

# **Oldham Borough Council**



**Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025**



## OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, for the following purposes:

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 82)

To order that the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on the dates listed below, be approved and signed as correct records.

- a. 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 (reconvened to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025)
- b. 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (Extraordinary Meeting – Request for an inquiry into CSE)
- c. 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (Extraordinary Meeting – Places for Everyone)
- d. 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (appointment of Chief Executive and the designation of Section 151 Officer)
- e. 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (Budget Meeting)

- 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 Council meeting to consider.

- 7 Youth Council

*(time limit 20 minutes)*

### **Young People's Mental Health**

Since 2012, young people have been telling the youth council that mental health is an issue that they face every day and that they need support now. Since this time we have only seen the need for mental health services increase, especially since the COVID pandemic, and although spending on Mental Health services has increased, it has not dented the need for support seen across Oldham and in the UK.

At the last election, Labour had several manifesto points to improve mental health support for children and young people and we would like to see these implemented as soon as possible.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Oldham Youth Council have made 'Mental Health' a priority issue, with it coming in the top 5 issues for Make Your Mark. The council also recognises that we have undertaken much work in this area to improve the experiences of Oldham's young people. This includes:

Oldham Youth Council first commissioned Kooth.com, an online mental health counselling service, for Oldham's young people.

2013 motion to Council asking for an overview and scrutiny of mental health services.

2017 motion asking to ensure that adequate funding is made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention mental health services.

2021 motion asking to secure mental health funding for Oldham.

Our work with Oldham Theatre Workshop, highlighting mental health and how professionals can work with young people called Standard Day.

Our work with Oldham Theatre Workshop, highlighting self-harm, called Boy in the Black.

Our campaign called SNAP that promoted Kooth.com and the support they provide for depression, stress/anxiety and eating disorders.

Our campaign 'I Love Me', raising young people's self-esteem and confidence.

Council notes:

That mental health issues have risen, with a 12% increase in cases since pre COVID.

That consultation undertaken by the Youth Council would suggest schools and teachers are still not able to fully support young people's mental health.

That according to several official sources the average waiting time to get an appointment for Mental Health assessments in Oldham is 16-18 weeks.

That consultation undertaken by the Youth Council would suggest that while the average wait time is 16-18 weeks some young people could wait for up to 6 months for an initial assessment and that the wait for treatment could be over a year after that appointment.

In 2022/23, just under £1B was spent on Children and Young People's mental health compared to the £12.8B on all mental health services. This was despite the understanding that 50% of mental health illnesses in adults start showing symptoms by the age of 14, and 75% experience symptoms before they are 24.

Labour's manifesto said that in the first term they would invest in front line services recruiting 8,500 new staff to reduce waiting times.

That the manifesto also said that labour's new Young Futures Hubs would have open access to mental health support for children and young people in every community

Therefore, we propose that **Council resolves** to complete an overview and scrutiny study of Mental Health service's waiting times (including CAMHS) and ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of state for Health to request an increase to children and young people's mental health services spending without reduction in spending on adult mental health; to again ask the Government to ensure that adequate funding and resources are made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention services; and for an update on their manifesto commitments.

*(time limit 15 Minutes)*

9 Questions to Leader and Cabinet (Pages 83 - 184)

*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 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025; urgent decisions made during 2024/25; the minutes of meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025; and the minutes of the meetings of the AGMA Executive Board held 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
- 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: Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

To be Moved by: Councillor Taylor

to be Seconded by: Councillor Davis

This Council notes with concern the increasing number of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Oldham and the impact this has on local communities, housing standards, and infrastructure. While HMOs can provide an important source of affordable accommodation, their proliferation in certain areas has led to issues including overcrowding, pressure on local services, and a decline in housing quality. In the past 5 years the number of licensed HMOs in Oldham has almost doubled.

This Council further notes that current national planning regulations allow certain HMOs (Class C4, up to six residents) to be established without the need for planning permission. This limits the ability of local authorities to manage their spread and ensure they are appropriately located and regulated.

This Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Chancellor of an additional £2 billion for social and affordable housing. This funding provides an opportunity to address the shortage of genuinely affordable homes and to ensure that people in Oldham have access to safe, secure, and high-quality housing.

This Council calls on the new Labour Government to reverse the changes introduced by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in 2010 which

removed the requirement for planning permission for small houses of multiple occupation.

