

Oldham Borough Council



Council Meeting
Wednesday, 9th April 2025

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 1st April 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 9th 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. 18th December 2024 (reconvened to 20th January 2025)
- b. 12th February 2025 (Extraordinary Meeting – Request for an inquiry into CSE)
- c. 12th February 2025 (Extraordinary Meeting – Places for Everyone)
- d. 6th March 2025 (appointment of Chief Executive and the designation of Section 151 Officer)
- e. 6th 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 2nd December 2024, 16th December 2024, 20th January 2025 and 3rd March 2025; urgent decisions made during 2024/25; the minutes of meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 29th November 2024, 13th December 2024, 31st January 2025 and 7th February 2025; and the minutes of the meetings of the AGMA Executive Board held 7th 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



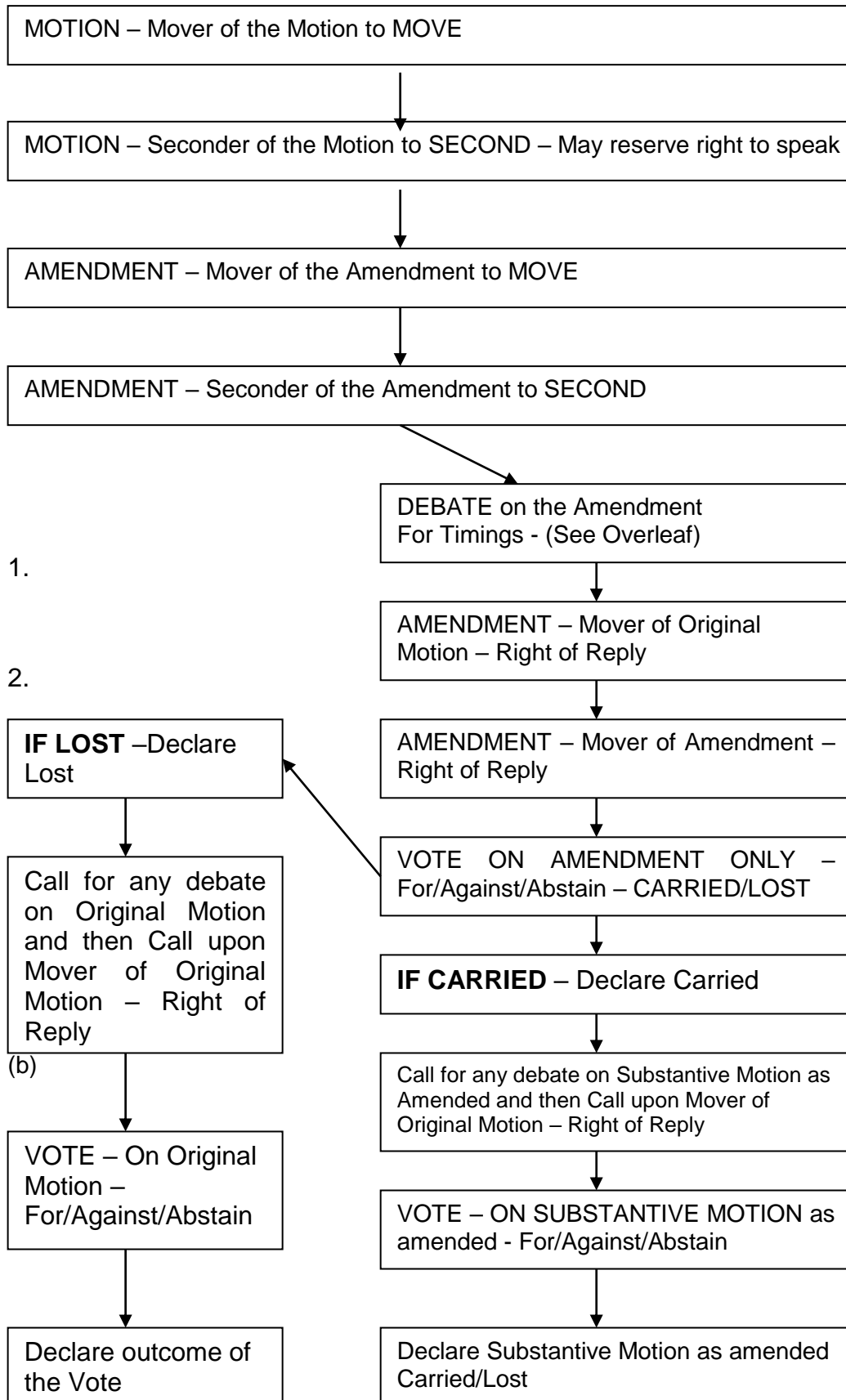
Declare outcome of the VOTE

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



COUNCIL
18/12/2024 at 6.00 pm



Present: The Mayor - Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Adams, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Arnott, Aslam, Azad, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chauhan, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Ghafoor, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Harrison, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hughes, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Kouser, Lancaster, Malik, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sharp, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson, Williamson and Woodvine

1. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hurley and Navesey.

2. **MINUTES**

Council considered the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 24th October 2024 and the Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 6th November 2024.

The Mayor, Councillor Chauhan MOVED and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Moores SECONDED that the Council meeting be adjourned until Monday, 20th January 2025 at 6.00 p.m. due to the behaviour of some Members within the Council Chamber, during proceedings.

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

RESOLVED: that the Council meeting be adjourned until Monday, 20th January 2025 at 6.00 p.m.

The meeting started at 6.00 p.m. and was adjourned at 8.25pm.

COUNCIL
20/01/2025 (reconvened) at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillor Moores (Deputy Mayor) in the Chair

Councillors Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Arnott, Aslam, Azad, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Ghafoor, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Hince, Hindle, Hughes, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Kouser, Lancaster, Malik, Marland, McLaren, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Navesey, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson, Williamson and Woodvine.

