

**COUNCIL**  
**14/07/2021 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** The Mayor – Councillor

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, G. Alexander, Ali, Alyas, M Bashforth, S Bashforth, Briggs, Brownridge, Byrne, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Curley, Davis, Dean, Garry, C. Gloster, H. Gloster, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harrison, Hobin, Hulme, A Hussain, F Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Jabbar, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, C. Phythian, Roberts, Salamat, Shah, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Surjan, Sykes, Taylor, Toor, Williamson and Williams

1           **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Chadderton, Lancaster and Leach.

2           **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19TH MAY 2021 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 be approved as a correct record subject to Councillor Lancaster to be added to the attendance list.

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

Councillors Birch and C and H Gloster declared a personal interest in item 8D and Councillors Garry and Wilkinson declared a pecuniary interest in 8D by virtue of employment with Greater Manchester Police.

Councillors Ahmed, Akhtar, Alexander, Alyas, Brownridge, Cosgrove, S and M Bashworth, Goodwin, Jabbar, Moores, Roberts, Sykes and Sheldon declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 by virtue of being a Member of the Greater Manchester Pension Scheme.

Councillor Shuttleworth declared a personal interest in the Oldham Council Cabinet minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, (page 34, item 10) by virtue of being a member of the Unity Partnership Board.

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

There were no items of Urgent Business.

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

The Mayor advised that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Shah had requested to read a statement to the meeting. Council agreed to the request.

As follows:

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council**

In November 2019, Oldham Council and Oldham's Safeguarding Board wrote to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to commission an independent review into the effectiveness of multi-agency responses to Child Sexual Exploitation in Oldham.

The review's remit is to look at historical allegations relating to child sexual exploitation and, to consider whether the Council and its partners provided an appropriate response to protect children.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority appointed Malcolm Newsham and Gary Ridgeway to oversee this review. Both Gary and Malcolm have extensive experience in social care and policing and have carried out reviews in other areas including Northamptonshire and, more recently, Manchester.

I recently wrote to Baroness Beverly Hughes, Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to ask her to provide an update on the progress of this review.

Baroness Hughes has confirmed that the review is progressing well and that they continue to receive the support and access to information that they need to complete their work effectively.

She has confirmed that the Review Team have so far received hundreds of documents, report and files, interviewed over 45 people and received 9 written submissions relating to their enquiries.

Baroness Hughes has provided assurances that a first draft of the report should be completed by September, but that a number of procedural steps must then be taken, including review by legal counsel to ensure the report is appropriately anonymised and in line with data protection legislation, and review by individuals mentioned to give them the opportunity to make representations. She has informed us that given the complexity and scale of this work, that this could take "a number of months".

We all share a desire for the review to be published as soon as possible, but we cannot rush them and risk jeopardising the ability of the Review team to complete their work diligently, thoroughly and transparently.

I can confirm that the Council will do everything in its power to support the swift publication of this report once it is finalised. Our biggest responsibility as a Council is to keep our children and young people safe. The review team are leading experts, so I have no doubt they will identify areas where our work in the past has fallen short.

I would add Madam Mayor, that nothing should be said today that seeks to pre-empt or undermine the review. I am acutely aware that those who seek to make political capital will portray whatever is found as part of a conspiracy if it falls short of completing a XXXXX, all that was done at the time to protect young people. We must not allow that to guide us, or to blind us in that we must take its findings, even where it offers challenge, and use that to ensure that lessons are learned. Nothing Madam Mayor, I repeat nothing matters more than the protection of young people and bringing abusers to trial.

I ask each and everyone of you in Oldham, firstly, help us instil confidence, so the victims feel supported to come forward. Help us educate and go into every community to teach young people what positive relationships are and what signs of abuse to watch out for, including control, grooming and inappropriate behaviour at home, in the community, or on-line. Secondly, that there is no hierarchy of victim or offender based on race, religion, social class, gender or anything else. All victims must be supported equally, and all offenders must be dealt with robustly, with the full weight of the law.

I will not shy away, and I hope I have the support of the whole chamber and the wider community. Finally, all of us in public service are here to serve the community to the best of our ability and judgement. It is a fact, a horrible fact that abuse does take place. Protesting, abusing and marginalizing those of us fighting to put it right does not help victims, or encourage decent people into public service. My personal commitment to you is honesty, hard work and accountability.

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

There were no petitions to consider.

7 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

There was no Youth Council business to consider.

8 **QUESTIONS TIME**

The Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda was Public Question Time. 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 the question would be read out by the Mayor.

a Public Questions

The following questions were submitted:



1. **Question received from Mark Birchall via email:**

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“Could we have a statement from the Leader of the Council regarding the latest vandalism and violence at the factory on the 21st June 2021. We are aware that MP, Debbie Abrahams, the Leader of OMBC and several Councillors attended to support the demonstration in Parliament Square.

Was any consideration given to the struggling business owners in the area who probably were affected by this, also the constant attendance at the factory which has now been taken to a different and more dangerous level. Has consideration been given to residents near to the factory who are having to ensure this kind of behaviour and are concerned for their own safety with the level of violence and vandalism now being carried out at the premises.”

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“The right to peaceful protest is a vital element of any functioning democracy and one that should be forcefully defended. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill that the Government are currently trying to pass and which, amongst other things allows the Police to restrict protests that are noisy, is an affront to our democracy.

Peaceful protest should not lead to vandalism and violence, however, we will always work with the Police and our partners to stop that happening. We are aware that GMP are in regular dialogue with Elbit and have a patrol plan for the area to reassure businesses and residents.”

2. **Question received from Robert Barnes via email:**

“Following the attack on Elbit Ferranti on Monday, June 21 2021 with the smashing of windows and paint being thrown on the floor outside the building, will the Council Leader categorically condemn the violence aimed at a business in our town?

Furthermore, will she also look into the issue of young children being taken to the regular protests that are held outside Elbit Ferranti? This should be a cause of great concern and treated as a potential safeguarding issue as children are too young to understand the very complex issues surrounding this matter. Children of such a young age should not be at such protests.”

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“I won’t repeat what I said in answer to the previous question. On the specific issue of young people at protest, parents and carers can make the decision to bring their children to organised demonstrations/protests. There is no legislation that enables the Local Authority to prevent this. However, if individual safeguarding concerns arise at the time of the event and it is felt that a child is at

risk of significant harm as a result, then safeguarding processes should be followed and a referral made into Children Services for consideration.



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We work closely with GMP and partner agencies to ensure safeguarding processes are followed in such circumstances and look to minimise associated risks by engaging with protest organisers in the event planning stage.”

**3. Question received from Lewis Quigg via email.**

“Will the Leader of the Council like any right minded person in our town, condemn the actions of a convicted criminal who is planning to carry out street patrols in Oldham and Chadderton? Does she agree that this is an unacceptable development, and will she take action to stop a convicted criminal from patrolling our streets and support Greater Manchester Police in asking for more street patrols and funding for our Police from the Mayor of Greater Manchester?”

**4. Question received from Debbie Barratt-Cole via email:**

“Can the Leader please tell me if she agreed with her long-time friend Mohammed Imran Ali (Irish Immy) setting up groups of people to patrol the streets at night in Chadderton and Werneth and will she be making funds for equipment needed for night time street patrols?”


The Mayor advised that as questions 3 and 4 were of a similar nature, Councillor Shah would provide one response covering both questions.

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“Thank you for your question. As a Council, we would not seek to condemn any member of the public who wishes to improve their area. People’s concerns about the levels of crime in their area are very real and something that all Members hear about from their local residents very regularly. We would, however, question whether street patrols of this nature are the best or most appropriate solution to the issues residents raise. As a result, the Council does not currently offer any support or funding to these types of groups and has no plans to do so.

GMP work closely with individuals or groups looking to establish local neighbourhood or street watch schemes like the one this question refers to. They engage directly with these groups to support and advise them on best practice including ensuring adequate insurance is in place, the establishment of codes of conduct for volunteers and making sure effective safeguarding procedures are carried out which could include Disclosure and Barring Service Checks on volunteers where required.

We have passed on details of this proposed scheme to Greater Manchester Police so that they can engage with the individuals involved directly to provide this advice and support. We will, as we



have always done, continue to fight for better funding for our Police services to increase visible policing in our neighbourhoods. The Greater Manchester Mayor has taken action to increase the funding that GMP receives locally through the police precept but more than 75% of the force's funding comes from Central Government. It is not a secret that years of Central Government cuts to police funding have led to over 20,000 fewer police on our streets over the last ten years and we will continue to highlight this and lobby for more resources for our local police."

**RESOLVED** – That the questions and responses provided be noted.

b Questions to Leader and Cabinet

**Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Group:**

"I welcome Councillor Shah to this meeting. I'm sure everyone would join me in condemning what she has had to experience recently and in doing so showing those people that we are conducting the business of the town here tonight."

