

Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting
Wednesday 2 November 2022**

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 25 October 2022

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 2 November 2022 at 5.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, for the following purposes:

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Item of Condolence - The late, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II
- 3 To order that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 7th September 2022 be signed as a correct record (Pages 1 - 44)
- 4 To receive declarations of interest in any matter to be determined at the meeting
- 5 To deal with matters which the Mayor considers to be urgent business
- 6 To receive communications relating to the business of the Council
- 7 To receive and note petitions received relating to the business of the Council

(time limit 20 minutes)

- 8 Leaders Annual Statement
- 9 Youth Council

(time limit 20 minutes)

Holiday Activities and Food sessions provide the 13,000 young people in Oldham who access free school meals a warm meal and fun activities during the school holidays. However, the cost of living crisis is a national problem for all households in the UK. Obviously, this crisis is impacting those who can claim free school meals but many others earning less than the National median of £31,000 will begin to struggle with the rise in cost of energy, fuel, and food. Indeed, research carried out by Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty coalition, showed 39.3% of children in Oldham were living below the poverty line in 2020/21. This figure would show that many more than those identified as eligible for free school meals require help during holiday times. Celebrities such as Marcus Ratchford and Jamie Oliver are also supporting campaigns that would like to see an increase in the numbers of young people eligible for free school meals by a further 800,000. This increase is to support all young people living in households that claim universal credit not just those who household income is less than £7,400.

A major barrier to accessing the HAF sessions is the stigma. If sessions are only accessed by those on free school meals, it identifies those young people as some of

the poorest families in the town.

Holiday sessions also help with young people's mental health. Worries about jobs, the cost of living crisis and COVID recovery, more than ever all young people need support with their mental health. The HAF sessions tick all boxes for the 5 ways to wellbeing; sessions allow young people to connect with others, allow them to be physically active, allow them to learn new skills, to participate in social and community life and to help to them take notice, savouring 'the moment'. In allowing all young people to access the HAF sessions we feel the value for money not only comes in feeding those who need it but also tackles mental health issues as well as providing young people with access to informal learning opportunities that help them develop skills for life.

In summary, while we applaud the HAF programmes aims and its ambition to support children and young people who need it most, we feel that given the current crisis around cost of living the programme doesn't go far enough. Opening the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people will reach more vulnerable families, people who need support but perhaps not quite eligible. It will be an effective and quick way for the government to support more families with the cost-of-living crisis.

We propose that Oldham Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP; The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP, Secretary of State for Education; The Rt Hon Bridget Philipson MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, and to our Oldham Members of Parliament; the Rt Hon Jim McMahon MP, the Rt Hon Debbie Abrahams MP and the Rt Hon Angela Raynor MP to ask them to lobby parliament to extend the offer of the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people not just those on free school meals to support all those impacted by the current cost of living crisis.

10 Questions Time

a Public Questions

(time limit 30 Minutes)

b Questions to Leader and Cabinet

(time limit 30 minutes)

c Questions on Cabinet Minutes (Pages 45 - 60)

(time limit 15 minutes)

22nd August 2022

21st September 2022

11 Notice of Administration Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1

Councillor K Phythian to MOVE and Councillor Chadderton to SECOND:

Housing policy

This Council notes the complete confusion that now surrounds housing and planning

policy following the collapse of the mini-budget, sacking of Kwasi Kwarteng as Chancellor and resignation of Prime Minister Liz Truss and subsequent Leadership election.

The status of proposals in the Levelling Up White Paper is in question and rumours about 'supply side reforms' abound.

This Council further notes the impact of Conservative Government policies on Oldham including:

1. The rise in households in housing need in Oldham - up a quarter in the past year – there are now over 7,000 households on the Housing Register waiting for a social home
2. Government refusal to fund general needs social homes in Oldham
3. Affordability issues in private developments meaning the target of 10% affordable homes on developments over 10 homes are often not met
4. Policy uncertainty leading to reluctance of developers to commit to new schemes
5. A hike in mortgage interest payments threatening many residents' ability to pay and keep their home, making it harder for first time buyers and raising private tenants' rents
6. Continued insecurity for private renters as no date is set for the abolition of Section 21 evictions despite a 2019 manifesto commitment

This Council believes that the best solution to Oldham's Housing crisis is a Labour Government committed to: a reformed Private Rented Sector that works for renters and good landlords; helping Councils build good quality social homes at rents people can afford to pay; and help for first time buyers and home owners including abolishing leasehold as a tenure.