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from the Mayor (Councillor Chauhan),
Councillor Adams and Councillor Sharp.

2 **MINUTES**

Council considered the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting
held on 24th October 2024 and the Minutes of the ordinary
meeting held on 6th November 2024.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules, 8.4(k) it was
MOVED that this Council meeting be adjourned until Monday,
20th January 2025 at 6.00 p.m.

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

RESOLVED: That the Council meeting be adjourned until
Monday, 20th January 2025 6.00 p.m.

On the meeting being reconvened, on 20th January the Deputy Mayor advised that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on 24th October 2024 had been circulated previously with the agenda pack.

At the meeting of the Council, on 18th December (prior to the adjournment), Councillor Ghafoor had referred to inaccuracies in the minutes of the meeting held 6th November 2024, (minute 9 refers) therefore, an updated version of these minutes had been circulated around the Chamber, for members' information.

At the meeting on 18th December 2024, the Liberal Democrats had requested an amendment to the minutes of the 6th November meeting which they felt reflected the Places for Everyone discussion. The proposed amendment had been checked against the meeting's transcript and the text of the report and the amendment could not procedurally be accepted as an accurate record of the debate. Therefore, the minutes remained as printed in the updated version issued that had been circulated to council for agreement.

However, the Deputy Mayor noted that in July 2024 the Council debated a Motion proposing a request to the Secretary of State to revoke the Places for Everyone plan for houses and jobs as it relates to Oldham. Instead, Council approved an amended motion, the resolution, which required officers to provide a further report back to council.

A series of member workshops were held in September 2024 and subsequently a further report was presented to council in November 2024. That report recommended that Council did not write to the Secretary of State and it did not include either a recommendation or an option to write requesting that revocation.

While the report was not supported by Council, Council was not given the opportunity to vote to write to the Secretary of State. However, as a result and following external legal advice, the deputy Mayor confirmed that no resolution has yet been taken by Council to write to the Secretary of State.

For this matter to be taken further, a new motion or report would need to be brought to Council for consideration and decision.

