

# Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

## OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, for the following purposes:

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 To order that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be signed as a correct record (Pages 1 - 48)
- 3 To receive declarations of interest in any matter to be determined at the meeting
- 4 To deal with matters which the Mayor considers to be urgent business
- 5 To receive communications relating to the business of the Council
- 6 To receive and note petitions received relating to the business of the Council

*(time limit 20 minutes)*

There are no petitions for this meeting of the Council to consider.

- 7 Youth Council

*(time limit 20 minutes)*

There is no Youth Council business for this Council meeting to consider.

- 8 Public Questions

*(time limit 15 Minutes)*

- 9 Questions to Leader and Cabinet (Pages 49 - 126)

*(Time limit 90 minutes)*

Leader and Cabinet Members to present their reports.

Non-executive members may ask questions.

- a. Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham – including the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and the meeting of the AGMA Executive Board held 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024
- b. Deputy Leader and Decent Home Portfolio Holder
- c. Deputy Leader and Value for Money and Sustainability Portfolio Holder
- d. Children and Young People's Portfolio Holder
- e. Education and Skills Portfolio Holder
- f. Enterprise Portfolio Holder

- g. Adults, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
- h. Don't Trash Oldham Portfolio Holder
- i. Thriving Communities and Culture Portfolio Holder

10 Notice of Administration Business

*(time limit 30 minutes)*

**Motion 1: Increasing Pension Credit Take-up**

To be moved by Councillor Jabbar

Seconded by Councillor Dean

This council recognises the importance of financial security for our pensioners, particularly those with low incomes. Pension Credit is a vital benefit that can significantly enhance the quality of life for eligible individuals and open the door to a range of other benefits and services, yet many are unaware of its availability or how to apply.

It's estimated there are 3,288 pensioners in the Borough currently missing out on pension credit, this amounts to £7.9m going unclaimed.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. **Launch an Awareness Campaign** – to develop a targeted campaign to educate residents about Pension Credit, including its eligibility criteria, application process, and potential benefits.
2. **Collaborate with Local Organisations** to partner with community groups and local charities to disseminate information and assist residents with applications.
3. **Increase capacity to support residents** – to identify and temporarily re-prioritise staffing capacity to support residents with applications where they may struggle to apply themselves and do not have anyone who can help them.
4. **Monitor and Report** – to establish a system to monitor the impact of the awareness campaign and report back to the council within six months, providing data on the increase in Pension Credit applications and any feedback from residents.

**Motion 2: Supporting Kinship Carers**

To be moved by Councillor Shah

Seconded by Councillor Mushtaq

Council believes that children and young people who are unable to live with their parents should receive the support that they and their carers need to safeguard and promote their welfare, whether or not they are looked after by the state.

**This Council notes:**

that here are 141,000 children in Kinship Care in England and Wales – carers who are friends or family who step up to care for a child where their parents can't. Many children and young people in the care of Oldham Council are looked after by Kinship Carers and the numbers are increasing.

that in October 2024 the Government has published 'Kinship Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' which pulls together the responsibilities of Councils in supporting all forms of kinship care (informal arrangements, private fostering, Kinship Foster Care,

Child Arrangement Orders, Special Guardianship Orders and adoption).  
Research by the charity *Kinship* has highlighted the need for practical support for Kinship Carers - one third said their income had dropped by 50% after taking on caring responsibilities and one in five often or always feel lonely.  
There are Council employees who have taken on the responsibility of providing kinship care or who are approved Foster Carers  
Council recognises the increasing demands being made of the Fostering Service and the valuable work done by Kinship and Mainstream Foster Carers in caring for children looked after by the Council and the investment made into the service to support carers and those taking Special Guardianship Orders.

**This Council resolves to:**

Instruct the Director of Children's Services to urgently review the new statutory guidance and ensure that the Council is compliant, particularly in making available the Kinship Local Offer on the Council's website.

Become a Kinship Friendly Employer as soon as is practicable, working towards achieving the Gold Standard

Record its thanks to all those who provide Kinship Care and mainstream Foster Care in Oldham.

11 Notice of Opposition Business

*(time limit 30 minutes)*

**Motion 1: Stop the Winter Fuel Payment Cuts**

To be moved by Councillor Bishop

Seconded by Councillor Marland

**This Council notes that:**

The recent announcement by the Labour Government to end universal Winter Fuel Payments has restricted eligibility to only those in receipt of Pension Credit, excluding too many vulnerable pensioners.