My first question to the Leader tonight is on an issue that for my Liberal Democrat colleagues and I think is of paramount importance to the future of the people of our Borough, and indeed the people of our planet. I am, of course, referring to climate change and this Council's ambitious targets to become carbon neutral in 2025 and make our Borough carbon neutral by 2030. Oldham cannot of course single-handedly save the world from climate change, but by taking practical actions to reduce our carbon footprint, and by leading by example, we can make a difference. Every little helps. So, I was pleased to see in the recently published Covid Recovery Strategy reference to the 'green recovery'. But, unfortunately, when it comes to actions and targets the document falls short on specifics. It references our intention to 'develop plans' for a new District Heat Network using renewable heat from disused mines underneath the town centre; to 'start to deliver' improvements in energy efficiency in social housing; and to 'develop plans' for Council corporate assets. The mine heat project is something I personally welcome as I first suggested it to the then Leader at the October 2014 Council meeting, but sadly it must surely now be in jeopardy as the Government has failed to support the proposal as part of our Towns Fund bid? But, in any case, this misses the real point.

In Bedford, as just one example, the Council also declared a climate emergency, identified its baseline level of carbon emissions, and by installing solar panels on its Council buildings, replacing street lighting with LEDs, and establishing a hydro power scheme in the Great Ouse River, reduced its carbon emissions by 62%. 2025 is only four years away.



Would the Leader not agree that by now we as a Council should be 'doing' like Bedford and not just 'planning' and 'starting to deliver'? So, when are we going to start 'doing it'? Otherwise, how are we as a Council showing leadership and providing encouragement to our public, social and private sector partners and our citizens to join us by doing their bit to stop climate change and save our planet?"

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

"Can I acknowledge Cllr Sykes initial comments regarding the last 24 hours which have been very difficult? I cannot say that this has not affected my family and the people I love, because it has, but what I am clear about, that whoever is responsible, and for whatever reason, I will not be diverted from the task in hand. Madam Mayor our town is facing some of its biggest challenges yet, and as we emerge from Covid, the fragile nature of economy and our society will be tested to the limits. My sole focus is on the town and its people. I came into public life because I demand better for every man, woman and child here and, to realise that this will require all the energy I and everyone in this chamber and more widely into the Council and our partners have in us, so let's get on with the task in hand and with doing that I am going to defer the question to my colleague Councillor Abudl Jabbar, who has the portfolio responsibility for the area that Councillor Sykes has just raised, but I would like to thank him for standing and supporting for exactly the good of what Oldham is."

**Cllr Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member, Finance & Low Carbon:**

Thank you to Councillor Sykes for his question and thanks to his party for constantly raising the green issue and the support in a number of things that we have tried to do. I think it is a really important question. Let me go through what we are doing. It is good that it is in the Recovery Plan because that just shows the commitment of this Labour administration and we see green as an important part of recovery for this town. In terms of some of the details you talked about, can I just say that we have to set up Oldham Community Power which is solar PV panels on a number of public owned assets and they are actually generating clean electricity for those buildings. We also installed solar power panels on the Tomyfield market. We have planned to install a new ground mounted solar farm on the Wrigley Head site but sadly as you know, the Government turned down our request for funding from the decarbonisation fund.

In terms of all the other things we are doing, we have got a very comprehensive plan, it is called the Green New Deal. We are the first Council anywhere in the land to have such a detailed comprehensive plan to deal with the climate change issue. You will say that we have not seen any projects; I can assure you we are doing a number of things. The coal mine water heating system that you talked about cost £20m. We asked the Government to give us £4m from the Towns Fund. Unfortunately, they did not. That was

just to do the bore hole test and also do the feasibility. It is not off the agenda. We are looking at different funding sources. I am absolutely committed, on behalf of the administration to find a way to bring that project to reality. We are absolutely committed to that in terms of some other things we are doing.



The target that you mentioned for 2025 is for the Council buildings and for the street lighting to be carbon neutral for that date. As part of the revision of our assets, we will make sure that whatever we do next, the renewal energy stuff is taken care of and we come close to achieving carbon neutrality in our new buildings. As part of the street lighting, we are already working with the PFI provider to change the bulbs to low energy. We have done that. There are a number of things that we are doing. If you look closely Howard, we are one of the leading authorities in Greater Manchester. That is not enough, as far as I am concerned because there is a lot more to be done, but as an administration, we are doing everything we can, are totally committed, and I look forward to working with you and your group on this matter. Thank you.”

**Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Group:**

I thank the Leader of the Council for her comments and also the Deputy Leader. We will be constructive about this because it is too important not to be. My second question tonight, is a subject that I have previously raised in Council and that is using the spending power of the Council and its partners to do greater good for our communities by employing it to purchase goods and services from local producers, suppliers and trades people and to employ local people. Of course, this creates a VIRTUOUS circle, nobody disagrees with it, as local companies take on more local people and then these companies and people invest their earnings in the local economy as do our residents who are council employees. The result is a more vibrant local economy and higher levels of local employment. It is not rocket science, it's rather the reverse. The meerkat TV Celebrity Professor Alexander Olaff would call it simples, but for this to work, we need to ensure that spending is placed with providers based in our District ??? as well as Oldham itself. This strategy would reflect the new reality that I spoke about with our previous Leader, in September 2020 Council meeting, suggesting that local is the new normal. People are more likely to work from home, shop from home, socialise or engage in leisure activities, in their home, around their homes or in their home's locality. When they do venture out, it will be to local outlets. They want their Council's and its partners to reflect that attitude, to invest first and foremost in our Borough by spending, but also investing locally with trades and businesses in Chadderton, Failsworth, Lees, Royton Shaw, Upper Mill amongst others to make these District centres vibrant alongside Oldham. Sometimes that may involve thinking outside of the box which is why I recently asked for consideration for an artisan and producers' market to be established in Shaw.





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Can the Leader therefore please tell me, how far off the current 60% target for local spend are we? What is the administration going to do to increase our local spending by stages, substantially above the current target of 60%? What plans are there to invest and spending in our District Centres as well as Oldham and what plans are there to earmark more of our Council jobs and those of our partners for local people who live in our Borough? What support are we giving to local people so that they can access these jobs at the Council, Health Bodies, Colleges and other public services. We need to lead by example as it will be us locally who builds back better, and we need to do it for ourselves. It is already clear to me that no one else is going to do it or help us do it in any meaningful way”.

**Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“We are absolutely committed to local spending in Oldham and the recovery of our economy. I am setting up working training to ensure that our procurement process focusses on social value far greater than it does at the moment. In terms of economic recovery set up, I have arranged and will be launching an Economic Review Board which will be chaired by Alan Francis, who is the Principal of Oldham College, another national and local expert who will help support in our building back agenda. Specific data will be provided to you and I am absolutely committed to economic recovery and recent partnerships between the college and the MCA employment for young people is a step board and my desiring commitment to show that I am willing to work collaboratively to get the best and go there.

The question around artisan markets, I recently met with you Councillor Sykes and we had this discussion and I am absolutely committed which is why I have got a Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Businesses which will focus on encouraging and supporting businesses and District Centres via establishing hubs but also I will look and provide and commit to the opportunity of investing in local people and that will be first and foremost in my agenda. Thank you very much.”

**Councillor Graham Sheldon, Leader of the Conservative Group:**

“It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your success to the position of Leader of the Labour Group and of this Council. It is the first formal opportunity I have had to wish you well in this significant and demanding role. The Conservative Group will support you when we agree, and put forward a fair and constructive objection, where we may disagree. I am shocked by the news we heard yesterday about your personal trauma, indeed the attack on a person or their property, must not be tolerated. The Conservative Group condemn all verbal and physical abuse to any person carrying out their work or duties. I do not know of any background information but there seems to be tension in Oldham at the moment, and I am hoping that by working with local community and

Police, these tensions will be calmed and subside. The Police must be our first call to deal with the upholding of the law and I would ask Councillor Shah to agree that any suggestions of vigilante groups keeping law and order in our town, are strongly discouraged and stopped.”



**Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“I have previously answered this question as a public question, but I would like to thank and welcome Cllr Graham Sheldon’s comments, but I would also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone in the chamber, that whilst there are tensions in Oldham, the people of this chamber have the utmost responsibility to make sure that we challenge ourselves in our conduct, our colleagues in our conduct and our political groups in our conduct and that goes wider than just the membership of this chamber, Madam Mayor. If we are truly promoting political peace, which I gave my commitment to at Annual Council, when I was declared Leader of this Council, then I would like to see that demonstrated cross party, that we call out bad behaviour, whether that’s one of our own, or if that is anybody else. Of course, I do not understand why I keep getting these continuous questions around vigilante groups and the police being first point of contact. I find it deeply offensive that there is even an assumption that this is not something that I would believe in. I have mentioned previously about my upbringing, my background, my experiences but I am here, and I know who I am, and I am here to lead the Council to make the lives better of every single resident who lives in this Council.

I welcome Cllr Graham Sheldon’s comments but I would also like to point people to using policy areas to attack each other and have discussion and debate around ,but not to make any other assumptions that are dumbfounded, and they know are not necessary or appropriate for this chamber, because every time we speak or behave in a certain way, or give room to these kind of conversations, we are actually doing a disservice to democracy for other people who are watching us and I would just like to remind everybody of our responsibilities.”

**Councillor Graham Sheldon, Leader of the Conservative Group:**

“I thank the Leader for answering that question and I can certainly say that we will work together with everybody if that does occur. The second question is on a brighter note, with the easing or end of lockdown next Monday, we are all aware of new expectations which could increase the Covid infections in the country, in the Borough. We are told that the vaccination could be up to 98% effective in preventing these infections. I believe it is still a race to vaccinate people, as the disease continues to spread. Long Covid is something that is being discussed more and more. There are thousands of people of all ages, but sadly it is also affecting young children. Will the Council Leader join with me in thanking the Government, Scientists, medical professionals for their works so far, and to encourage people within the Borough to take the offer of

the vaccination if they are able, and at the earliest opportunity? not only to protect themselves but their family, friends and those around them. I will continue to wear a face covering in crowded spaces and hope others do the same”.