A recorded vote, in line with Council Procedure Rules was taken on the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held 6th November 2024, as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	ABSTAINED	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	AGAINST	Ibrahim Nyla	AGAINST
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR

Ali Zaheer	AGAINST	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	AGAINST	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	AGAINST
Azad Montaz Ali	AGAINST	Kouser Aisha	AGAINST
Ball Sandra	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	AGAINST	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	AGAINST
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moores Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	AGAINST
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	AGAINST	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	AGAINST	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	AGAINST	Sharp Beth	APOLOGIES
Harkness Garth	AGAINST	Sheldon Graham	AGAINST
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	AGAINST
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	AGAINST
Hughes Jade	AGAINST	Wilkinson Mark	AGAINST
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	AGAINST
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	APOLOGIES

On a recorded VOTE being taken 30 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th November 2024 being approved as a correct record with 26 VOTES cast AGAINST and there was 1 ABSTENTION. The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th November 2024 were therefore APPROVED as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 24th October 2024 and 6th November 2024 be approved as correct records.

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

The Deputy Mayor informed the meeting that due to the receipt of several enquiries from Members, the Interim Borough Solicitor had granted a dispensation that permitted all members to participate in the discussion and voting on Item 11 (Motion 2 – Ethical Investment: Divestment from Fossil Fuels and Arms by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund), which is being proposed by the Oldham Group.

There were no other declarations of interests.

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

The Deputy Mayor advised that the Conservative Group had withdrawn their Amendments to the two Motions detailed at agenda item 10 (Notice of Administration Business).

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

The Deputy Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Alan Griffiths, who represented the Shaw Ward between 1986 and 2002 and who served as Mayor of the Borough in 1986/87. Accordingly, Councillors Sykes, Dean, Hince and Williamson addressed Council paying their individual condolences and tributes.

Council held a minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Griffiths.

Council was advised that Councillor Graham Sheldon had left the Conservative Group and would henceforth sit as an Independent Member. Councillor Byrne was the interim Leader of the Conservative Group.

The Deputy Mayor permitted Councillor Woodvine to address the meeting, who offered a full apology for his behaviour and comments made at the meetings of the Council held on 18th December 2025 (prior to the adjournment).

The Deputy Mayor permitted Councillor Hince to address the meeting, who offered a full apology for his behaviour and comments made at the meetings of the Council held on 18th December 2025 (prior to the adjournment).

The Deputy Mayor advised the meeting that two groups of survivors and their advocates, had asked that two short statements be read out at this meeting. Accordingly, on behalf of the two groups of survivors the Deputy Mayor read out the two separate short statements.

Statement 1

The past few months have been very difficult time for us since the decision was made for Oldham to run their own independent inquiry. In addition to this, the past 2 weeks have been even

more stressful, triggering and upsetting, having to watch the world's media descend on our small town, over such an emotive and extremely personal issue.



Senior politicians have been making decisions on our lives and who they are aiming to try to find a solution to suitably address the suffering and exploitation, the victims and survivors have endured in Oldham for decades. We are aware we'll never see a decision that everyone will agree on.

Whilst we hoped for and continue to fight for a national inquiry, we appreciate they have come up with a compromise. Whilst we'll continue to fight for a victims led national enquiry, for now, we are satisfied that our voices are finally being heard, although we will continue the fight in a way that works for us, to lobby for changes we feel are necessary in shaping a suitable inquiry. Our biggest priority is to hope we can achieve that it be a statutory one.

Our whole ordeal has been traumatic enough, without the extra stress and agitation of having to watch media footage, containing claims of help and actions that didn't happen and that we have not received. We've even been put in the position where certain media interviews are talking on matters that directly concern us without prior warning, consultation or agreed involvement. It's caused a decline in our mental health and had a serious knock-on effect to our children and families. We don't take kindly to this, having already feeling unheard for so many years. Those that have assisted us have stayed firmly out of the spotlight, remaining supportive and providing us with the help we need.

We hope as a town now that we can start on a new journey and let the ones doing the real work behind the scenes continue and try to bring some closure and answers for those desperately in need. We are hoping for and seeking a peaceful time whilst things unfold.

Statement 2

Early last week ourselves, Samantha and Jamie-Leigh attended a meeting with Kemi Badenoch, following that meeting we met with Jess Phillips. After much consideration we are still not happy with the overall decision but are happy to continue with a local Telford inquiry. Going forward we have multiple meetings with MP's and officials. We are currently in talks with numerous survivors and are currently in the process of setting up a survivors committee where survivors and only survivors have a voice, we are also in the process of setting up a family support group, so families have equal support.

