

**CABINET**  
**18/03/2024 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** Councillor Shah (in the Chair)  
Councillors Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, Jabbar and Mushtaq.

1           **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F. Hussain and Councillor Taylor.

2           **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3           **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4           **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions for this meeting of the Cabinet to consider.

5           **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024, be approved as a correct record.

6           **PROPOSED CHANGES TO SECTION 75 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Associate Director of Strategy, Planning and Development (NHS Greater Manchester), which informed Members that there was a need to ensure that business related to the Section 75 Agreement held between Oldham Council and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board moves into Oldham's Integrated Care Partnership Committee (formerly named Oldham Integrated Care Partnership Locality Board), with the aim of providing robust stewardship of the pooled / aligned health budget, whilst linking this work to wider health and care partnership conversations.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the proposed changes to the governance arrangements for the Section 75 and the Terms of Reference for Oldham Integrated Care Partnership Committee, as outlined in the report.

7           **REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance which provided Members with an update on the Council's 2023/24 forecast revenue budget position (outlined at Annex 1 of the report) and the financial position of the capital programme, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 (Quarter 3 – 2023/24), together with the revised capital programme 2023/24 to

2027/28, as outlined in section two of the report (outlined at Annex 2 of the report).



The forecast outturn position for 2023/24 was a projected adverse variance of £16.642m after allowing for approved and pending transfers to and from reserves. There were significant variances contained within the projected net overspend within three areas forecasting pressures:

- a. Children's Services is forecasting a pressure of £14.240m.
- b. Place and Economic Growth is forecasting a pressure of £5.442m.
- c. Community Health and Adult Social Care is forecasting a pressure of £0.864m.

These will continue to be closely monitored for the remainder of the ensuing financial year with action taken to address variances and take mitigating action as detailed in the report. Favourable variances across the remaining portfolios totalling £3.903m are offsetting these pressures in these three areas.

An update on the major issues driving the projections is detailed within Annex 1, of the report.

The forecast pressure of £16.642m, at Quarter 3, was an increase of £0.449m on the adverse position of £16.194m reported at Month 8. Management actions that have been approved to review and challenge planned expenditure, control recruitment and to maximise income would hopefully have an impact on the anticipated the outturn deficit position.

Information on the Quarter 3 position of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Collection Fund was also outlined in the report. As reported previously, the position on the DSG continues to improve and as at month 9 it was forecasting an in-year surplus of £2.117m, with an estimate that the year-end position will be a surplus of £3.561m.

Action would continue to be taken with the aim of mitigating cost pressures and delivering and maintaining a surplus position. To assist, Oldham was taking part in the Department for Education sponsored Delivering Better Value in SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) which will provide dedicated support for the SEND Review reforms to 55 Local Authorities with historical DSG deficit issues with the aim of putting the DSG of participating Authorities on a more financially sustainable footing.

There were currently no significant issues of concern in relation to the HRA. The Collection Fund was forecasting an in-year surplus of £0.707m. The Collection Fund is particularly volatile, whilst currently in surplus the position will continue to be closely monitored throughout the year as any surplus or deficit at the end of the financial year will have a direct budgetary impact in 2024/25.

The report also outlined the most up to date capital spending position for 2023/24 to 2028/29 for approved schemes. The revised capital programme budget for 2023/24 was £79.466m, at the close of month 9 (2023/24), a net decrease of £30.839m from the original budget of £110.305m. Actual expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 was £52.765m (66.40% of the forecast outturn). It was thought likely that the forecast position would continue to change as the year drew to a close, with additional re-profiling into future years.

Options/alternatives considered:

- a. To consider the forecast revenue and capital positions presented in the report including proposed changes (preferred option).
- b. To propose alternative forecasts.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet endorses the forecast revenue outturn for 2023/24, at Quarter 3 (2023/24) being a £16.642m adverse variance.
2. That the Cabinet endorses the forecast positions for the Dedicated Schools Grant, Housing Revenue Account and Collection Fund.
3. That the Cabinet endorses the revised capital programme for 2023/24 and the forecast for the financial years to 2027/28 as at Quarter 3 (2023/24).

8

### **SYNERGY EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - SYNERGY CONTRACT RENEWAL**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that sought authority to enter into a call-off contract under a procurement compliant framework agreement in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules to support the ongoing use of Synergy Education Management System for three years with the option to extend by a further one year.