**Councillor Arooj, Leader of the Council responded:**

“Thank you, Councillor Graham Sheldon, for your question. Our rates are significantly high locally. We are actively monitoring them. We have vaccinated nearly 300,000 in total of first and second doses in Oldham and will continue to promote our pop-up community clinics across the town.


I would also like to thank the officers of this Council, the community and voluntary sector, who have really adapted in flexible ways to make sure that access for testing and vaccinations are available to our communities and across the town. I have deep concerns that I have raised publicly about the announcement around the 19<sup>th</sup> July. I will also continue to wear the face mask, as my colleagues will do in this chamber, and we need to continue to do what we have done all along, which is what Oldham’s response has been, putting our residents first, protecting our loved ones, families and our wider communities, and in that sense I would like to use this opportunity to thank Councillor Graham Sheldon for his question, and the scientists that have had a difficult challenge, that has sometimes played out publicly, in managing politicians, especially those that are Ministers in Government at this time, who seem to blurt out announcements for the sake of it and at times hasn’t put public health or the concerns of our residents, at the fore front, but we will continue in Oldham in the same spirits that we have, and that is taking all the precautions that are out there, staying safe and protecting our loved ones.”

**Councillor Brian Hobin**

I would also like to convey my thoughts to the Leader of the Council on the events of yesterday. She is well aware that she has our backing. On policy matters, the previous administration purchased Spindles Shopping Centre at what was supposed to be a bargain price. I would like to know if this administration has carried on with that plan, if they have any different plans for Spindles and if there is an update on what the bargain price is now up to with the added spending that has been taking place on the site. Thank you.

**Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“Thank you Madam Mayor and I would also like to thank Councillor Brian Hobin for reaching out and supporting me through the last 24 hours. Buying Spindles was a great decision for Oldham for several reasons. It was a bargain, even if we knocked it down, the land alone is worth more than what we paid for it. It gives the public control of a large site right in the heart of the town centre meaning we can turn it into something that works for Oldham rather than leaving it to rot in the hands of disinterested Californian



investors. It is a key to unlocking several other projects because we own Spindles so we can create a new performance space, develop a great new site for the XXXX market traders and create much more cost-effective Council offices, develop new houses in the town to reduce pressure to build on the green belt and create a brand-new town centre park. Without Spindles this all becomes a lot harder. As we develop our plans for Spindles, it is vital that regardless of the opinions of some in this chamber, that residents are at the heart of our decisions. This is their town centre. We received more than 2000 responses to the consultation we ran earlier in the year. We will be consulting again in the summer to see what people think of our earlier ideas designed in response to what people have said. The purchase of Spindles was completed in October 2020 at the cost of £9.5m and this purchase included the whole site and all leases with the exception of a leasehold on the Top Man unit, which was purchased later in June 2021. There are huge opportunities here and I will be continuing with that plan because it has been endorsed not just by my predecessor Council Leader, Sean Fielding but also residents of this town and in that spirit we will continue.”

### **Councillor Shuttleworth**

“I wish to bring to the attention of elected members a posting by an individual who stood for election at the local elections on 6<sup>th</sup> May in this Borough, and I apologise in advance for the wording and I quote:

Definition of 'Parasite', "an organism that lives in or on an organism of another species (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the other's expense."


Speaking of which, did you know for the pleasure of wearing a few baubles and chains the Mayor of Oldham will trouser an extra £15,662 in allowances for just putting a faux fur coat on and parading around in chains. They will cost you £25,638 for the privilege.

The leveler in me thinks this is rotten hypocrisy of the highest order when the same Councillors complain about children going hungry. Meanwhile they gorge themselves on taxpayer funded civic meals and events whilst being paraded around like the prize pig. That doesn't include the cost of the Mayoral Chauffeur driven car by the way. What a Rotten Borough! End of quote.

May I ask the Leader to express her thoughts about this comment and also ask Cllr Shah to formally raise this with the Leader of the Conservative Group in Oldham to establish if these are the views of his group, and if not, what action he proposes to take against the individual concerned?”

### **Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

I thank Cllr Shuttleworth for his question. I'm sure I share the view of most people in this chamber and those watching online that this sort of attitude and language is hugely destructive. We've seen



over the last year what an important role the Mayor of Oldham plays, raising money for charity, supporting communities and doing little things that make a big difference for people like marking birthdays and anniversaries. I would encourage the poster to look at the Mayor's Facebook page to see all the incredible activity and hard work the role involves, and will certainly raise the issue with the Leader of the Conservative Group.

I'd like to raise a wider point though. We're all very aware of the hate being stoked up in our communities. We've seen it online, locally and nationally with the shocking response to the result at the Euros. Let's be clear: tolerating this hatred online has real world consequences.

We've seen a growth in the kind of dehumanising language used by Mr Quigg. By calling someone a parasite, we invite people to treat them as less than human and open to attack. Like several other members in this chamber, I've experienced a barrage of it in the last couple of years. You can attack my political decisions all you want, but most of the time instead I get attacks against me as a person. Sadly we've seen people in this chamber echoing the arguments of those who seek to divide us, even when they admit elsewhere there's no evidence to support them. I hope they can now see the potential and real consequences of their actions. It's not a game – people's lives are at stake. Oldham is better than this, and it's time for us to show it".

### **Councillor Dean**

"Please could the appropriate Cabinet member give me an update on the future renovation to the archway and house at the entrance to Greenacres Cemetery.

This is an historic and attractive building that has now been encased in scaffolding for over 15 years because of structural issues. I have raised the problem on a number of occasions, and been told solutions are being looked at, but no progress seems to have been arrived at. This is an iconic entrance to Oldham's largest cemetery, and residents are asking for progress. I would be grateful for a positive reply."

### **Cllr Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member, Finance & Low Carbon responded:**

"Thank you to Councillor Dean for his question. The Council took steps back in 2016 to address a number of structural issues that were found to this archway structure, that consisted of two attached residential properties that also have structural problems. A protective scaffold was put into place at the time, to ensure that access would be maintained to the Cemetery, whilst funding opportunities could be explored to address the necessary remedial works identified which have been estimated to be in the region of £0.5m.

While Government cuts mean an ever-decreasing funding pool for competing priorities, we are currently undertaking a strategic asset

management review of the Council's estate to see if a potential funding opportunity can be found to support the necessary renovation works."



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### **Councillor Alyas**

"We are all aware that during the last round of budgetary considerations it was decided to reduce the amount of direct funding that Mahdlo receive from the Council and I am aware that the Council offered to support Mahdlo in accessing alternative funding streams. Can the relevant Cabinet Member please tell us what support is being provided to Mahdlo and have they been able to access alternative funding?"

### **Councillor Eddie Moores, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People responded:**

"Thank you Cllr Alyas. I would like to assure Members that we have an ongoing dialogue with Mahdlo. Councillor Officers have met with Mahdlo on several occasions and supported them in identifying possible funding streams. I am pleased to be able to tell you that in addition to the £300k investment the Council will give to Mahdlo in this financial year the Council has also helped them to secure additional funding. This includes

- £4,714 from the local support grant
- £18,000 from the Restart Grant
- £75,000 from the Additional Restrictions Grant
- In addition, Mahdlo, following a bid, will receive a further £34K investment from our Holiday Activities Fund; this will support their activities during the Summer.
- The Council is also investigating how its social framework supports the wider voluntary sector offer including Mahdlo.

As promised, The Council supported Mahdlo in identifying funding streams and this support will continue to allow Mahdlo to make an impact on the lives of so many young people."

### **Councillor Murphy**

"The Government has recently consulted on new proposals to overhaul refuse collection and recycling in England. The stated aim is to recycle 65% of our waste by 2035 and reduce landfill to a maximum of 10%.

The proposals have been met with dire warnings in the media and from some councils that homes will be cursed with seven bins as a result, that bin collection is being 'nationalised', and that the proposals represent 'costly chaos'.

In Oldham we are ahead of the game in already providing for free garden and food waste collections, but can the Cabinet Member please tell me what the Government's proposals would mean for Oldham, when we are against the 65% target, and whether the

10% target for landfill might mean our Borough is threatened with more air-polluting incinerators, like the one rearing its ugly head to burn the residual non-recyclable waste?"



**Oldham**  
Council

**Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Finance & Low Carbon.**

"Thank you Councillor Murphy for your important question. The waste collected within Oldham is disposed of through a shared contract with other Greater Manchester Authorities. Given the combined authority aims to achieve 55% household recycling by 2025, 60% recycling across the 20 Household Waste Recycling Centres by 2021 and at least 90% diversion from landfill by 2021 we are well placed to deal with the Governments proposals with no plans for additional facilities."

**Councillor Woodvine**

"As a result of once having had more Turnpike Roads than anywhere else in the country the Civil Parish of Saddleworth, which was at that time in the West Riding of Yorkshire, has twenty-five surviving milestones which have fallen into a state of disrepair after being neglected.

They were erected in 1894 and as such are historically significant so please can the Cabinet Member responsible commit to repairing and restoring these milestones on Saddleworth's highway network?