This Council resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ask for urgent clarification of the Government's Housing and Planning policies and seeking assurance that

1. Section 21 evictions will be abolished in this session of Parliament
2. Any reforms of the Planning system will ensure local democratic control of the planning process and fund Councils to provide an efficient and effective service
3. Homes England will be directed to support all Councils to build homes for social rent
4. Requirements on developers to provide Affordable Homes will not be further watered down
5. Action will be taken to end land banking by developers
6. Help will be put in place to support mortgage payers who are threatened with losing their home because of Tory mismanagement of the economy

Motion 2

Councillor Jabbar to MOVE and Councillor Brownridge to SECOND

Cost-of-living; Pension Credits

Older people in Oldham face a harsh winter this year, with the cost-of-living crisis affecting older people disproportionately. The government's support schemes haven't gone far enough to support vulnerable older people, and the new chancellor's announcements have done little to give people confidence or stability in the coming months.

Over three million households in the UK are eligible to claim pension credits, however over 800,000 of these households don't claim it. In Greater Manchester this means that

£70m in benefits went unclaimed last year, with over £6m in Oldham alone.

The Labour administration has pledged to ensure that residents in the town will have access to all support that they are entitled to, as people cannot rely on the government to support them when they are unable to support their own policies.

With energy bills, food, fuel and household essential prices rising, many older people in Oldham are forced to choose between staying warm or eating. Whilst government policy is ever changing, the Prime Minister cannot be trusted to help our older people, Oldham Council has taken action to support those who are most vulnerable during this cost-of-living crisis with our £3m We Can Help Campaign.

This Council notes:

- That during the Tory cost of living crisis, £6m in pension credits went unclaimed in Oldham last year, preventing those who are eligible to receive them using this money to support themselves during these difficult times.
- Last year Oldham's Welfare Rights Team supported residents by helping them access over £1.8m worth of social security support.
- The government has failed to provide the necessary support and guidance to eligible pension credit recipients.
- As a local authority we are committed to ensuring that our vulnerable residents can access all the support they are eligible to receive.
- The work that the council are undertaking across all departments to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are supported.

This Council resolves to:

- Ensure that the council continues its joined up approach to supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, working across all areas to ensure that no resident suffers hardship due to their financial situation.
- Continue to support residents to access all the benefits they are entitled to access, through the Council's Welfare Rights Team.
- Commit to working alongside Age UK to identify how the council can support older people during the cost-of-living crisis, including ensuring that everyone has access to food and heating.

This Council further resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, asking them to make changes to the benefits system to ensure that eligible residents receive benefits automatically, rather than having to claim them; asking them to commit to raising all social security benefits in line with inflation.
- Work alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Ageing Hub to identify more avenues of support for older people in the borough.

12 Notice of Opposition Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1

Councillor Al-Hamdani to MOVE and Councillor Kenyon to SECOND:

No Confidence in Andy Burnham's management of Greater Manchester Police

This Council notes that:

1. There have been no crime figures published for Oldham from July 2019 onwards. Residents are unable to download and compare crime, stop, and

search, and outcome statistics in their local areas unlike, for example, in London.

2. Newsam & Ridgway's review into CSE in Oldham, commissioned by Andy Burnham, notes the following (p40/2.17): the review started in January 2020 yet it took until November 2021 to agree a data processing agreement with GMP (for comparison, a complete data processing agreement with Oldham Council was agreed in April 2020). This data processing agreement with GMP only covered two of the 11 cases investigated – Shabir Ahmed and 'Sophie'. Newsam and Ridgway further note that the lack of an agreement affected the quality of assurance that they could give about the quality of the conduct of GMP.
3. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICFRS) reported that GMP was failing victims of domestic abuse in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021. GMP was placed into special measures in December 2020
4. From 2016, all chief officers at GMP have been replaced. The only two senior posts that have remained unchanged throughout this entire period are the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Crime, Criminal Justice, and Fire – Andy Burnham and, his appointee, Baroness Beverley Hughes.
5. GMP's failings reflect a national trend of defunding of Police by this Conservative government. Police are solving just 7% of recorded crimes.
6. The highest ever number of rape cases in the UK was recorded in 2022 – 70,330, of which just 2,223 cases resulted in charges being brought. An estimated four out of five rape cases are not reported. Rape investigations currently take an average of 465 days from being reported to someone being charged.
7. There is a backlog of nearly 59,000 cases at the crown court, and over 358,000 cases to the magistrate's court. The backlog increased by 23% in the year prior to the COVID pandemic and has increased further since.