The submitted report sought approval to enter into a call-off contract with Access UK LTD to provide the Education Management System together with any additional modules and services, subject to budget approval.

Options/alternatives considered:

The various options were considered at item 22 on the agenda.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 22 of the agenda before making a decision.

9

### **DON'T TRASH OLDHAM/TRANSFORMATION: YEAR END REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and the Director of Environment which noted that clean streets and tackling issues of fly tipping and littering that blight the local communities remain a priority for the Borough of Oldham's residents and for the Council. The second iteration of Don't Trash Oldham (DTO) campaign had commenced in

October 2022, and in addition to community engagement, it also focused on betterment/transforming communities by working with ward members and this was supported by a limited budget for each area, which could be used to realise the requests of Councillors.



Therefore, the submitted report detailed the outcomes and achievements of the Transformation campaign, examined the lessons learned (what has worked and what could be improved) and proposed some new measures/targeted interventions for the future, which strike a balance between new ways of working and addressing the ongoing environmental challenges faced by the residents of Oldham and the Councils approach in addressing such challenges.

The DTO campaign had commenced in September 2021, with the aim of cleaning all council owned alleys and road infrastructure of fly tipped/dumped waste and litter across the borough, on a ward-by-ward basis, spanning a full calendar year. The first year of the campaign concluded on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022 with the end of year findings reported at that time.

From October 2022 to October 2023, the DTO campaign morphed into a Betterment phase to transform neighbourhoods and build on the legacy work from year one. This was backed up by intensive enforcement and clean up activity in highlighted 'hotspot' neighbourhoods. The accepted aim of this programme was to 'make a difference'. This included visibly improving areas, ensuring detailed attention and physical improvements that were not always deliverable as part of routine work.

For the transforming neighbourhoods' elements of programme to work effectively, a material budget of £3,000 per ward was allocated. To understand the local area and ward member priorities for the focus of the work, meetings were held between the Communities Team, ward members and officers from the Environmental Services to understand the requests and agree what was deliverable within the timescale and budget. Meetings typically took place a month before the teams were due to visit the locality and work in each area typically lasted four weeks.

The submitted report provided a summary of the work completed boroughwide – this includes details of engagement with members, the work completed, waste removed from wards, a summary of the enforcement action undertaken, and the wider improvement(s) achieved because of the additional funding. Finally, the report also outlined proposals on how the legacy of DTO/Betterment campaign will be embedded and what this will look like moving forward. There is a recognition that given the work completed over the last two iterations of DTO/Betterment, a sustainable approach is needed to ensure previous gains are not lost and a more durable model is adopted moving forward,

which meets the needs of the borough, the residents and ensures a clean environment for all.



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Options/alternatives considered:

The submitted report dealt with a number of different options:

- a. Option 1 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.
- b. Option 2 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.
- c. Option 3 - No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.
- d. Option 4 – This option is being dealt with by a separate Delegated Officer Report named “Gulley Cleaning Review and Restructure”. The additional financial resource required for this option has been calculated at £43,060.
- e. Option 5 – No further financial resource required, this option can be funded from existing budget resource.
- f. Option 6 – It is noted that Option 6 will require a significant financial resource due to the number of unadopted alleys boroughwide. Therefore, if a decision is taken to approve this option, this will form part of a separate report to fully identify the financial resource required.

Resolved:

1. that the Cabinet notes the achievements of the Don't Trash Oldham/Transformation Campaign across the borough between 2022 and 2023.
2. That the Cabinet approves the priorities listed in Section 4 of the report, which aim to provide a sustainable and deliverable legacy for the DTO/Transformation campaigns and outline key areas of focus moving forward.
3. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate to Director of Environment and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the prioritisation of funding for the delivery of priorities.

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## **LIGHT DUTY VEHICLE CROSSINGS POLICY**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment that sought approval for a new Light Duty Vehicle Crossings Policy.