I have relevant reports into the current, deteriorating, condition of the milestones which I can share with the Cabinet Member which includes information and shows where they are located in Saddleworth."

***Prior to Councillor Jabbar's response, as follows, the Mayor advised that due to timings, Cllr Woodvine's question would be the last question to receive a response.***

**Cllr Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance & Low Carbon**

"Thank you Councillor Woodvine for this question. Whilst in the full bid it would be necessary to demonstrate that this contributes to building back better, and has significant community support, it would in theory be eligible for a bid through the Local Improvement Fund if you wish to apply."

## **QUESTIONS ON CABINET MINUTES**

Council was requested to note the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on the undermentioned dates and to receive any questions on any items within the minutes from Members of the

Council who were not Members of the Cabinet, and receive responses from Cabinet Members. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 and 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 were submitted.

Members raised the following questions:

**Councillor Byrne –**

“On the street bin replacement, it does not seem clear whether the bin replacement is going to cover the whole borough. Each time I have made an enquiry, I have had a rather ambiguous answer because in my ward and ward surroundings, we have bins that have been removed and not replaced and when we ask the question about replacement, that response ambiguous in some cases, they say “we will leave you an extra bag”. When I look through these, I didn’t find a commitment to site. I presume we are going to be sent a list of possible sites so that we can comment on them?”

**Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

“Councillor Chadderton is not present today. I will pass on Councillor Byrne’s comments and pass them on to Councillor Chadderton. Thank you so much.”

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**QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS**

Council was requested to note the minutes of the following Joint and Partnership meetings and the relevant spokesperson to respond to questions from members.

The minutes of the Joint Authorities and Partnerships were submitted as follows:

AGMA	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
GMCA	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2021
GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
GM Waste and Recycling Committee	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
GM Health and Social Care Partnership	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2021 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
GM Transport Committee	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
National Park Authority	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
Oldham Leadership Board	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021



Commissioning Partnership Board	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
Health and Wellbeing Board	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2021



Members raised the following questions:

**Councillor H Gloster–**

“GMCA minutes 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 – GMCA 37/21 – GM Brownfield Housing Fund – Additional Award of Funding from MHCLG –“Over £81m had been awarded to Greater Manchester to support Housing Development projects on Brownfield land sites. Please can the Cabinet Member tell me how much of this money has been awarded for Brownfield developments in Oldham and how many extra new homes can now be built on Brownfield instead of on Green Belt sites as a result. Is there any estimate as to how much more money would be needed in Oldham to build all the new homes proposed for the Borough in the Places for Everyone plan solely on Brownfield sites.”

**Councillor Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member, Housing responded:**

“I am delighted to confirm that Oldham has been successful in securing a provisional allocation from the fund for just over £8m across four sites to deliver up to 551 new homes. Unfortunately, no estimate exists of how much it will cost for all Brownfield sites in Oldham to be built on, however I can assure you that we will continue to do everything that we can to make sure that we bid and are successful in bidding for housing development on Brownfield sites and to maximise the funding opportunities that will support this approach. We have discussed this before at Full Council. The flexible housing fund exists to help us do that. I would also note that it is not possible to meet the Tory housing need target. There just aren’t enough of them despite all of our efforts scouring the Borough for any sites that may become available, developing the mill strategy and significant increasing the number of homes planned for the town centre.”

**Councillor Al-Hamdani**

“GMCA 33/21 – Climate Emergency – 6-month update – Over £10m of Green Homes Grants have been awarded or energy efficiency and over £80m of funds secured to retrofit public buildings in Greater Manchester, with an additional £15m of grants anticipated to be made available this year. Can the Cabinet Member tell me how much of that money has been brought into Oldham? How many homes in the Borough have received energy efficiency upgrades and which specific public buildings have been retrofitted as a result of this investment.”

**Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member, Housing responded:**

“I think we have reported to Council before about Oldham leading on delivery of the public sector section of the green homes grants programme and we have been able to bid for upgrades for housing that we own in the Borough through that programme. Thirty homes in Oldham have received energy efficiency upgrades between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 funded by £130,000 from the Green Homes Local Authority delivery scheme. Further installations are in progress and will continue until the end of the year and that includes doing wall insulation and solar panels. Referrals can still be made at [www.eonenergy.com/greenhomesgrants](http://www.eonenergy.com/greenhomesgrants). £94,000 has been allocated from the public sector decarbonisation fund from LED Lighting scheme at Oldham Leisure Centre”.

**Councillor Mark Kenyon**

“GM Health & Care Board minutes 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Please can someone tell me why it has taken 18 months for these minutes to be presented to a meeting of Oldham Council for Scrutiny?”

**Councillor Zahid Chauhan, Cabinet Member, Health and Social Care responded:**

Thank you Cllr Kenyon for your question. There was no meeting of the GM Health and Care Board between 31<sup>st</sup> January and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The minutes of the meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 were not approved until the meeting in March 2021 and therefore could not be presented to the Full meeting of the Council before that date.”

**Councillor Hamblett**

“Peak District National Park minutes – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 Climate Change Member Task Group Annual Report. This week we have heard the wonderful news that a baby beaver has been born on Exmoor for the first time in 400 years. Beavers are a force multiplier for good in the fight against climate change. Martin Viarley from the Cheshire Wildlife Trust described the new little guy as a super-hero who can create decarbon capturing landscapes and reduce the impact of floods, droughts and wildfires and looks really cute into the bargain. Plans are now also underway to introduce beavers in Cheshire, Cumbria, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Yorkshire. In part because of the project funded by the Peoples Post Code Lottery. Please can I ask our representative on the Peak District National Parks Authority Board if the climate change Member Task Group discussed reintroducing beavers in any part of the Peak District and if he does not have that information to hand if he can please explore this exciting prospect at the next meeting of the Board?”

**Councillor Colin McLaren**

“I can advise that the Lead Officer for the Member Climate Change Task Group can confirm that the Task Group has not considered beavers at all in their work so far. However, the

National Environment Rural Economy team Manager is able to offer some further information. The National Park Authority currently has no firm plans to introduce beavers to the Peak District, nor is this a topic which has been considered by the Climate Change Member Task Group since in the Peak District there are other measures such as Moorland restoration and Woodland creation which are likely to have a far greater impact on climate change. We are however aware that a partnership organisation is currently considering the introduction of beavers to their land in the national park. We are broadly supportive of this proposal subject to further evaluation of the habitat suitability and potential impacts. The authority is currently in discussion with partners about producing and implementing a nature recovery plan for the Peak District. As part of this, consideration will be given to the role of reintroduction of relevant species including beavers might play in. Any reintroduction would need to follow appropriate guidelines and consider both potential positive and negative impacts and would need to have support from landowners and need to be adequately resourced. The Peak park is certainly considering it but would want this to be done within the context of other nature conservation and climate change priorities. A proposed nature recovery plan would provide exactly that opportunity and this work will be shared with partners over the coming 12 months.”

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## **NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

### Motion 1 - Recovery in Education and Young Children's Development

Councillor Mushtaq MOVED and Councillor Moores  
SECONDED the following MOTION:

This Council notes that:

- Sir Kevan Collins, appointed by the Prime Minister as the Government's Education Recovery Commissioner judged that some £15bn was needed to repair the damage done to the nation's pupils because of Covid.
- On 2nd June the Government published its plans for education recovery after the pandemic. Its offer, £1.4bn, falls far short and is completely inadequate to build back better from the pandemic and have an education system that supports high standards and strong mental health for everyone.
- The Government's funding is intended mainly for tutors for children in schools. Other essential support, especially for disadvantaged children is not provided for.
- Moreover, there is no mention of support to ensure good development of children in their early years.

This Council further notes that

- Evidence from research for the Government supports the necessity for greater resources for children in Oldham, who are among the poorest and most vulnerable. Oldham suffered extended periods of lock-down and studies have shown that pupils have fallen behind, losing progress in maths and reading. Progress, about which Oldham is rightfully proud, in reducing the gap in attainment between Oldham's children and those nationally, has been jeopardised. It has been confirmed in national research that the poorest pupils have lost more learning than the average.
- Prolonged absence from social contact with peers and adults in school has negatively affected the mental health of children and young people.
- Attendance in early years settings in Oldham, as more generally in the country, has fallen during the pandemic. This has implications for their development and school readiness.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To urge the Government to value and invest in all our children, so they are supported to develop well, to learn, succeed, and go on to have bright futures.
- To write to the Prime Minister and call on the Government to scale up its ambition for all our children in their early years, in school and in adolescence, to provide the resources needed to ensure that no child is left behind by putting in the investment called for by its own former Education Recovery Commissioner. This investment must include proper provision for pupil and early years premiums, ensuring access to school lunch throughout the year, and to sports and social activities which promote health and mental wellbeing.
- To continue to use the resources available to the Council for the development of all Oldham's children – in school, in college and in early years settings – and to encourage families to do what they can to promote the sound development of their children.

Councillor Mushtaq spoke on the Motion.

Councillor Moores spoke on the Motion.

Councillor H Gloster spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sheldon spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Ali spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sykes spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Mushtaq exercised his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. Oldham Council urges the Government to value and invest in all our children, so they are supported to develop well, to learn, succeed, and go on to have bright futures; and
2. Oldham Council to write to the Prime Minister and call on the Government to scale up its ambition for all our children in their early years, in school and in adolescence, to provide the resources needed to ensure that no child is left behind by putting in the investment called for by its own former Education Recovery Commissioner. This investment must include proper provision for pupil and early years premiums, ensuring access to school lunch throughout the year, and to sports and social activities which promote health and mental wellbeing; and
3. The Council to continue to use the resources available to the Council for the development of all Oldham's children – in school, in college and in early years settings – and to encourage families to do what they can to promote the sound development of their children.