Moving forward we hope the Council remain transparent and politics are kept aside and the far-right stop using this for their own agenda. As we move forward us survivors and victims' need to be kept updated throughout each stage of the process regardless of how little it may be.

Please can members of the public remain respectful as this is solely about survivors and victims. Survivors and victims are the start and heart of this inquiry. Thank you for your understanding.

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

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

7 YOUTH COUNCIL

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that the Youth Council's Motion was to be deferred to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

8 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Question from Shona Farnworth

What are the plans for accessible homes for those with visible and non- visible disabilities as we the public do not know what the plans are around the lack of accessible homes stock within the council as the Tommyfield market should become this space?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied, thanking Ms Farnworth for her question, noting that all newly constructed dwellings have to be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standards by law, so new homes being built will be easier to adapt for use by those with visible and non-visible disabilities.

The Council's Local Plan is in the final stages of development and may include further planning policies to provide homes specifically for those with disabilities, and we would welcome input and suggestions on how this could be done as we progress through the final stages on consultation.

Councillor Taylor undertook to email Ms Farnworth about her specific ideas and suggestions so we can review them as part of this ongoing work.

2. Question from Lewis Farnworth

What Support for Full time unpaid carers as the government budget left out full time unpaid carers living on £81.90 for 90+ hours a week care we provide as we are struggling. We have to choose whether to pay bills or eat?

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Health, Social care and Wellbeing replied, thanking Mr Farnworth for his question, adding that the Council has a strong commitment to carers to support them in their caring role.

We have put together a comprehensive package of support to make sure that no Oldhamer goes hungry or cold this Winter. We have used Household Support Funding from the Government to bolster our offer. This includes funding our Warm Homes Team to provide emergency fuel vouchers for pre-paid meters and to provide advice and guidance on reducing energy consumption. We have also invested in emergency supermarket vouchers to support residents to purchase food and essential

items as well as funding Oldham Foodbank to maintain stock levels.

We will contact Mr Farnworth and offer support for schemes that he is eligible for this winter.

Additional support for carers includes support from the carers service who are able to complete an updated Carers assessment. An option to contact Adult Social Care for the cared for to request or a reassessment if it is felt this appropriate. It is also advisable to contact Age UK/ Citizens Advice Bureau/DWP to check you are on the right benefits and if there are any additional support services you can approach. However, I reiterate our message of support this winter, please don't hesitate to call our Helpline on 0161 770 7007.

3. Question from Phillida Ship

Can the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes explain what the process would be for developing a new Local Plan if Oldham withdraws from Places for Everyone?

How long would it take from starting the process again to the adoption of a Plan and how much would it cost?

What restraints would there be on developers applying to build on Green Belt and Local Green Spaces while the Local Plan is being drawn up.

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied thanking Phillida Ship for her question.

If Places for Everyone was revoked for Oldham, the Council would need to start a brand-new Local Plan which could need to include the new higher housing and employment targets set by Government.

This new approach would involve several stages of public consultation starting with a fresh call for sites and a review of the Green Belt, because there is not enough brownfield land available to meet the new requirements. We would need to consult on the options and opportunities, then again on the draft plan, and then again on the final plan before submission for examination and adoption.

Overall, this process would likely last a minimum of 5 years depending on the feedback and engagement from the different consultation stages.

With regards to the costs for producing a new plan – this would be in the region of about £500,000 (five hundred thousand pounds / half a million pounds) for the evidence base and examination, with additional costs for officer time over this time period.

In the meantime, without PfE, the council would not be able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, and so even Green Belt and local green spaces would potentially be vulnerable to applications for housing development if they demonstrate that they are sustainable.

4. Question from Mike Rooke

I read in the Mill that Cllr Sykes in justifying his support for withdrawing from Places for Everyone said "I'd like to think we have all these people sitting on the boundary of Oldham waiting

for this to happen... But we haven't. If we were in a place where we had plenty of developers and planning applications, I'd be a lot more worried."

Can the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes confirm which developers made representations at the Planning Enquiry seeking to get sites currently protected from development included or extended?



Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied, thanking Mike Rooke for his question. Be in no doubt - big developers are licking their lips at the thought of Oldham being out of PfE.