The purpose of this policy was to replace the existing policy and procedures for the assessing of Light Duty Vehicle Crossing (dropped kerb) applications and to ensure that they are assessed in a consistent and fair manner.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 was to approve the new Light Duty Vehicle Crossings Policy. The proposed reduction in the requirement for a minimum driveway length to 4.7m would result in more properties qualifying for an Light Duty Vehicle Crossing. This should enable more properties to have access to off-street

parking, thus, reducing congestion on the highway, and, where appropriate, support electric vehicle charging.  
Option 2 was to retain the existing Light Duty Vehicle Crossings Policy, which had been introduced in 2018.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the establishment of a new Light Duty Vehicle Crossings Policy, to come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

11

## **A LOCAL RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING CRISIS**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which informed members that in tackling the current housing crisis and unprecedented demand for housing services, the report highlighted a number of key immediate resource, asked to support a local response in Oldham to improve access to housing support for our residents, to accelerate house building so Oldham's residents have access to more social homes, and to bring online more temporary homes which are much needed for residents in emergency accommodation situations as a result of the cost of living crisis, domestic abuse, or a change to family circumstances.

Over 7,000 people were currently waiting for a social home in Oldham on the housing register, with thousands more currently applying to get on the register; while 500 households were living in temporary accommodation as there simply was not enough truly affordable properties, of the right size in the borough to move people out of their temporary lodgings. Importantly, this included 500 children in these temporary living arrangements.

Families and households across Oldham were facing many challenges as a result of the cost of living crisis - housing being a massive factor in this due to increased rents and mortgages following a decade of high inflation and interest rates. Oldham didn't have the enough housing to meet the changing needs of peoples circumstances; namely enough truly affordable homes. This acute shortage of housing, particularly social and genuinely affordable housing, had led to spiralling rents and house prices. Many young people and families on low to middle incomes struggled to afford to rent or to buy a decent home and therefore overcrowding, evictions, rent arrears and homelessness are all on the rise.

The Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Licensing had held a 'round-table' discussion with housing associations, private landlords, housing developers, lettings agents and other industry experts, where they also explored the lived experiences of Oldham's residents

with the Poverty Truth Commission. This insight was added to the concerns and complaints from direct residential feedback, and it was clear that there was a need for local action, partnership and collaboration to provide a local solution to these housing challenges in Oldham. These challenges were part of a national housing crisis; however, Government policy changes and funding programmes were not mobilising quickly enough to support communities and residents who deserve better access to housing support.

This report was seeking approval to provide investment for the local response to the national housing crisis and included proposals for: redeployed staffing resources; options for improving service delivery models; and new programmes of activity for refurbishing, leasing, purchasing, and/or building new homes for the purposes of both temporary accommodation and to ensure Oldham residents have more access to truly affordable social housing.

Options/alternatives considered:

Options and alternatives were to be considered at item 23 of the agenda.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 23 of the agenda before making a decision thereon.

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### **ACCEPTANCE OF BROWNFIELD INFRASTRUCTURE AND LAND FUNDING GRANT FOR OLDHAM MUMPS, PRINCES GATE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of economy which advised members that the Council had secured capital funding, by way of a grant from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), to help support the development of new homes at Princes Gate, Oldham Mumps.

The recommendations in the report were presented to confirm the value of the grant available to Oldham Council and to notify Cabinet of the intention to accelerate the delivery of circa 347 new homes at this location with Council's Private Sector Partner – MUSE.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 – That Oldham Council doesn't accept the offer of grant from the Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Grant Funding and inform GMCA of the decision not to progress with the grant acceptance.

Option 2 – That Oldham Council progress the project proposals and confirm acceptance of the grant. This was the preferred option, as the site was part of the approved project with the Council's appointed Private Sector Partner which was a key component of the Creating a Better Place programme. The funding provided an opportunity to progress to development without a reliance on the Council's Capital Programme.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet confirms acceptance of the grant from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)
2. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Economy to agree and enter into grant award letter and other associated agreements with GMCA.
3. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Legal Services, or his appointed nominee, to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in the submitted report.
4. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Economy and/or his appointed nominee, to approve the appointment of external legal advisers required to protect the Council's interests and to give effect to the recommendations in the submitted report.

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### **UKSPF GRANT ACCEPTANCE - E22 SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy, which asked members to approve and accept a £1,462,282 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant allocation following confirmation of an award from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. This was specifically in relation to Supporting Local Business strand - E22: Investing in enterprise infrastructure and employment/innovation site development projects.

The Cabinet was advised that the fund was split into £1m Capital investment for the Managed Workspace programme in the Spindles and £462,282 revenue to deliver business support to create economic growth (new jobs) and new enterprises (sole traders or new companies). The package of support would be a combination of one-to-one enterprise start-ups and business growth advice and guidance, grants and supporting the Social Innovation Hive.

The UKSPF programme had replaced the European Social Investment Funds and was provided by HM Government and had been devolved to Greater Manchester Combined Authority but will conclude operations by March 2025.

