting minutes.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Partnership meetings as detailed in the report be noted.



- a To note the Minutes of the following Joint Authority meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members

The minutes of the following Joint Authority meetings were submitted as follows:

National Peak Park Authority	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2017
	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2018
Police and Crime Panel 2017	12 <sup>th</sup> December
	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
Fire Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership Board	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA) 2017	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2017
	21 <sup>st</sup> December
	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
Transport for Greater Manchester Greater Manchester Combined Authority 2017	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
	24 <sup>th</sup> November
	15 <sup>th</sup> December
2017	
	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
Association of Greater Manchester 2017 Authorities (AGMA)	24 <sup>th</sup> November

Members raised the following questions:

Councillor McCann, GMCA Minutes, 24 November 2017, Minute 196/17 f) Autumn Budget – Councillor McCann asked about the reduction in central government funding to Greater Manchester Police. In light of the tragedies in Manchester and problems not decreasing as in Metrolink, could the position be confirmed?

Councillor Stretton, Leader of the Council responded that GMP would not be getting more money and that Central Government continued to decrease funding.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Joint Authority meetings as detailed in the report be noted.
2. The question and the response provided be noted.

**UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Legal Services which informed members of actions that had been taken following previous Council meetings and provided feedback on other issues raised at the meeting.

Councillor Harkness spoke on the report.



**RESOLVED** that the Update on Actions from Council be noted.

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### **POLITICAL BALANCE REVIEW**

Council gave consideration to report of the Director of Legal Services which detailed a Political Balance Review following the deaths of Councillor Sue Dearden and Councillor Brian Ames. A review of the allocation of seats to political groups was required at, or as soon as practicable when notice was received of a change in the composition of a political group and changes to committee membership related to political groups.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

1. The review of political balance and committees as detailed in the report be noted and agreed.
2. The review undertaken required no change to political balance or committee places.

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### **APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR FROM THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/19**

Council gave consideration to a late report of the Director of Finance which requested Council to note the appointment of Mazars by the Local Government Association Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) from the financial 2018/19 to:

- Undertake the external audit of the Statement of Financial Accounts; and
- Audit the Teacher's Pension Agency Return.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

1. The appointment of Mazars by the PSAA as the external auditors to the Council from the financial year 2018/19 be noted.
2. The appointment of Mazars as external auditors to the Teachers' Pension Agency Return for 2018/19 be approved.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.36 pm