Many pensioners on lower and middle incomes will no longer receive the payments. Across England and Wales, the number of people eligible for Winter Fuel Payments will fall by 10 million (from 11.4 million to only 1.5 million). According to data obtained by the Liberal Democrats from the Department of Work and Pensions, 85% of pensioners in Oldham Borough will lose out. There are an estimated 7,800 pensioners in Oldham over the age of 80 set to lose their winter fuel payment who do not receive pension credit.

**This Council believes that:**

The criteria for Winter Fuel Payments that the Labour Government is using will exclude too many pensioners who need help. Only those receiving a pension of less than £218.15 a week (or £332.95 a week for couples) are eligible for Pension Credit.

This is significantly lower than the living wage rate.

Take up of Pension Credit has been worryingly low, more than one in three eligible pensioners are not signed up. We have a role to play to increase awareness of welfare

support such as Pension Credit to ensure people get the help that they need.

**This Council further notes that:**

The Energy Price Cap has risen by 10% in October, which combined with the removal of Winter Fuel Payments will push thousands of local pensioners into fuel poverty.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Instruct the Council's Communications Team to urgently commence a significant awareness campaign to maximise uptake of Pension Credit. This should include a dedicated advice line, promotion in the local press as well as targeted letters to those who may be eligible.
2. Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit receipt to be immediately paused and introduce a new threshold to determine eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments. Council further requests the Leader of the Council write to Oldham's three MPs asking them to give their formal support to halting these changes to the Winter Fuel Payment eligibility.

**Motion 2: The Budget Challenge**

To be moved by Councillor Lancaster

Seconded by Councillor Woodvine

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has delivered a budget which will impact the people who live in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. To write to Oldham's three MP's, the relevant government departments and agencies to reinstate Winter Fuel Payments for all pensioners, without any means testing. All pensioners, regardless of income or other financial factors, should receive this payment automatically in recognition of their lifelong contributions to society through taxes.
2. That the Council will do all it can to help alleviate those struggling paying for winter fuel bills this winter, given the Energy Price Cap has increased by 10% also adding £150 to the average fuel bill.

**Motion 3: Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza**

To be moved by Councillor Chowhan

Seconded by Councillor Ghafoor

**Background:**

As of October 2024, the situation in Gaza has reached a dire humanitarian crisis, with the Gaza Health Ministry reporting that over **42,000** individuals have lost their lives due to ongoing military operations. This includes approximately **14,100 children** and **9,000 women**, indicating a devastating toll on the civilian population. In addition to the loss of life, the health infrastructure in Gaza has been severely impacted. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed that there have been **over 516**

**verified attacks on healthcare facilities** in the Gaza Strip since the conflict escalated.

The attacks have resulted in significant damage to hospitals, disrupting essential healthcare services and leaving many without access to medical care. The United Nations has expressed deep concern over the escalating violence. Secretary-General António Guterres stated, on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2024, "The violence must stop immediately," emphasising that "the protection of civilians is paramount." Furthermore, world leaders have called for an immediate ceasefire. French President Emmanuel Macron stated on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024, "We must work together to bring about an immediate ceasefire and ensure the safety of all civilians." Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau echoed this sentiment on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2024, stating, "Canada calls for an end to hostilities and the protection of human rights in Gaza."

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) raised alarms about the situation on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024, indicating that the ongoing actions in Gaza may constitute violations of international law and could be characterised as genocide. The ICJ noted, "All parties must adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law and protect the civilian population."

Humanitarian organisations, including UNICEF, state that "every child in Gaza is in danger," highlighting the urgent need for safe corridors for aid to reach those in need.

#### **Justification:**

This motion is brought to the council as a matter of urgency due to the following reasons:

- 1. Humanitarian Responsibility:** As representatives of our community, we have a moral obligation to advocate for the protection of human rights and the welfare of civilians in conflict zones. The ongoing violence in Gaza has led to a humanitarian catastrophe that requires immediate action.
- 2. International Law:** The situation in Gaza poses serious questions regarding adherence to international humanitarian law. By passing this motion, the council can reaffirm its commitment to upholding these principles and advocate for accountability on the global stage.
- 3. Community Sentiment:** There is a growing concern among constituents regarding the ongoing conflict and its humanitarian impact. Bringing this motion forward allows the council to express solidarity with affected populations and demonstrate responsiveness to community concerns.
- 4. Global Leadership:** The motion aligns with the calls from world leaders and international organisations for immediate action. By taking a stand, the council can contribute to a collective global response aimed at de-escalating the conflict and ensuring the protection of civilians.