Options/alternatives considered:

*Option 1* – Do not accept the E22 – SPF Grant. Option appraisal – The grant has been allocated to Oldham by GMCA with the aim to support new businesses to start and existing businesses to grow creating jobs. Each of the ten local (Greater Manchester) authorities have been awarded an allocation. If the decision is to not accept the grant, then the funding would be redistributed across the remaining 9 local authorities. This would disadvantage the local business community.

*Option 2* – Retain the capital funding and procure a programme of business support. Option appraisal – The capital funding would be secured and the revenue-based outcomes would be procured/commissioned. This option was examined with the



ambition to secure a trans-organisation/partnership response. However, the soft market testing demonstrated a lack of capacity especially within the very short window for delivery. In addition, there were some concerns relating to subsidy control and the length of time that would take to resolve. As a consequence, this option was discounted (due to time constraints and market capacity).

*Option 3* – Deliver the programme as outlined above (and in Appendix 1 to the report). Options appraisal. The grant has been awarded to Oldham Council and will be used to develop the business support element of the Business Growth and Investment team with the intention of seeking to bring in additional investment to the Council, which in turn enables more targeted, local delivery of business support related solutions. The risk is that this programme does not get extended but to achieve budget savings and maintain outcomes then the team will benefit from managing externally funded provision with the aim to proof capability in this arena.

Preferred Option: *Option 3* is the preferred option as it secures the highest level of control to deliver the programme within the limited time frame.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the acceptance of the £1.462m UKSPF grant against the two inventions as set out below:
  - a. Capital Grant allocation £1m to support the Managed workspace project in the Spindles and;
  - b. a revenue grant allocation £462,282 to provide business support advice and guidance, alongside supporting the Social Innovation Hive and a series of grants programmes (targeting start-ups and business growth).
2. That Cabinet approves the delivery of:
  - a. 300 enterprises receiving non-financial support.
  - b. 80 jobs created as a result of support.
  - c. 40 new enterprises created as result of support.
  - d. 3201m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space completed or improved.
3. Cabinet notes that as accountable body for UKSPF, GMCA has issued a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in respect of the grant, along with supporting documentation, which has been reviewed by the Council's legal services.
4. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to agree the terms of the MOU issued by GMCA in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Director of Legal Services.
5. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Economy, or his nominated representative, to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and

negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2023/24 – 2024/2025.

6. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Legal Services, or his appointed nominee, to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report.
7. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Economy and/or his nominee to approve the appointment of external legal advisers if required to protect the Council's interests and give effect to the recommendations in this report.

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## **UNITED UTILITIES GREEN RECOVERY FUND GRANT ACCEPTANCE**

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that asked members to approve the acceptance of the £1,991,000 United Utilities Green Recovery Fund (UUGRF) grant allocation following confirmation of an award from United Utilities Plc in October 2023.

Oldham Council's Highways and Engineering Team had submitted various applications seeking financial support to increase the National Capital Value (NCV) of Oldham. The submissions were based on four emerging projects in Oldham town centre, namely: West Street; Rock Street; Market Street; and Curzon Street. All of these projects were to be delivered by March 2025 and the grant award received from United Utilities was intended to supplement and match funding from the Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund that was already secured for these projects.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 was to do nothing. Failure to accept the grant allocation of United Utilities Green Recovery Fund would reflect negatively on the perception of the town and its ambitions. It would also have significant implications for delivery on the overarching project budgets and, therefore, the achievement of regeneration ambitions and objectives in Oldham Town Centre.

Option 2 was to formally accept the United Utilities Green Recovery Fund award allocation for £1.991m and enter the FCA as set out in this report. the preferred Option was therefore Option 4.1 Option 2, as this would help to ensure delivery of the projects in the agreed timescales and budgets and, therefore, achieve the regeneration ambitions and objectives in Oldham Town Centre.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the acceptance of the £1.991m United Utilities Green Recovery Fund grant against the

increased National Capital Value criteria specified by Ofwat in collaboration with United Utilities Plc. The grant, it was noted would be broken down for spend against the following schemes; West Street – an allocation of £441,000 to increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, and increase amenity space - dwell space, pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase soft landscaping infrastructure; Rock Street – an allocation of £700,000 to increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, increase amenity space on former brownfield site, improve connectivity for disabled and vulnerable road users i.e. pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase in soft landscaping infrastructure to facilitate a new public amenity space in the form of a park; Market Street – an allocation of £600,000 to increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and significantly reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, increase amenity space i.e. dwell space, pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase in soft landscaping infrastructure; and Curzon Street – an allocation of £250,000 to increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and significantly reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, increase amenity space i.e. dwell space, pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase in soft landscaping infrastructure.

2. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), or her nominated representative, to agree the terms of the Legal Agreement in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Director of Legal Services and approve appointments of professional teams and contract award in respect of the agreed budgets.
3. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to Director of Legal Services, or his nominated representative, to finalise and enter into the Legal Agreement issued by United Utilities Plc in respect of the grant award subject to the completion of any necessary due diligence on subsidy control compliance and authority to agree and complete any project change requests under the Agreement.
4. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Economy or their nominated representative to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2023/2024 – 2024/2025.
5. Cabinet notes that as accountable body for United Utilities Green Recovery Fund, United Utilities Plc, has issued a Legal Agreement in respect of the grant, along with supporting documentation, which is currently under review by the Council's Legal Services Team.
6. Cabinet notes and endorse that the internal governance and administration for the United Utilities Green Recovery Fund grant will be performed via the Creating a Better Place Programme Board (CAPB) structures alongside a

dedicated Delivery Group for which Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Director of Economy, or his nominated representative.



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### **NEW RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Managing Director for Children and Young People, which set out the rationale and challenges faced in the current context regarding the increasing number of cared for children in residential placements, the lack of sufficient placements, provided detail about the activity already underway to manage this and outlined the proposals to further improve accommodation choices for children who are cared for by the local authority.

The report explained that the Council's Children's Services were aware that children and young people had better outcomes when they lived in their local communities.

The Cabinet was therefore, requested to consider proposals to enter negotiations to purchase, subject to the council's due diligence check, new homes to accommodate children who are cared for by the local authority and approve the refurbishment of an existing asset to repurpose into a children's home. The report also sought approval for all future decisions regarding these matters to be delegated to the Managing Director of Children and Young People, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), the Director of Finance, the Director of Legal and the Leader of the Council.

Options/alternatives considered:

Options and alternatives were to be considered at item 24 of the agenda.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 24 of the agenda before making a decision thereon.

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### **IMPROVING OUR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years that sought approval to remodel the delivery of services for young children and families creating seven new Family Hubs, delivering increased outreach into communities and an enhanced digital offer. Public consultation on these proposals took place between 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

The Council is currently transforming its offer to families through the £3.6m Oldham Family Hubs programme. The programme will provide easily accessible places in local communities, which will provide families with children and young people aged 0-19 (up to 25 if there are special educational needs and disabilities) with early help to overcome difficulties and build stronger relationships. The Family Hubs programme is acting as a catalyst for the proposed wider re-modelling and improvement of

services for children and families in Oldham around seven new Family Hubs. These proposals were the subject of a public consultation that ran from 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

Options/alternatives considered:

Options and alternatives were to be considered at item 25 of the agenda.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 25 of the agenda before making a decision thereon.

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### **CAPITAL AND REVENUE GRANTS - CHILDCARE EXPANSION PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Education, Skills and Early years, which was seeking approval for the allocation and expenditure of the Oldham's 2024 - 2026 Childcare Expansion Capital and Revenue Grant. Specifically, it presented proposals for a capital and revenue grant application process. If approved this would enable the Council to meet its aims and objectives, detailed in the Childcare Expansion Programme and to fulfil its statutory duties in line with the Childcare Act 2006.

In the Spring Budget 2023 the government announced the biggest investment in childcare in history, doubling the amount they expect to spend over the next few years from around £4 billion to around £8 billion each year.

The childcare expansion Programme had two projects.

a. **Wraparound childcare** – by 2026, all parents and carers of primary school-aged children who need it will be able to access term time childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm, so that parents can access employment and improve labour market participation. To support this ambition, the government announced that it will provide up to £289 million of start-up funding over two academic years to support local authorities and providers in England to introduce or expand childcare provision on either side of the school day, which parents of primary school-aged children will be able to pay to access.

b. **Expansion of the free entitlement to working parents** - England had some of the highest quality childcare provision in the world, with 96% of early years settings rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding. But the government has recognised that childcare is also one of the biggest costs facing working families today. This project is to ensure that eligible working parents can access 30 hours of free childcare per week, for 38 weeks a year from the term after their child's is 9-month-old to when they start

school. This will be rolled out in three phases starting April 2024 with the final phase being April 2025



Oldham has received notification from the Department for Education that it will receive both capital and revenue grant funding to support the expansion programme.