### Motion 2 - Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill

Councillor Hulme MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED the following MOTION:

This Council notes

1. The ongoing climate crisis is the biggest challenge we face in our world. Climate breakdown is causing global temperatures and sea levels to continue to rise and we are experiencing more unseasonal and extreme weather events are taking place.
2. That Oldham Council has declared a climate emergency and is pursuing a Green New Deal strategy to meet ambitious targets of a zero carbon Oldham by 2030 including creating new sustainable, green jobs.
3. The work by local organisations such as the RSPB and City of Trees alongside the Council to improve natural habitats across the Borough and at a regional level by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to meet their 2038 target
4. That despite Parliament declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, the Government's actions haven't matched its words. An emergency requires strong, decisive action to reverse the climate and ecological crisis. One in seven native British species are now at risk of extinction and tree-planting targets have been missed by over 50%.

This Council believes that

1. That the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill would create the powers needed to take strong, urgent action on both the climate and ecological emergencies missing from the current Climate Change Act. The bill would require the Government to: ensure that the UK reduces greenhouse gas emissions in line with its legally-binding international obligations to limit

global heating to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; protects and restores habitats, woodlands, wetlands and the wider natural world and establish a representative Citizens' Assembly to involve people from all parts of the UK in deciding which policies are needed to avoid irreversible environmental damage.

2. Local Authorities across the country will need national Government funding if we are to stop climate breakdown.

The Council resolves to:

1. Support the campaign to get the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill passed and ask the Chief Executive to write to Oldham's three MPs urging them to pledge to support the Bill;
2. Raise awareness of the bill and the ongoing climate emergency as well as local projects tackling the issue;
3. Ask the Chief Executive to write to: the Environment Minister, the Rt. Hon. George Eustice MP; the President of the COP26 Climate Conference, the Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma MP, and the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP, informing them of this Council's support for the Bill and urging government time be allocated to the Bill to enable it to become law.

Councillor Moores spoke on the Motion.

Councillor Jabbar spoke on the Motion.

Councillor C Gloster spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Hulme exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, XX votes were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION and 5 were cast AGAINST with 1 ABSENTION. The MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. Oldham Council support the campaign to get the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill passed and ask the Chief Executive to write to Oldham's three MPs urging them to pledge to support the Bill; and
2. Oldham Council raise awareness of the bill and the ongoing climate emergency as well as local projects tackling the issue; and
3. The Chief Executive be requested to write to: the Environment Minister, the Rt. Hon. George Eustice MP; the President of the COP26 Climate Conference, the Rt. Hon. Alok Sharma MP, and the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP, informing them of this Council's support for the Bill and urging government time be allocated to the Bill to enable it to become law.

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Hamblett  
SECONDED the following MOTION:



This Council recognises that:

- Burning fossil fuels contributes significantly to global warming, jeopardising the stability of our climate upon which our well-being and economy depend. Such activity also has a negative impact upon air quality and so public health.
- Research demonstrates that 80% or more of the world's proven fossil fuel reserves will have to remain unburnt if we are to have a reasonable chance of keeping global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, the globally agreed target for climate change mitigation.
- Since 80% of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, the reserves of the fossil fuel industry risk becoming 'stranded assets' with little or no value – representing a substantial financial risk for those that invest in them.
- Greater Manchester Pension Fund currently has around £1.7 billion invested in the oil, coal and gas industries. This is environmentally and financially irresponsible.
- To date, over 1,100 institutions representing over \$14 trillion in assets have committed to divest from fossil-fuel companies. These include the World Council of Churches, the Irish state, New York City, the British Medical Association and a growing number of UK local authority pension funds.
- As a Local Authority with a commitment to become carbon-neutral by 2025, it is illogical for Oldham Council to make employer contributions towards a pension fund that is committed to investments in fossil-fuel companies.

Council resolves:

- Not to invest directly in fossil fuel companies.
- To mandate its representative to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund Board to call for the adoption of Responsible Investment policies which:
  - Immediately freeze any new investment in the top 200 publicly traded fossil fuel companies;
  - By the end of this year, divest from direct ownership of companies involved in coal mining;
  - Within two years, divest from direct ownership of all fossil fuel companies, along with any commingled funds that include any fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds;
  - Set out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting all other investments, and
  - Focus future investments on areas that minimise climate change risk and, where possible, invest in local climate solutions that will benefit fund members, their families and the wider community.
- To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Leaders and Chief Executives of the other 9 Greater Manchester local

authorities outlining this Council's position and asking for their support.

Councillor Al-Hamdani spoke on the motion.

Councillor Hamblett spoke on the motion.



## AMENDMENT

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Hulme SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

This Council recognises that:

- Burning fossil fuels contributes significantly to global warming, jeopardising the stability of our climate upon which our well-being and economy depend. Such activity also has a negative impact upon air quality and so public health.
- Research demonstrates that 80% or more of the world's proven fossil fuel reserves will have to remain unburnt if we are to have a reasonable chance of keeping global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, the globally agreed target for climate change mitigation.
- Since 80% of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, the reserves of the fossil fuel industry risk becoming 'stranded assets' with little or no value – representing a substantial financial risk for those that invest in them.
- Greater Manchester Pension Fund currently has around £1.7 billion invested in the oil, coal and gas industries.
- To date, over 1,100 institutions representing over \$14 trillion in assets have committed to divest from fossil-fuel companies. These include the World Council of Churches, the Irish state, New York City, the British Medical Association and a growing number of UK local authority pension funds.

Council resolves:

- Not to invest directly in fossil fuel companies.
- To mandate its representative to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund Advisory Panel to support the current Responsible Investment policies, which seek to:
  - Invest to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest, in line with the Paris Agreement;
  - Collaborate with partners including Make My Money Matter and the Paris Aligned Asset Owner group, and use the Net Zero Investor Framework to develop a 2030 target in line with the PICC's 1.5-degree pathway which sets out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting the Fund's investments;



- Be a responsible shareowner activist and proactively work to campaign for all companies in which the fund has an interest to pursue carbon neutrality and environmentally friendly practices to create real world impact and reductions in emissions;
  - Manage financial risks and continue to be in the top quartile of performance of LGPS Pension Funds, which has resulted in over £3.4 billion return in excess of average fund performance through a Just Transition to protect the interests of pension holders, workers and taxpayers across Greater Manchester. Set out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting all other investments, and
  - Focus future investments on areas that minimise climate change risk and, where possible, invest in local climate solutions that will benefit fund members, their families and the wider community.
- To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Leaders and Chief Executives of the other 9 Greater Manchester local authorities outlining this Council's position and asking for their support.

Councillor Sykes spoke AGAINST the amended motion.  
Councillor Al-Hamdani exercised his right of reply. ??????  
Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.?????

ON being put to the vote, XX votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and XXX votes were cast AGAINST with 9 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDEMNT was therefore CARRIED.

Councillor Al-Hamdani exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, xx votes were cast in FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and xx votes were cast AGAINST with xx ABSENTIONS. The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

#### **RESOLVED -**

1. Not to invest directly in fossil fuel companies.
2. To mandate its representative to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund Advisory Panel to support the current Responsible Investment policies, which seek to:
  - Invest to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest, in line with the Paris Agreement;
  - Collaborate with partners including Make My Money Matter and the Paris Aligned Asset Owner group, and use the Net Zero Investor Framework to develop a 2030 target in line with the PICC's 1.5-degree pathway which sets out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting the Fund's investments;

- Be a responsible shareowner activist and proactively work to campaign for all companies in which the fund has an interest to pursue carbon neutrality and environmentally friendly practices to create real world impact and reductions in emissions;
  - Manage financial risks and continue to be in the top quartile of performance of LGPS Pension Funds, which has resulted in over £3.4 billion return in excess of average fund performance through a Just Transition to protect the interests of pension holders, workers and taxpayers across Greater Manchester. Set out an approach to quantifying and addressing climate change risks affecting all other investments, and
  - Focus future investments on areas that minimise climate change risk and, where possible, invest in local climate solutions that will benefit fund members, their families and the wider community.
3. To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Leaders and Chief Executives of the other 9 Greater Manchester local authorities outlining this Council's position and asking for their support.

### Motion 2 – Pavement Parking: Options for Change

Councillor Murphy MOVED and Councillor C Gloster SECONDED the following motion:

This Council notes that:

- Pavement parking can pose a hazard to pedestrians, especially people with sight loss, parents with pushchairs, wheelchair users and other disabled people.
- People with sight loss are especially at risk as they can be forced into the road and faced with oncoming traffic that they cannot see.
- Pavements are not designed to take the weight of vehicles and so surfaces can become damaged or subside, presenting a further hazard for pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities.

Action to tackle pavement parking in this Borough is currently problematic because:

- The current legislation on nuisance pavement parking is confusing.
- The legal remedies available to tackle nuisance pavement parking are unsatisfactory.
- Greater Manchester Police has previously refused a Council request for assistance with enforcement.
- Council:
- Awaits with interest the Government's promised response to the public submissions made to the Department of

Transport's 'Pavement Parking: Options for Change' consultation, but regrets that this response, promised by 31 March, is now over three months late.