This Council believes that:

Victims of crime in the borough of Oldham, and across Greater Manchester, are being failed. Andy Burnham has failed and the Conservative government's approach to policing and criminal justice has failed.

This Council resolves to:

Direct the Chief Executive to write to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to inform them of Council's lack of confidence in their ability to effectively manage GMP.

Motion 2

Councillor Quigg to MOVE and Councillor Arnott to SECOND:

Oldham Council like others who provide local services needs to strike the right balance when it comes to spending public money and how they deliver those local services. Plans made today soon age and become historic in the changing world we live in and as quickly as circumstances around them change the need to change and adapt those plans grows stronger. Housing, transport, and local services are not purely a numbers issue, they are in fact a social, economic, and political issue. Building cohesive communities that last and that have good access to key transport infrastructure in the long term means people will want to live in those communities. That means growth and

prosperity.

Sadly, Oldham has poor transport links, not helped by the fact that unlike neighbouring Rochdale which maintained its five train stations, and introduced the Metrolink, Oldham ripped out its rail links for the Metrolink, with Greenfield station officially being Oldham's sole station.

Despite the Borough being the gateway to the Pennines Oldham has failed to capitalise on that unique position leaving us overly dependent on the economic tides of Manchester rather than opening opportunities to West Yorkshire and beyond.

As the Council focuses its regeneration projects on Oldham Town Centre, there is considerable disquiet in the districts where they feel abandoned and neglected. Given many of these districts are net contributors to the Council budget and are the growth areas for people, businesses, and housing it is not unreasonable for people who live there to ask why the Council isn't treating them equally and invest in those districts as well.

Coupled with high levels of immigration into the United Kingdom, there has been a significant strain put on public services and community cohesion due to levels being far too high for far too long. It is why a balance must be struck with those already living here as well as maintaining a sustainable supply of housing and need. That is why we need to deliver the quality homes we need, the quality services we need whilst being aware of the genuine and legitimate concerns of residents already living in our Borough.

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and its subsequent replacement, the Places for Everyone plan was and is so unpalatable to so many people in the Borough due to its use of Green Belt land. The Office of National Statistics published the 2021 census relating to household growth. Their findings clearly indicate that projected household growth across Greater Manchester has been severely over-estimated over the preceding ten years (actual growth of 50,000 households as opposed to the projection of 101,000).

Oldham's household growth was consistent with the general pattern (actual growth of 3,400 households in contrast to the projected 6,900). The Government's stance is reasonable, and it is the Government's expectation for councils to proceed cautiously, to meet provision within an area.

However, now that we have hard data available to us in the form of the Census, we believe that the severely erroneous projections that underpin the housing targets—and therefore the Green Belt release—would qualify under the provision set by the Government that a deviation from the standard methodology would be justified in "exceptional circumstances". If the GMCA and the councils are to maintain an evidence-based approach to planning, then the evidence needs to be correct. The evidence needs to change.

This Council resolves that:

- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council use her position on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to adjust the Places for Everyone Plan under the provision set out by the Government that the housing figures meet the request for a deviation from the standard methodology using the "exceptional circumstances" criteria.
- Brownfield sites be prioritised over Green Belt development.
- Shovel ready projects on brownfield sites are not held back by delays, and that they are included in the overall housing figures in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.
- Oldham Council look to rationalise its brownfield site assets where reasonable and

practicable.