Options/alternatives considered:

Options and alternatives were to be considered at item 26 of the agenda.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 26 of the agenda before making a decision thereon.

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### **CAPITAL INVESTMENT AT THE BLUECOAT SCHOOL**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years which advised that joint investment was required between Oldham Council and the Cranmer Education Trust (CET) to prevent the closure of a teaching block at the Bluecoat School site. The capital works required to prevent closure was £3.5m.

The Bluecoat School was part of the Cranmer Education Trust (CET). The Trust currently operates five schools:

- a. The Blue Coat C of E School. The only Ofsted "Outstanding" secondary school in Oldham. There are over 1200 pupils on roll in Years 7-11. The school also runs a very successful academic sixth form for 420 students who come from Blue Coat and schools across the borough and beyond.
- b. St Anne's C of E Academy. The school is based in Rochdale for pupils aged 11-16 from a wide catchment area across Northeast Manchester.
- c. East Crompton St George's C of E Primary School. A primary school based in the parish of St James, East Crompton, catering for children from 4 to 11 years old.
- d. Mayfield Primary School. A large, two-form entry primary school based in Derker catering for pupils from Reception to age 11, together with a nursery.
- e. The Brian Clarke C of E Academy. Opened in September 2022. This is an 11-16 school, admitting 240 pupils every year, in a newly built permanent site in the town centre of Oldham.

Options/alternatives considered:

Options and alternatives were to be considered at item 27 of the agenda.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 27 of the agenda before making a decision thereon.

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### **PROCUREMENT OF SOCIAL PRESCRIBING SERVICE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health that sought approval for the procurement of an all-age social prescribing service.

Cabinet was informed that all the available extensions to the existing contract had been utilised, and the current contract was due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

The Council's current Social Prescribing offer was a key contributor within the Adults Target Operating Model, Children's Early Help Strategy and Housing prevention offer, acting as step-down and improving flow through the system. This had involved the development of a few specialised elements to the service; children and young people's link workers, and during 2023/24 piloting of a dedicated link worker role in Adults Referral Contact Centre (ARCC). Alongside this was a volunteer model that had been developed to help support clients with lower-level needs.

Demand for the service has increased over the lifetime of the contract, with the service receiving 2,096 unique referrals in 2021/22, 2,509 in 2022/23 and 2,293 up to the end of Q3 (31<sup>st</sup> December 2023) 2023/24. Most referrals into the service are made by professionals in Primary Care, Mental Health Services, Acute Health Services and Social Care, although more than 1 in 10 are self-referrals. People are primarily referred into the service due to loneliness and isolation or mental health and wellbeing, however reasons for referral also include issues with welfare and money management, long-term conditions and housing. The children and young people's element of the service began in early 2023 and has now received over 200 referrals.

Options/alternatives considered:

The various options were considered at item 28 on the agenda.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at item 28 of the agenda before making a decision.

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### **OLDHAM COUNCIL'S SOCIAL VALUE POLICY**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance that sought approval for the adoption of the Council's first social value policy, which would set out the approach within commissioning, procurement, and other wider practices as well as the approach to working with staff, partners, suppliers, and service providers to ensure additional benefits are delivered through all council activity, creating the best possible outcomes for our residents and communities.

It was reported that social value had first been introduced by The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 of which the Council responded to by implementing an Oldham specific social value framework and mandated weighted questions in all tenders. Through the years this framework approach had developed and evolved to the adoption of the National TOMs (themes, outcomes, and measures) and creation of the Oldham TOMs.

A review of the Council's social value journey was then undertaken in 2022, recognizing achievements but also identifying improvement areas to ensure our aim in becoming a leader in embedding social value is achieved. One such of those areas was in relation to governance and accountability and having a published policy and strategy.

The Social Value Portal had been working alongside key stakeholders within the Council to design and produce a policy which details the Council's approach and future ambitions, the final draft of which was at appendix 1, to the submitted report.

In parallel to this, a review also undertaken by the Social Value Portal to the Council's Local Needs Analysis. This document included a summary of insights to highlight the areas of highest deprivation, needs within the local community and priorities identified by Oldham Council. It aimed to provide guidance for stakeholders, suppliers, developers, contractors, and others working in Oldham to develop more robust social value strategies.