There is prime greenbelt across Oldham that could be developed at the click of the fingers, with no consideration of proper infrastructure which we could be powerless to prevent. What is happening in Liberal Democrat Stockport is simply a glimmer of what could happen in Oldham where there is so much more green space that is easy to develop without the protection of PfE.

The developers aren't keeping this secret as you can see their responses to planning inquiry for Places for Everyone.

5. Question from Hannah Roberts

Everyone agrees that the priorities for Oldham are to build on previously developed land – Brownfield sites – and increase the numbers of affordable and social homes. Oldham Council has increased the number of brownfield sites in the Town Centre and by adopting the Mills Strategy.

Are there other brownfield sites that haven't already been identified and included in the SHLAA and Places for Everyone? And what is the projected land supply over the next 10 years compared with the revised housing targets?

Where will these homes be built if brownfield sites don't exist?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied thanking Hannah Roberts for her question.

Every year the council updates the following documents - the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), the Brownfield Land Register and the Housing Land Supply - to ensure that they reflect the most up to date position and feedback from landowners, developers and agents.

As part of this process, new sites may be added if they are considered deliverable and developable, including those submitted through the council's open Call for Sites. Including numerous calls for brownfield sites to be put forward during the many rounds of consultation for Places for Everyone, and no sites were put forward by those who are incorrectly claiming we can meet our targets without building on the greenbelt.

As of 1 April 2024, there was land to accommodate approximately 8,230 homes over the next 10 years (including greenfield sites). This figure drops to only 6,048 homes when including sites that are brownfield (or part brownfield).

The Government adopted a new standard method for calculating housing requirements last week, and these would require Oldham to deliver 910 homes a year, which equates to 9,100

homes over ten years. This is significantly higher than the average annual requirement under Places for Everyone (680 homes a year).

As both the adopted Places for Everyone housing requirement and the Government's new housing requirement cannot be met on deliverable and developable brownfield sites alone, Oldham has to enable development on greenfield sites as well to ensure there is enough housing for all, and there would be increased pressure on our protected open spaces and Green Belt land under the new housing requirement.

6. Question from Dominic Wall

Can the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes estimate the cost to Oldham of turning down planning applications for housing which are later approved at appeal? Is it possible to say, for example, what the cost to the Council would be of turning down an application to build on Hanging Chadder which was later approved at appeal?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied, thanking Dominic Wall for his question.

It is not possible to accurately estimate what appeal costs may be, as each planning application is different and the application for costs by an appellant will vary depending on the specific matters covered in an appeal and whether the appeal is heard by a Public Inquiry or not.

However, where an application involves a large housing development, and the appeal is held through a public inquiry, it would be expected that appeal costs would usually involve six figure sums (hundreds of thousands of pounds) if the appeal is upheld (and the Council decision is overturned) and the costs are awarded against the Council.

7. Question from Kathryn Phillips

Can the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes confirm what would happen to the 97.5% of Oldham's Greenbelt currently protected by Places for Everyone if Oldham withdraws from the plan?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied, thanking Kathryn Phillips for her question.

Currently 97.5% of our beautiful greenbelt land is protected under PfE. If we withdraw, all of it is under threat. We can see what is happening in Stockport - our land is so much better here in Oldham and developers are licking their lips at the chance to build, build, build.

The protection is lost because it means we wouldn't have an up-to-date development plan and we would need to create a new one. This would take a minimum of five years.

In the meantime we would be expected to deliver more homes than what is under Places for Everyone due to the protection as explained in an earlier question – putting even more greenbelt at risk.

8. Question from Diane Wrall

Could the relevant cabinet member please tell me why even if people object to large masts being put in certain locations, the permitted developments still ride rough shod over residents' voices in this borough?

Also why is it that officers of this council who apparently work for us and the borough, quite happily have weekly meetings with IX, but feel that it isn't necessary or want to meet with residents who are rightly concerned about this issue and about IX acting as has been found out in the past in contravention to Health and Safety laws?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes replied thanking Diane Wraill for her question. This is a complicated area of planning law, but essentially our hands are tied as – in summary – the national rules about these permitted development rights means that there are only very specific circumstances where we can intervene.

All of the details on this are on our website if you want to understand the technicalities of this.