- Local communities can access neighbourhood plans and referenda in order to sustainably build homes in their area in order to secure local support rather than through top-down targets.
- The Council confirms homeownership as being a fundamental tenant of building stronger communities.
- The Council devolve further competencies both politically and budgetary to the districts.
- That the Council look beyond funding just Oldham Town Centre and apply for funding in any future grant rounds to improve our district town centres.
- Will restrict the number HMO's in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough area and using the Article 4 direction across the Borough, which removes permitted development rights.
- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council will look to create a Pennines Economic Co-operation Board which works with neighbouring authorities on a bilateral basis and looks to maximise the potential economic benefits of maximising the opening of new road and rail links between Oldham and West Yorkshire.

The Council further resolves:

- That the Chief Executive will write to the government to:
 - i. Seek a meeting with the Department of Transport and relevant Oldham Council Cabinet member to seek extra funding for improved transport in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham.
 - ii. Explore the options of reopening existing railway stations such as those at the Middleton Junction in Chadderton, Diggle in Saddleworth or a new Oldham line which connects to Oldham, Manchester and West Yorkshire for both freight and passenger services which can service the Borough more widely.
 - iii. Support the government's plans to control immigration and deter illegal immigration into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Motion 3

Councillor Rea to MOVE and Councillor Hindle to SECOND:

Regulation of HMO's

With an ever growing number of HMO's popping up across the borough, all Councillors must be aware of the increased frustration caused to neighbouring residents and the place they live. We are aware of the extra congestion these properties cause and that good, essential family homes are being removed from the current market. Currently in Failsworth we have an historic area being swamped with such developments and the character and appeal to this historic place is being lost on a rapid scale.

It can only be seen as a positive thing that we have residents who look upon their community favourably and want certain standards to be upheld where they live. They do after all pay a high premium with their council tax for the pleasure of living in this Borough. It's to the detriment of local residents that the adverse impacts of the HMO's saturating areas causing doctors, dentists and other services to be strained. We are not increasing services to cope with the increased number of residents we are allowing to reside, at a fraction of the cost to those who live in family homes. We want more for the areas we live. We want our residents to remain proud of where they live.

Typically, HMO residents aren't taking part in community life, we want to encourage to build on existing communities and see the next generation grow where their parents intended them to.

This Council Notes

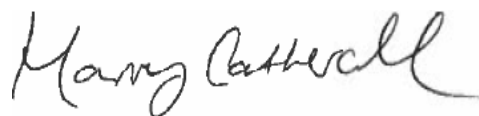
- Council tax is per property and does not reflect the number of adults in each HMO property
- HMO's cause the loss of affordable family homes and this council recognises the need to keep decent family homes available to the market for families to purchase
- HMO's cause the loss of S106 monies on houses that are not being built to meet the demand of areas in the borough

This Council resolves to:

- Gather the evidence to monitor the situation, paying attention to minimise any potential negative impacts HMO's are having on areas. Also, to work with Councillors and residents to protect the interests of the residents, in the future development of HMO's.
- That automatic development rights are removed for HMO's of up to six occupants and that they are to seek planning permission for a HMO of any size. Enforcing an Article 4 direction
- Limit the number of HMO's in the Borough and certain areas within it
- A consultation takes place with neighbouring residents, when development opportunities are sought by landlords to develop HMO's
- Write to the Secretary of State for levelling up, housing & Communities, requesting changes to the current HMO legislation, to enable local authorities to have more control.

13 Update on Actions from Council (Pages 61 - 76)

14 Appointment of Independent Chair of Audit Committee (Pages 77 - 78)



Harry Catherall
Chief Executive

PROCEDURE FOR NOTICE OF MOTIONS
NO AMENDMENT

MOTION – Mover of the Motion to MOVE



MOTION – Secunder of the Motion to SECOND – May reserve right to speak



DEBATE ON THE MOTION: Include Timings



MOVER of Motion – Right of Reply



VOTE – For/Against/Abstain



Declare outcome of the VOTE

RULE ON TIMINGS

(a) No Member shall speak longer than four minutes on any **Motion or Amendment**, or by way of question, observation or reply, unless by consent of the Members of the Council present, he/she is allowed an extension, in which case only one extension of 30 seconds shall be allowed.

(b) A Member replying to more than one question will have up to six minutes to reply to each question with an extension of 30 seconds

WITH AMENDMENT