In light of these developments, the council resolves to:

1. Call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, urging all parties involved to halt hostilities and prioritise the protection of civilian lives.
2. Support the rapid entry of humanitarian aid to address the urgent needs of the population affected by the ongoing conflict.
3. Call and enforce a ban on the supply of military equipment specifically used to bomb

Palestinian civilians, while allowing for the entry of supplies intended solely for genuine defence purposes.

**Furthermore, the council requests** that the Chief Executive write to the Prime Minister, urging the UK government to:

4. Call and enforce an immediate ceasefire in international forums.
  5. Facilitate the rapid entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza.
  6. Meet their moral obligation by suspending all arms sales to Israel until such time that international humanitarian law is observed and respected.
- Through these actions, the council seeks to contribute to the restoration of peace and the protection of human rights in the region.

#### **Motion 4: Honouring Veterans**

To be moved by Councillor Wilkinson

Seconded by Councillor Ball

Our veterans have served King and Country with distinction, honour, and integrity. It is why as we come up to remembrance, that we use this time to recall the sacrifice of those not just who died in service but all those who came home also.

For some the change from being a serving soldier to civilian life can be difficult. It is why we ask that the Council do all they can to support our veterans and to make sure that our Borough's War memorials, war graves and all other assets are kept safe and secure for future generations. We must also remember the sacrifice of those from this Borough who served not just King and Country, but those who made the sacrifice for King and Empire, as well as the Commonwealth.

It is why it is imperative that the Council call on the government to do more to protect our veterans from malicious prosecution, especially those from Northern Ireland who served under Operation Banner, where several veterans in their twilight years have faced worry and fear of reprisal. This is also the case with the more recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

**This Council notes that:** 3.4% of Failsworth's population are veterans, 1.8% of Oldham's population are veterans, 2.5% of Chadderton, Saddleworth and Lees population are veterans, 3.4% in Shaw and Crompton and 4.1% in Royton are veterans.

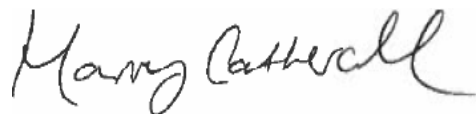
#### **This Council resolves to:**

1. Support the work of the Royal British Legion and other veterans' charities to help improve the lives of those who served King and Country.
2. Maintain up-to-date assets register of all monuments, memorials and other valued objects that relate to the proud history of HM Armed Forces in Oldham.
3. Continue to fight for our veterans when it comes to providing the necessary support once they have left the service but also for those who currently serve.
4. Reaffirms its commitment to HM Armed Forces and the Armed Forces Covenant.

***This Council further resolves:***

5. To write to Oldham's Members of Parliament to use their offices to do everything they can to protect veterans, especially those who served under Operation Banner and subsequent conflicts from malicious prosecutions. Asking them to stand by all those that served King and Country.
- 12 Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan: Request for revocation of the Plan for Oldham (Pages 127 - 212)
- Council is asked to consider a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in response to the Motion that Council approved on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024, regarding the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.
- 13 The Oldham Plan 2024 – 2030; Pride, Progress, Partnership (Pages 213 - 232)
- Council is asked to consider the Oldham Plan 2024 – 2030: Pride, Progress, Partnership.
- 14 Corporate Plan 2024 - 2027: Ready for the Future (Pages 233 - 252)
- Council is asked to consider the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2027: Ready for the Future
- 15 Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26 (Pages 253 - 270)
- A report of the Director of Finance detailing a Council Tax reduction scheme for 2025/26.
- 16 Scrutiny Annual Report (Pages 271 - 294)
- A report covering the activities of the Council's four Scrutiny Boards in 2023/24.
- 17 Update on Actions from Council (Pages 295 - 314)
- To note actions taken arising from previous Council meetings

**NOTE: The meeting of the Council will conclude 3 hours and 30 minutes after the commencement of the meeting.**



**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