What we absolutely have done is to ensure that where IX Wireless have been doing things which are unsafe we have suspended their work until they make it right.

With regards to meetings with residents, this does happen as both Officers and Councillors have met with various local residents when it has been needed. Officers and Councillors also engage extensively on email with residents. We acknowledge the local frustrations and concerns being raised, and to try explain where we can do so.

9. Question from Peter Webb

I would like to ask the relevant cabinet member the following question,

Back in May 2024, I voted for my local Labour councillor based on the promise made in a leaflet distributed to residents of North Chadderton.

The leaflet stated that £50,000 would be allocated for road safety improvements around St. Herbert's School and the cemetery on Middleton Road.

It has now been six months since the councillor's re-election, and residents, including parents, have yet to hear any updates on these plans.

Could you please confirm if any progress has been made or if there are concrete plans to follow through on this commitment? Or was this simply a pre-election promise with no intention of being fulfilled?

Additionally, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and commend St. Herbert's School for their proactive efforts in keeping children safe in the absence of these promised improvements. Would the council join me in congratulating the school for their initiative?

Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Don't Trash Oldham replied, thanking Mr Webb for his question.

Taking your points in reverse order, many thanks for commending the work being undertaken by St Herbert's School, which of course the Council will endorse.

I can confirm that progress is being made to review the road safety concerns around this school. Council officers have been communicating with Ward Members and St Herbert's School directly on the various options available to tackle the concerns being raised.

Officers are currently developing the details of the road safety scheme and public consultation on the proposals will commence early in the new year.

We will ensure there is an update provided to parents via the school newsletter and can I ask Ward members to assist with ensuring local residents are kept informed of progress please.

The Deputy Mayor advised that the unanswered questions, that had been submitted, would be published to the Council's website, with written answers, in due course.

9

QUESTIONS TO LEADER AND CABINET

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members to present their reports and further invited non-executive members to ask questions thereon, as follows:

a. Councillor Shah, Leader and Building a Better Oldham Portfolio – including the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held 14th October 2024 and 18th November 2024 and the Minutes of the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 25th October 2024.

Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Question 1: Place for Everyone

I want to ask about something that we debated on the minutes the council meeting on 6th November when Members voted by 30 to 29 to write to the Secretary of State, calling for Oldham to be removed from Places for Everyone. Everyone in the chamber knew what that vote was that's the way they spoke it was clear from the speeches on both the Labour side and opposition members there was no doubt what people thought they were voting for and instead of honouring or being weaselled out of a democratic decision made by the Council, the Administration has used what looks like every trick in the book to avoid writing to the Secretary of State and they think they're being clever just like they think they're being clever with at least four planted labour questions about this very same issue.

Mr Deputy Mayor is it the Labour group's policy that the council will have to vote and debate once again, the issue of Places for Everyone before they write to the Secretary of State just because they didn't like the result last time?

Councillor Shah Leader of the Council replied, thank you Councillor Sykes for your question however I do think there's some irony in this like so there's if there's something about and a common theme that runs across the chamber it's when people don't like the outcome of something they like to say it's a conspiracy or it's wrong but actually um you've actually given me an opportunity to set the matter straight um to which I'm really thankful for again. So, I have to say that I've actually had no involvement in the procedure around the decision not to write to

the Deputy Prime Minister to request that we withdraw from places for everyone it's very clear that the administration agrees with Places for Everyone however the report before Council, on 6th November 2024, didn't actually mandate officers to write to the Deputy Prime Minister to request the removal of Oldham for Places for Everyone. The vote was on the recommendations contained in the submitted report.

Question 2: Social Care:

My second question, I think, is equally as serious since about the winter crisis and the problems we're encountering in Social Care, Mr Deputy Mayor. The NHS is facing it's not a double whammy it's not a triple whammy it's a quadruple whammy in terms of the respiratory diseases that people are getting. I understand it in terms of another winter crisis, ambulance services being in chaos; I had the joys of visiting Oldham's Hospital recently and the whole of the ambulance bay was full as we were still waiting to offload patients and find somewhere for them to be even if that was on a corridor. The pressure on social care is mounting there's some evidence from earlier this week, I read, that nearly a third of people in hospital are in hospital because they're waiting for somewhere to be discharged to and that's not the fault of our social care it's the fact that successive governments have kicked the can down the road.