- Anticipates that the outcome of the consultation will be for government to grant new powers to local authorities to address nuisance pavement parking, rather than imposing an unnecessary blanket ban that will be onerous on residents and costly and difficult for local authorities to enforce.
- Council resolves to:
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Transport requesting that the Government's response to the consultation now be published as promised.
- Ask the relevant Executive Director to conduct a survey amongst the elected members of this Council asking members to identify streets within their ward where nuisance pavement parking occurs.
- Ask the relevant Cabinet Member to bring to a future meeting of this Council a report with the findings of this survey and details of the enforcement action that this Council proposes to take, taking account of any new powers the Government promises to make available to local authorities in their published response to the consultation.

Councillor Williams spoke on the motion.

#### AMENDMENT

Councillor Williams MOVED and Councillor Hulme SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

This Council notes that:

- Pavement parking can pose a hazard to pedestrians, especially people with sight loss, parents with pushchairs, wheelchair users and other disabled people.
- People with sight loss are especially at risk as they can be forced into the road and faced with oncoming traffic that they cannot see.
- Pavements are not designed to take the weight of vehicles and so surfaces can become damaged or subside, presenting a further hazard for pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities.

Action to tackle pavement parking in this Borough is currently problematic because:

- The current legislation on nuisance pavement parking is confusing.
- The legal remedies available to tackle nuisance pavement parking are unsatisfactory.
- Greater Manchester Police has previously refused a Council request for assistance with enforcement.
- Council:

- Awaits with interest the Government's promised response to the public submissions made to the Department of Transport's 'Pavement Parking: Options for Change' consultation, but regrets that this response, promised by 31 March, is now over three months late.
- Anticipates that the outcome of the consultation will be for government to grant new powers to local authorities to address nuisance pavement parking, rather than imposing an unnecessary blanket ban that will be onerous on residents and costly and difficult for local authorities to enforce.
- Council resolves to:
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Transport requesting that the Government's response to the consultation now be published as promised.
- Ask the responsible Cabinet member to share with members the outcome of the ongoing GM consultation on pavement parking and discuss how it can be implemented in their wards

Councillor S Bashforth spoke on the amendment.

Councillor C Gloster spoke on the amendment.

Councillor Murphy spoke on the amendment.

ON being put to the vote, XX votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and XXX votes were cast AGAINST with xxx ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDEMNT was therefore CARRIED.

On being put to the vote, xx votes were cast in FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and xx votes were cast AGAINST with xx ABSENTIONS. The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Transport requesting that the Government's response to the consultation now be published as promised; and
2. Ask the responsible Cabinet member to share with members the outcome of the ongoing GM consultation on pavement parking and discuss how it can be implemented in their wards

### **Motion 3 – Hands off our Peak District National Park**

Councillor H Gloster MOVED and Councillor Kenyon SECONDED the following MOTION:

Council notes that:

- 2021 is the 70th anniversary of the Peak District and other National Parks

- Our precious National Parks represent an irreplaceable national natural resource which provide enjoyment, education and employment for countless thousands of people every year and are treasured and loved by millions more.
- At present, every National Park is managed by its own LOCAL Park Authority with LOCAL representatives who know and serve the community and keep LOCAL oversight. The Park District National Park Authority includes an appointed representative from Oldham Council.
- Council is therefore gravely concerned that the Glover Review of 2019 proposed the replacement of the local National Parks Authorities with a National Landscape Service which would centralise services under one, nationally run, new organisation, and that the Government is giving active consideration to accepting this recommendation.
- Council is opposed to the replacement of the locally run National Parks Authorities because:
- It is contrary to the Government's 'levelling-up' agenda which involves government decentralising power and working more directly with local partners and communities.
- The 2019 Conservative Party Manifesto stated that "the days of Whitehall knows best are over" (p.26) and pledged to give communities of all sizes far more control. This Council questions how a centralist National Landscapes Service would achieve this.
- The move is contrary to international good practice in the management of protected landscapes which emphasises the importance of management being undertaken with, and through, local people and mainly for, and by, them.
- Locally run and locally managed National Parks consider local circumstances and take account of local feelings and requirements without the burdensome red-tape of national management.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State urging them not to replace local National Parks Authorities with a National Landscape Service or to take any step which will remove or degrade their powers
- Ask the Chief Executive to send a copy of this letter to the Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority
- Ask the Chief Executive to also copy in our three local MPs and the Chief Executives of other local authorities covered by the Peak District National Park asking for their support and/or similar action

#### AMENDMENT

Councillor McLaren MOVED and Councillor S Bashforth SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

Council notes that:



- 2021 is the 70th anniversary of the Peak District
- Our precious National Parks represent an irreplaceable national natural resource which provide enjoyment, education and employment for countless thousands of people every year and are treasured and loved by millions more.
- At present, every National Park is managed by its own LOCAL Park Authority with LOCAL representatives who know and serve the community and keep LOCAL oversight. The Peak District National Park Authority includes an appointed representative from Oldham Council.
- Council is therefore gravely concerned that the Government response to the Glover Review of 2019 suggests the possible replacement of the local National Parks Authorities with a National Landscape Service. This would centralise services under one, nationally run, new organisation. The Government appears to be giving active consideration to this idea subject to consultation with partners later this year.

Council is opposed to any proposal to reduce or replace locally run National Parks Authorities because:

- It is contrary to the Government's 'levelling-up' agenda which involves government decentralising power and working more directly with local partners and communities.
- The 2019 Conservative Party Manifesto stated that "the days of Whitehall knows best are over" (p.26) and pledged to give communities of all sizes far more control. This Council questions how a centralist National Landscapes Service would achieve this outcome.
- Such a move would be contrary to international good practice in the management of protected landscapes which emphasises the importance of management being undertaken with, and through, local people and mainly for, and by, them.
- Locally run and locally managed National Parks consider local circumstances and take account of local feelings and requirements without the burdensome red-tape of national management.
- Council therefore resolves to:
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State urging them not to consider replacing local National Parks Authorities with a National Landscape Service or to take any step which will remove or downgrade their powers
- Ask the Chief Executive to send a copy of this letter to the Chair and the Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority
- Ask the Chief Executive to also copy in our three local MPs and the Chief Executives of other local authorities covered by the Peak District National Park asking for their support and/or similar action

ON being put to the vote, XX votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and XXX votes were cast AGAINST with xxx ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDEMNT was therefore CARRIED.

On being put to the vote, xx votes were cast in FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and xx votes were cast AGAINST with xx ABSENTIONS. The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

1. Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State urging them not to replace local National Parks Authorities with a National Landscape Service or to take any step which will remove or degrade their powers; and
2. Ask the Chief Executive to send a copy of this letter to the Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority; and
3. Ask the Chief Executive to also copy in our three local MPs and the Chief Executives of other local authorities covered by the Peak District National Park asking for their support and/or similar action.

**The Mayor advised that as each of the main opposition parties had equal numbers, it had been proposed that this item be extended by 10 minutes to provide the Conservative Group to proposed the motion as detailed below.**

**Council agreed the above proposal.**

#### Motion 4 – Oldham Regeneration

Councillor Sharp MOVED and Councillor Abid SECONDED the following MOTION:

The Government Minister for local growth, Luke Hall, stated High Streets are the beating heart of our local communities. That is why we welcome the Conservative Government delivering over £10.7 million for Oldham from the Future High Streets Fund to improve accessibility, connectivity and to aid recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic.

On top of that a further £24.4 million was awarded by the Conservative Government's Town Fund.

However, three of these projects, Northern Roots, the relocation of Tommyfield Market and the development of flexible working within Spindles, have raised considerable concerns with members of the public and businesses, particularly those in the markets.

This money was awarded to Oldham to kick start the recovery from the pandemic. That is why it is disappointing that little or no consultation was had with taxpayers, the private sector or Councillors when developing these plans. It is why we have concerns that many of these projects could end up going way over budget like previous projects have done and that they will saddle taxpayers with more debt and higher Council tax bills to pay for it.

This Council therefore resolves:

- That it will properly consult with market traders, local taxpayers and the private sector to understand their concerns with these projects.
- That any future bids must include other parts of the Borough outside of the Town Centre.
- That the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council convey to the Town Deal Board (the board), the concerns that have been raised by the public, and the board will, in future, consult and inform the public of any decision to be made.
- That the board will open itself to proper public scrutiny about any draft plans they consider putting forward.
- That a special committee is established with equal representation from all parties to oversee the planned projects to:
  - Scrutinise and avoid wasteful expenditure of taxpayer's money.
  - To avoid any of the projects overspending.
  - Provide proper overview and scrutiny of these projects.
- That these projects do not go over budget and that contracts and agreements are properly scrutinised before signing to avoid taxpayers footing the bill for a failure to deliver on time or on budget.

#### AMENDMENT

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Roberts SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

The Government Minister for local growth, Luke Hall, stated High Streets are the beating heart of our local communities. That is why we welcome the Council's successful bid for over £10.7 million for Oldham from the Future High Streets Fund to improve accessibility, connectivity and to aid recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic.

On top of that the Council secured a further £24.4 million from the Town Fund, endorsing the Labour Administration's vision for Northern Roots, the relocation of Tommyfield Market and the development of flexible working within Spindles.