A workshop had been held to discuss the content of the analysis stemming from the Council's and the Borough's needs and priorities; the final draft of which, was included at appendix 4, to the submitted report.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: To approve the policy and its publication, formally documenting the Council's approach and commitment to social value. The policy would then be available for the Council's partners, suppliers, and the community strengthening our commitment.

Option 2: To not approve the policy and its publication. The Council would not have in place a formalized policy to govern the approach to securing social value and further progressing in shaping and leading on the delivery of social value.

Cabinet was informed that the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Body had permitted this item to be considered at this meeting of the Cabinet, without prior notification on the Authority's forward plan of Key Decisions in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution

Resolved:

1. To approve the policy and its publication, formally documenting the Council's approach and commitment to social value; the policy will be available for the Council's



partners, suppliers, and the community strengthening the authority's commitment.

2. To approve the revised local needs analysis, documenting the needs and priorities of the Council and the wider community, which will be published on the Council's website and with all tendering opportunities, improving social value commitments proposed by bidders ensuring they are relevant to Oldham and its residents.

21

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting, for the following seven items of business, on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

22

### **SYNERGY EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - SYNERGY CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 8: Synergy Education Management System - Synergy Contract Renewal.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approves a Call-Off Contract, via Crown Commercial Services G Cloud 13 Framework Agreement RM1557.13 Lot 2 Cloud Software, for the continued use of the Synergy application.
2. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Legal Services to formalise any relevant legal requirements, including the execution of the Call-Off Contract as a Deed FCR-03-24.
3. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Director of Education Skills and Early Years to build flexibility into the call-off contract to allow for the purchase of additional modules and support in accordance with the framework agreement and the relevant pricing schedule, subject to budget availability and approval.

23

### **A LOCAL RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING CRISIS**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 11: A Local Response to the National Housing Crisis.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approves the funding and delegations as set out in the submitted report, to support a local response to the national housing crisis.
2. Cabinet approves, in principle and delegates to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), in consultation with the Directors of Legal and Finance, and the Deputy Leader/Portfolio holder for Housing and Licensing, for an additional revenue allocation of £2.162m to provide a



dedicated response and local investment to respond to the housing crisis; broken down as follows:

- a. To make the existing 13.5 FTE fixed term grant funded posts within the Housing Options Service permanent to ensure stability and staff retention within the Services. Underwriting subject to external grant provision / extension £0.524m
  - b. To improve customer service capacity in Access Oldham and ensure residents are supported by reducing waiting times for face-to-face appointments, and on the phone lines £0.24m.
  - c. To enter into a long term (25 year) leasing agreement to provide access to 47 accommodation units for Temporary Accommodation (TA) provision through a private landlord, Helping Hands. Included within the lease is a lease yield of 7.5% payable over the 25 years with the rental costs being funded from Local Housing Allowance.
  - d. To procure and enter into a contract with an external provider to deliver the Out of Hours Emergency Homelessness Support Service for a period of 12 months. Anticipated maximum cost to the Council £0.130m per annum.
  - e. To accelerate housing delivery through the recruitment of a dedicated team £0.208m and funding for feasibility / business case development work £0.250m.
  - f. To improve housing standards through dedicated and proactive enforcement £0.095m.
  - g. To bring on-line an additional 7-bed unit using the e-bed model as an additional temporary accommodation for rough sleepers at a total cost of £0.146m which will be fully funded from the Asylum Dispersal Grant.
  - h. To agree the allocation of £0.715m for the use of temporary accommodation properties.
3. Cabinet approves in principle and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Directors of Legal and the Deputy Leader/Portfolio holder for Housing and Licensing for an additional £1m investment to provide a local response to the housing challenges will be reviewed during the first quarter of the 2024/25, with any drawdown on the additional resources reported to Cabinet in the 2024/25 Quarter 1 Revenue & Capital Monitoring Report.
  4. Cabinet approves in principle and delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Directors of Legal and Finance, and the Leader of the Council/Portfolio holder for Reform and Regeneration and the Deputy Leader/Portfolio holder for Housing and Licensing to draw down from the Flexible Housing Fund capital allocation with the Creating a Better Place Capital Programme to a maximum value of capital investment of £10m as follows:

- a. To purchase/acquire properties for conversion to TA units / Children's care homes as needed.
- b. To purchase/acquire empty properties across the borough and bring them back into use as socially affordable homes.
- c. To accelerate the development and delivery of social house building on Council land.
- d. To work with partners to accelerate the development and delivery of social house building where viability is proven to be a challenge.
5. Approval in principle to accelerate property acquisition using Compulsory Purchase Powers with delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) for details and requirements as needed, in consultation with the Directors of Economy, Legal and Finance, and the Leader of the Council/Portfolio holder for Reform and Regeneration and the Deputy Leader/Portfolio holder for Housing and Licensing.