This council further requests that the Chief Executive writes to the borough's 3 MPs and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, asking for their support in reversing the aforementioned changes.

### **Motion 2: Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)**

To be Moved by: Councillor Mohon Ali

to be Seconded by: Councillor Nasheen

This Council notes that In Oldham, as of January 2024, there were **8,694 pupils identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**. This represents **18.8% of the school-age population** in the area. Among these, **6.0% have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**, while **12.9% receive SEN support**.

The positive improvements to services for children and young people with SEND in Oldham continue at pace, led by the SEND Local Inclusion Partnership Executive Board chaired by Dame Christine Lenehan. This new governance structure has improved strategic planning and focused on: improved access to health services; better quality and more timely Education, Health and Care Plans and Annual Reviews; smooth transitions between early years, children's and adult services. This has been achieved by focusing on co-production with parents, carers, and young people. Our aim is to ensure children with SEND are safe, healthy, happy, and able to achieve their potential

The Department for Education has confirmed Oldham has made good progress.

There is significant pressure on the services for children with SEND in Oldham and across England, and this Council welcomes the steps being taken by the Labour Government to reform the system put in place in the 2014 Children and Families Act.

This Council further notes the launch of '*Inclusion in practice*' evidence-gathering project to help shape a reformed SEND system that delivers better experiences and outcomes for all children focused on identifying and sharing practical, scalable solutions for inclusion in mainstream schools.

This Council welcomes the commitment to produce a White Paper to overhaul the SEND system with the aims of ensuring: support is put in place far more quickly for children who need additional support; much earlier identification of need; much more timely intervention and support.

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

Encourage Oldham Schools to submit examples of good practice to '*Inclusion in practice*'

Support the LGA's call for urgent action in the Spending Review to address the deficit in High Needs Spending by Local Authorities and put spending to support children with SEND on a sustainable footing.

## 11 Notice of Opposition Business

*Time limit 30 minutes*

### **Motion 1: Tackling Fly-Tipping and Exploring Free Bulky Waste Collection to Reduce Costs**

To be Moved by Councillor Ghafoor

To be Seconded by Councillor Wahid

#### **Council Notes:**

Fly-tipping is a persistent and worsening issue in Oldham, causing environmental damage, attracting anti-social behaviour, and placing a significant financial burden on the Council.

In the last year alone, Oldham Council responded to **5,672 fly-tipping incidents**, costing over **£600,000** in cleanup and enforcement efforts.

**Over 69% of fly-tipping in Oldham occurs in back alleyways (53%) and on highways (16%)**, with a significant proportion of this waste consisting of bulky household items such as sofas, mattresses, and white goods.

Currently, residents must pay **£23 to dispose of up to three bulky waste items**, plus **£7 per additional item** and **£10 per fridge/freezer**. This financial barrier discourages responsible disposal and contributes to illegal dumping.

#### **Council Believes:**

The cost of clearing fly-tipped waste often **far exceeds** the revenue generated from bulky waste collection charges.

Reintroducing a **free three-item bulky waste collection service** could significantly reduce the number of items being illegally dumped in alleyways and on highways.

If, for example, **10,000 households** accessed the free service annually, the lost revenue would be **£230,000 per year**. However, if this measure led to a substantial reduction in fly-tipping, it could generate net savings by reducing cleanup and enforcement costs.

#### **Council Resolves to:**

Commission an urgent cost-benefit analysis comparing the potential savings from reduced fly-tipping against the costs of reintroducing a **free three-item bulky waste collection service** for residents.

Explore external funding opportunities or efficiency measures within waste management services to support this initiative.

Request that the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services reports back to full Council within **three months** on the financial implications and potential impact of this policy change.

By taking a proactive approach, this Council can tackle the root causes of fly-tipping, keep our alleyways and highways clean, and ensure taxpayers' money is spent more effectively.

### **Motion 2: Expressing disappointment at government failure to compensate the WASPI Women**

To be Moved by Councillor Bishop  
To be Seconded by Councillor Sykes

The 1995 and 2011 Pension Acts saw the State Pension age for women rise from 60 to 66 but the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) consistently failed to adequately communicate these changes. As a result, tens of thousands of women were plunged into poverty. One-in-four affected women struggled to buy food and one third fell into debt. This was an avoidable scandal.