This money was awarded to Oldham to kick start the recovery from the pandemic. That is why it was so important to engage in thorough consultation with taxpayers, the private sector and Councillors when developing these plans.

This Council notes that:

- Earlier this year over 2,000 residents responded to the Council's consultation on preferences for the town centre, Spindles and Tommyfield Market, with a further 400



contributing via social media. The responses showed overwhelming support for action.

- A separate survey was also conducted with the Tommyfield Market traders
- A further consultation will be taking place this Summer, so that residents can continue to play an active role in shaping the Council's plans for the town centre
- Northern Roots has held more than 60 direct stakeholder engagement activities, and conducted a wide range of consultation events and activities, ranging from online surveys, to focus groups, to face to face events, engaging almost 1,000 people to date
- Several rounds of consultation have taken place with key stakeholders and industry experts on the proposals for a new performance space, and further consultation with stakeholders and residents will take place in the next phase of development
- The Town Deal Board includes a range of local stakeholders, including business people, representatives of the voluntary and community sector, and our major public institutions, and that all agendas and minutes from the Board's meetings are published on the council website
- The Government mandated the geographic area for which bids could be made to the Towns Fund, meaning areas like Royton, Saddleworth and Chadderton were excluded.

This Council therefore resolves:

- That it will continue to properly consult with market traders, local taxpayers and the private sector to understand their concerns with these projects.
- That the Council continues to invest in the whole Borough, and encourages councillors to submit bids to the Local Improvement Fund for projects that will enhance their local area.
- That the Town Deal Board (the board) continue to respond to the issues raised by the public through the extensive consultation that has taken place to date, and the board will, in future, consult and inform the public of any decision to be made, including through the specific consultation sub-group of the Town Deal Board
- That the board continue to publish all agendas and minutes from board meetings to enable proper public scrutiny about any draft plans they consider putting forward.
- That projects continue to be brought to the cross-party Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, including the update on "Creating a Better Place and Spindles Shopping Centre" scheduled to come before the Committee in November
- That project management systems, processes and procedures continue to be strengthened, and projects go through a robust rigorous gateway process as each business case progresses, as agreed as part of the funding criteria, to ensure these projects do not go over budget and that contracts and agreements are properly scrutinised before

signing to avoid taxpayers footing the bill for a failure to deliver on time or on budget.



Councillor Sharp exercised her right of reply (out of order amendment)

ON being put to the vote, XX votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and XXX votes were cast AGAINST with xxx ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDEMNT was therefore CARRIED.

On being put to the vote, xx votes were cast in FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and xx votes were cast AGAINST with xx ABSENTIONS. The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

### **RESOLVED -**

1. That Council will continue to properly consult with market traders, local taxpayers and the private sector to understand their concerns with these projects; and
2. That the Council continues to invest in the whole Borough, and encourages councillors to submit bids to the Local Improvement Fund for projects that will enhance their local area; and
3. That the Town Deal Board (the board) continue to respond to the issues raised by the public through the extensive consultation that has taken place to date, and the board will, in future, consult and inform the public of any decision to be made, including through the specific consultation sub-group of the Town Deal Board; and
4. That the Board continue to publish all agendas and minutes from board meetings to enable proper public scrutiny about any draft plans they consider putting forward; and
5. That projects continue to be brought to the cross-party Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, including the update on "Creating a Better Place and Spindles Shopping Centre" scheduled to come before the Committee in November; and
6. That project management systems, processes and procedures continue to be strengthened, and projects go through a robust rigorous gateway process as each business case progresses, as agreed as part of the funding criteria, to ensure these projects do not go over budget and that contracts and agreements are properly scrutinised before signing to avoid taxpayers footing the bill for a failure to deliver on time or on budget.
7. That these projects do not go over budget and that contracts and agreements are properly scrutinised before signing to avoid taxpayers footing the bill for a failure to deliver on time or on budget.

**UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

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

Copies of amended appendices in relation to the report were circulated at the meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the actions regarding motions and issues from previous Council meetings be agreed and that the correspondence, updates and amended appendices provided be noted.

**COVID-19 RECOVERY STRATEGY 2021 - 2022**

Councillor Shah **MOVED** and Councillor Jabbar **SECONDED** a report recommending that the Covid-19 Recovery Strategy 2021-2022 be adopted by the Council as attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Members were reminded that as a Co-operative Council, Oldham was committed to tackling the impact of Covid-19 and protecting our most vulnerable residents and communities. Members were also advised that building on the learning so far, and the anticipated events to come, a comprehensive Recovery Strategy had been developed, which would help to shape approach and vision for Oldham over the next 18 months whilst continuing to respond to an ongoing critical incident.

It was reported that the objectives and approach to the Recovery Strategy were rooted in our vision, the Oldham Model, ensuring as we adapt to a changing world that we remained focused on building thriving communities, an inclusive economy and to delivery co-operatively.

It was reported that to develop the new Covid-19 Recovery strategy priorities, consultation had taken place at Directorate Management Team Meetings (DMT), with Cabinet, and through engagement with Overview and Scrutiny.

Key priority areas in the Strategy were reported as:

Driving equality, Investing in quality housing, Championing a green recovery, Creating and protecting jobs and supporting businesses, Prioritising education and skills and Promoting health and wellbeing and supporting the most vulnerable.

Details of each of the above priority areas were outlined within the report. It was reported that each of the above focus areas formed a key strand of the Covid-19 Recovery Strategy, with individual actions attached to each priority area. The Strategy reflected the difficult and challenging times ahead and the opportunities that were arising as we recover from the pandemic

as Team Oldham. The Strategy also set out how we can embrace the 'new normal' to build a stronger local economy, increase community resilience and public participation, support our local health system, and support our most vulnerable residents.



Details of monitoring of the Recovery Plan were outlined within the report and Members were advised that following Full Council approval, the Recovery Strategy would be launched, ensuring that the priorities are embedded across Team Oldham. This would include creating a full communications and engagement programme, both within Team Oldham, with stakeholders and residents. An online tool would also be created to regularly update on progress.

The financial implications of delivering the Strategy were also outlined within the report.

Councillor Jabbar extended thanks and appreciation to all staff and NHS partners and volunteers who had dedicated their time and hard work to support the residents of the Borough to get us through the pandemic period.

#### **Questions from Councillors:**

##### **Councillor Hamblett:**

Supporting patients with long-COVID

“ equal my thanks to all the staff and Members within the Council and Oldham Cares and all health teams. On Page 29, under Driving Equality, I would like to see some commitment to providing support to the many residents in our borough who will be suffering from the impact of long-COVID.

Last month, the Government-funded Reach-2 study revealed that more than 2 million adults have experience COVID-19 symptoms lasting more than 12 weeks and in May, the Cumbria and Lancashire Public Health Collaborative estimated that over 140,000 people in the North West had long Covid last year, with the Collaborative identifying that: “The impact of long Covid is likely to be greater in the North due to employment and economic inequalities and variations in health care access due to the pandemic.”

Please could the Cabinet Member tell me how many cases of long-COVID there have been in this Borough and identify what support and treatment packages will be made available to patients suffering from long-COVID under this recovery?”

##### **Councillor Zahid Chauhan, Cabinet Member, Health and Social Care responded:**

Before I formally answer your question, I would like to say, I was one of the first ones across the country who spoke about the

long covid and recognised that and thank you for bringing this here as well. It is a very important issue. I can tell you in Oldham that obviously we are very committed and have a personal commitment in this administration to ensure that not only people who are suffering from long covid are being treated, but people who also have other symptoms exacerbated and conditions exacerbated due to covid are also dealt accordingly.

We have adopted something called MDT approach which is a multi-disciplinary team approach and as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 20201 we had 20,000 patients diagnosed with covid positive. 8.1% of them were admitted and 91.9% were not admitted. From those around 872 were identified has having symptoms of long covid. We also have to remember that we are learning as we go along. We know much more than we knew about covid on day 1 and about long covid also. I can confirm that out of these patients there are only 64 remaining patients who have not yet been discussed in our MDT clinic. I am sure you will appreciate whilst there is long covid, there is still covid on-going as well. We have full commitment to ensure that patients with long covid are treated appropriately and they receive full support.”

**Councillor Howard Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Group:**

“I would like to seek an assurance which I’ve had privately and publicly that covid whether we call it the recovery plan or covid report or what we’ve had at every Council has been a welcome opportunity for Members to both receive updates on what we are doing. This thing is going to be with us for months if not years as we have already debated, and I just seek an assurance that in this bit of the agenda or elsewhere something around covid whether it’s about the recovery plan or the progress report or whatever will be on future Council meetings as it is the number one issue in terms of the impact on our Borough.

My specific question, Madam Mayor was regarding care home residents, their relatives and staff have had a torrid time since the start of the pandemic. Many times, over the last 15 months, the Liberal Democrat group has asked questions and raised concerns about the experiences and treatment of some care home residents and their relatives/carers and usually, the excellent support made available to them and to staff. Could the appropriate Cabinet Member what support will continue to be made available by the Council and its health partners to care homes in this Borough, its residents and staff after the so called promised lifting of the remaining covid 19 restrictions on the 19<sup>th</sup> July and what is the plan going forward.”