24

### **NEW RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 15: New Residential Children's Homes.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the funding and delegations as set out in the submitted report, to support the new residential children's homes.
2. Cabinet approves the proposal to enter into negotiations for the in-principal purchase and refurbishment of 3/4-bedroomed homes to be converted to registered residential children's homes.
3. Cabinet approves the capital expenditure, of £1.730m for the purchase and refurbishment of three 3/4-bedroomed residential properties.
4. Cabinet approves the additional allocation of capital expenditure of £0.230m to the scheme, to be funded from Funds for Emerging Priorities, currently allocated within the Capital Programme and Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29.
5. Cabinet authorises the Director of Economy, Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, in consultation with the Managing Director of Children and Young People, to enter negotiations and agree terms for the purchase of three residential properties, for the purpose of registered children's homes.
6. Cabinet authorises the Director of Economy and Director of Finance, in consultation with the Managing Director of Children and Young People, to undertake procurement, appoint contractors and enter into legal agreements for the refurbishment of the premises as registered children's homes.
7. Cabinet authorises the Director of Legal Services, and/or his appointed nominee, to negotiate and enter into the necessary legal documentation.

8. Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Legal Services, and/or his appointed nominee to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report.
9. Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Economy and the Director of Legal, and/or their appointed nominee, to approve the appointment of external legal advisers, if required, to protect the Council's interests and give effect to the recommendations in the submitted report.
10. Cabinet approves the proposal for future decisions regarding the homes to be delegated to the Managing Director of Children and Young People, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), the Director of Finance and the Leader of the Council.

25

### **IMPROVING OUR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 16: Improving our Services for Children, Young People and their Families.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approves Option 1, detailed in the submitted report, approving the move forwards, with the phased implementation of a remodelled service around 7 Family Hubs.
2. Cabinet notes that all new Family Hubs sites are proposed to open during Spring 2024.
3. Cabinet approves the de-designation of the remaining 10 children's centres and relocation of services to be implemented over two phases to ensure residents are fully aware and engaged as services and sessions shift between local buildings.

26

### **CAPITAL AND REVENUE GRANTS - CHILDCARE EXPANSION PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 17: Capital and Revenue Grants – Childcare Expansion Programme.

Resolved:

1. that Cabinet approves the allocation and expenditure of Oldham's 2024/26 Childcare Expansion Capital and Revenue Grant; thereby enabling the Early Years PVI and Schools sector to submit expressions of interest to support the delivery of the programme aims, with the grants being awarded based on a full supply and demand mapping assessment which will highlight areas within the borough where demand is likely to exceed supply.
2. Cabinet notes that this course of action poses no risk to the council or council budgets as all funding is provided through a DfE S31 Grant, which will ensure that the Local Authority remains compliant with its statutory duties

outlined within the Childcare Act 2006 and the Councils corporate plan and aligning strategies.



27

### **CAPITAL INVESTMENT AT THE BLUECOAT SCHOOL**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 18: Capital Investment at the Bluecoat School.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the funding of the capital project, detailed in the report, in the sum of £3.5m; of which:

- a. The Council should fund £1.169m (33.4%) through a direct grant award to Cranmer Education Trust (CET) from the Council's Basic Need allocation.
- b. The Council should fund £1.84m (52.6%) through a loan to CET from the Council's Basic Need allocation. This loan would be repayable from CET to the Council over a term of ten years at a non-commercial rate of interest.
- c. CET should directly fund £0.491m (14%) directly from Trust finances from the outset of the project.

28

### **PROCUREMENT OF SOCIAL PRESCRIBING SERVICE**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 19: Procurement of Social Prescribing Service.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet agrees to the procurement of an all age social prescribing service for a period of 5 years, with the option to extend for 2x +2 year periods.
2. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to award the contract following use of the NHS Provider Selection Regime (PSR) to select a provider.
3. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to approve any extensions to the contract as provided for within the original contract terms and where there is budget available.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.35pm