A landmark Ombudsman report in March 2024 told the Government to pay compensation and apologise to 3.6 million, women born in the 1950's who were affected by the lack of communication in relation to their State Pension age. The report concluded ministers failed to properly notify those impacted by the changes. However, the DWP – under the new Labour Government - has indicated it does not accept the findings of the report.

Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) calls for fair and fast compensation for the financial and emotional hardship caused by DWP failures. WASPI argues for the highest level of compensation for the worst affected, i.e., women who had the shortest notice of the longest increase to their state pension. The worst affected women received just 18 months' notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age. WASPI continues to call for: *All Members of Parliament to support the urgent delivery of fair and fast compensation to all those affected; and compensation scheme proposals should be brought before MPs to vote on as quickly as possible.*

This Council notes that more than 11,600 WASPI women across Oldham Borough stand to lose out on compensation after the Labour Government decided to ignore the independent ombudsman's assessment and go against their long-held policy to support WASPI women. It is estimated that the compensation owed to impacted women across Oldham Borough would be a minimum of £11,642,500.

This Council notes that previous Labour Leaders of this Council have referred to the situation facing WASPI women as "an injustice" and as recently as March 2023, Oldham Labour were still campaigning to put that injustice right.

This Council reasserts its support for the WASPI women and regrets the decision of the Labour government to ignore an independent ombudsman's assessment that compensation should be paid to them.

Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Liz Kendall MP asking her to look again at this decision.

Council further resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the three MPs who represent Oldham Borough as well as the Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, calling on them to publicly support justice for WASPI women.

### **Motion 3: Local Government Review**

To be Moved by Councillor Lancaster  
To be Seconded by Councillor Woodvine



Local Government in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham needs to be more democratic, more accountable, and more local.

The cabinet system was imposed on all but the smallest districts under the Local Government Act 2000. The Localism Act 2011 allowed councils to opt for the committee system and created a route for communities to call a referendum on governance arrangements.

Sheffield City Council, Sutton London Borough Council, Kingston-upon-Thames Royal Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, Basildon Borough Council, and Worcester City Council have done this.

We believe that Councillors need to work together and have better decision-making powers.

Therefore, the Conservative Group on Oldham Council request that this Council resolves to:

- 1) End the cabinet or strong leader model on the Council and revert to a committee system where all councillors, from all parties, will be represented on the council, and will have to take responsibility for key decision-making.
- 2) The Council immediately begins the appropriate processes needed to implement a committee system on Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council.

#### **Motion 4: Council Tax Reduction for Special Constables**

To be Moved by Councillor Wilkinson

To be Seconded by Councillor Ball

The Special Constabulary consists of volunteer officers, who give up their spare time to assist with the policing of Greater Manchester and Oldham, by increasing the effectiveness of local police initiatives.

Special Constables are considered to be a vital part of the police service, helping to prevent crime and interacting with the diverse communities they serve. Greater Manchester Police are fully supportive of introducing this Special Constable council tax discount.

Noting that in Rochdale, a 50% discount is given and in Trafford a 100% discount is given.

I am aware that there is only Thirteen Special Constables serving in Oldham. If we took an average figure of £2000 per special, then we are only talking of a figure of £26.000 if they claimed the 100%. Of the Thirteen, it may well be that not all of them live in Oldham.

To qualify for this reduction, special constables must meet the following criteria. Liable to pay council tax, live in Oldham, volunteer in Oldham and complete a probation period and complete at least 1 year of service in Oldham. (same criteria as Trafford)

I have received statistics for the last 3 years that Special Constables have worked.

2022- 5696 hours £99.680

2023- 4444 hours £77.770

2024- 3392 hours £59.360

This has been calculated on a 2/3 year pay scale of £17.50 per hour of a full time Police Officer

This Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Chief Finance Officer produces a report within 28 days for approval to Cabinet to provide a 100% discount from the payment of Council Tax to Special Constables who live and serve in the Borough of Oldham.
2. The creation of a Section 13A (Local Government Finance Act 1992) policy and procedure to include the discount above, be approved.


12 Update on Actions from Council (Pages 185 - 204)

To update Council on actions from previous meetings. Appendix 1 will be circulated ahead of the meeting

13 Review of Political Balance on Committees (Pages 205 - 212)

To update Council on changes to the composition of political groups.

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



**Shelley Kipling**  
**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