**Cllr Zahid Chauhan, Cabinet Member, Health and Social Care responded:**

“Thank you Councillor Sykes and thank you for your on-going personal interest in this matter. I know you always speak about this issue and seek assurances and also assisted. Whilst you were asking the question, the Leader has assured me that this

issue will be on the Council agenda and we will be providing regular updates.



**Oldham**  
Council

As you are aware, I really feel very proud to be part of Oldham Council because this was one of the first Councils to set up this hub, our ppe store. We said we would supply ppe. I personally as a cabinet member went around the care homes and met some great key workers and support workers who moved in to care homes to look after the patients. The first questions I asked them, and that was a time that on the national media, it was shown that people were using plastic bags and things instead of ppe. I asked them if they had enough ppe and took me around and showed me extra supplies of ppe. This was thanks to this Council care staff and Members who constantly asked the right questions and sought assurances.

Throughout the pandemic, the Social Care team have been working pro-actively so we had this approach of working proactively. We had daily calls to care homes to ensure that they were ok, including how they are dealing with staff sickness and various issues. We had a specialist team, public health and STICH team (Supporting Treatment in Care Homes), community nursing services and various other services. Let us not forget that was at the time on a national level this Government made a huge blunder and set up the policy of saying that patients should be discharged from hospitals to care homes without being tested. This was the time that we were trying to pull everything together and support people at care homes. Most importantly was the distribution of key information, we ensured that as commissioners as social care department that we had regular newsletters providing all the necessary information to care homes, regular virtual forums and most recently with the vaccinations, I know that some of my colleagues had been holding sessions with care home staff to explain to them the importance of vaccinations and why staff need to have the vaccinations.

We received money towards supporting some aspects of infection control and various other drugs which was passported to care home staff and as more money is being made available, we will do that. To be honest and frank, when the money was not available, we helped and we will continue to help and support our care homes in whichever way we can”.

### **Councillor Murphy**

“Walk-in services at the Integrated Care Centre have been closed to patients for many months and GP services have been very difficult to access; both of these factors have led to more pressure being put upon our already strained Accident and Emergency Service at the Royal Oldham Hospital upon Community Nurses.

Can the Cabinet Member please tell me whether the early restoration of ICC services and face-to-face appointments with local GPs will be made a priority under this recovery plan”?

**Cllr Zahid Chauhan, Cabinet Member, Health and Social Care responded:**



“Thank you Councillor Murphy for your question. I can reassure that integrated care services and GP practices have never been shut. They have been operating in a covid safe environment which is the telephone triage and if they need to be seen they have been invited to the surgery.

What was done as a walk in centre, in line with national guidelines, a covid safe digital hub was established to assist patients when they don't need to be in A/E, they can be seen in a more covid safe environment because we could not bring covid patients into the normal practice because of the risk of spreading the infection. Essentially what happened in car homes, this could have been duplicated in general practice as well. Following public consultation in the past, it was decided by the CCG governing body to in 2018 to close the walk-in centre. The walk-in centre is not going to come back instead it was established as an urgent care hub. I don't see any reason why based on the clinical needs why patients should not be offered face to face appointments and there is a national directive. This is a discussion between clinician and the patient. Quite happy to look into that if you have any specification. It has never been the case that due to covid you are not allowed to see a patient, except to see them in a safe environment. If you have any specific examples or issues, please bring it and I will personally look at it.”

**Councillor Kenyon**

“On page 35-36, the strategy references ‘Creating and Protecting Jobs and Supporting Businesses’. I would like to ask the Cabinet Member a question about this borough's hospitality industry.

Prior to the pandemic, the national hospitality industry employed 2.4 million people in 150,000 businesses. Recent data suggests that 6,000 licensed premises have closed permanently in 2020, and I am sure that many more will have closed so far in 2021.

Can the Cabinet member please tell me how many businesses in the hospitality sector have been lost in this borough and do we have any estimate as to how many jobs have been lost with them?”

**Councillor Shoab Akhtar, Cabinet Member, Employment and Enterprise responded:**

“Unfortunately, there is no data regarding closure or job losses to us so we cannot access that level of data but the hospitality industry is a priority for the Council and presumably for the Government as well. The Council has chosen this sector to receive priority access to the grants scheme. Average grant has been in the circle of £34,000 since the start of the

pandemic, alongside furlough and other support e.g. bounce back loans. The Business Growth and Investment team in the Council have been in contact with most of these hospitality businesses and will continue to engage with key stakeholders. The Council is also working with Sasha Lord, GMCA Night-time economy Tsar to develop a supportive approach for the hospitality sector. The Council have put forward a request for business support for Retail, hospitality and Leisure from the Government's Community Renewal Fund. We are hoping to hear the outcome of this request in September from the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Hopefully in September we are hoping for good news. Get Oldham Working team have been supporting the sector access Kickstart programme that provides 6 months' salary for new jobs targeting 16-24 year olds."

### **Councillor Hindle**

"Regarding the Covid 19 recovery strategy, creating and protecting jobs and supporting local businesses. As a business-man myself, I am only too aware of the frustration of many businesses that approach me complaining of the lack of opportunity when tendering for OMBC contracts. This and the complaints from OMBC licensed taxi drivers that vehicles from other licensing authorities are carrying out OMBC home to school contracts seems to tell a different story. What is the administration going to do to see that much of the local work and local monies from the Council are going to the very business that employ local business who pay their ~Council tax to Oldham Council rather than outside the Borough."

### **Councillor Shoab Akhtar, Cabinet Member, Employment and Enterprise responded:**

"This is a detailed question. I will respond to this in detail when I have the full facts and write to all Councillors."

### **Councillor C Gloster**

"The Government are telling us that we are coming out of restrictions on 19<sup>th</sup> July. Councillor Chauhan was telling us about the mistake of people leaving hospital care to go into care homes without being tested. The question is to seek an assurance from him that once these restrictions are lifted, there is no possibility that it will revert back to that process, if he knows the answer."

### **Councillor Zahid Chauhan, Cabinet Member, Health and Social Care responded:**

"I wish I had influence on Boris Johnson and I could give you assurance. That is the honest answer. Also, the honest answer that if infection rates are going up, potentially it will make things worse. We will try our best collectively in this administration and Council to do our best to put systems in place to safeguard people as best as we can."





## **Councillor Williams**

When I got Covid 19 on October 5<sup>th</sup>, I thought I would have a cold, a bit of a chill. It felt like I had a backpack on that was full of bricks. For that week, I thought I would get better and then as the second week occurred, I finished up going to hospital for that night because I had low oxygen levels and then I was told I had pneumonia. I then thought I would be ok and that long-term I would be fine. I eventually went back to work on January 14<sup>th</sup>. Coming out today Madam Mayor, all these months later, I feel absolutely burnt out. I cannot work at home like that can I? Why? Because I am old and clapped out and nearly 64. A couple of weeks something really extraordinary happened. All of a sudden from nowhere I felt rough. I went home sick, the only time in 19 years that I have been home sick. The Manager told me to go for a test. I had a test which was negative. I had another test an hour later which was negative. I visited the Doctor on Wednesday. I told him how I felt, dodgy mood swings, me getting fed up, niggly and nasty, not my personality one bit. The shift in personality niggled me. My Doctor told me it was part of my illness and that it can affect any organ. Immune system shot at. I decided I was not going to feel like that. The Doctor advised that when I feel like that I should just avoid the feeling. I feel fine now but for months I felt absolutely terrible. If I call myself a strong-willed person, how many other people are out there really struggling but just cannot come forward because they simply don't know how to?"

## **Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council responded:**

"Thank you to all Members who have contributed to the development of this recovery strategy and for your contributions this evening. It does not need saying again how tough the last year has been for everyone, but it is always worth repeating what an incredible job our residents from Oldham have done to support one another. Whilst things are opening up, it remains vitally important that we do everything we can to keep each other safe and I hope we will see residents taking this seriously even when sometimes it seems that the Government doesn't.

The plan we approve tonight is about recovery, but it is also about setting the ground for a better tomorrow. We all know that Oldham has loads of things going for it, but that people are struggling. With this plan we are setting the course for better jobs, better health and better lives. Now we are beginning to see the end of the tunnel, it is time to pick up the pace and push forward. We have got this far together, and I know with the efforts of everyone in this room and our residents, we will make the next step together to."

**RESOLVED** – That the Covid-19 Recovery Strategy is adopted by Full Council.

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### **DISTRICTS AND LEAD MEMBERS - CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Consideration was given to a report setting out proposed constitutional amendments to realign the Council's Districts, and to update the role of the District Leader Member.

The proposed changes were outlined within the report at Appendix 1.

**RESOLVED** – That Council approves the changes to the Constitution proposed comprising as follows:

1. Part 2, Article 10.1 – in order to recognise realignment of District geographies; and;
2. Part 2, Article 10.2/10.3 – relating to the role of the District Lead Member.

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### **CONSTITUTION - CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS**

Consideration was given to a report highlighting, on grounds of good governance, consequential and other amendments to the Council Constitution required following the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Details of the Constitution Consequential Amendments were outlined within the report.

**RESOLVED** –

1. That the report and the consequential amendments to Part 3 “Responsibility for Functions” to the Constitution be noted; and
2. The revisions to Part 2 “Articles” and Part 3 “Responsibility for Functions” referenced in this report be approved; and
3. Any further consequential amendments arising from this report be delegated to the Director of Legal.

The meeting started at Time Not Specified and ended at Time Not Specified