Social care services in Oldham are under extreme financial pressures, Mr Deputy Mayor but what's really dangerous is the impact that this Labour government's National Insurance hike could have on our services if common sense doesn't prevail. More essential services will disappear from view for those who rely on them, so, I ask the Leader tonight, if she agrees is it time for her government to work with other parties to sort this out and does she agree that it's important is that people get care based on need and not on what they can afford to pay?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied, everyone in the Chamber can entirely agree with we know that adult social care is under increased pressure. We know it's a huge significant budget challenge not just for this Council but for councils across the country and we also know that the issues around the NHS and how all of its unintended consequences add to all the other pressures that we're actually facing out in our communities as well and we're all in agreement as well that actually not resolving any of this isn't helpful to anyone. The previous government bears significant responsibility for this because they left the current government with a significant mess.

The cross-party LGA are calling for greater understanding and for greater funding. I am hopeful that this will happen. The Leader agreed to give Councillor Sykes a more detailed response, to his question which she will submit to him in writing.

Question from Councillor Ghafoor

I think it's very important that we talk about child sexual exploitation. We have all been disgusted by the exploitation and rape of the most vulnerable children in society every victim must

be heard and appropriate legal action must be taken against the perpetrators, whoever they are. As a group of Muslim councillors, we in the Oldham Group, feel that the perpetrators should be punished with the worst and longest punishments available.

We know that now that many of these vile individuals were never investigated due to the failings of our institutions whether they were the police, social services, children's care home or safeguarding teams. In many cases these institutions failed vulnerable white girls for decades, these children were sometimes blamed or shamed or ignored by the very people paid by the taxpayers to protect them.

My question to Councillor Shah is, will the Oldham inquiry be judge led, similar to the Telford inquiry, to ensure Independence and credibility? Will you commit to Consulting the full Council chamber to reach a consensus on the terms of reference for the inquiry ensuring a broad and transparent scope will the terms of reference explicitly include all relevant institutions such as the Police, Social Services, Council departments, politicians, children's care homes and safeguarding teams to ensure systematic failings are comprehensively addressed? Will you ensure that this inquiry is given full legal powers to enforce compliance including access to any document or evidence that it requires, and finally can you confirm that the inquiry will examine both historical and recent cases of institutional failings to identify systematic issues and propose actionable safeguards for the future?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied, saying that she was disappointed that notice hadn't been taken of the survivors' statements that had been given earlier in the meeting asking that politics needs to be taken out of this.

The Home Secretary, last week, made a statement in the House of Commons about sexual abuse and exploitation of children that there must be recognition that survivors have suffered the most horrific form of abuse and that there must be an absolute commitment to protect children from abuse now and in the future. Councillor Shah added that listening to the voices of survivors and the protection of children which must be the driving force behind the independent inquiry that will be set up. The request for the inquiry actually came from local survivors who were affected and who felt that the previous Assurance Review had not given them an opportunity to have their voices heard or put forward their individual testimonies and experiences examined. The Leader reassured the meeting that, since the summer, Oldham Council had been working with a group of survivors and those affected by child sexual exploitation to discuss how they could help shape a further local inquiry.

The Home Secretary announced last week, that she will appoint Judge Crowther, to lead the inquiry, having previously led the Telford Inquiry. Survivors are happy with this because they have observed how the Telford Inquiry was conducted. I am confident that this will provide additional assurance to survivors and that they will be at the heart of the inquiry. The recent home office

announcement also said that that there would be additional government support and additional funding and we, as a Council, will continue to have discussions with government about funding the inquiry and how it will progress but one thing that I am also proud of is that as of now and thanks to these survivors, we'll be shaping how future survivor led inquiries across the country, will happen.

Question from Councillor Byrne

I would like to ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Shah, if you will confirm whether you would support the following you've covered quite a bit of the area but this is more specific. Will you support our call for a national inquiry, into Pakistani heritage rape gangs who have groomed children, not just in Oldham but in the whole of the UK? Will you confirm the timeline for the local inquiry into the historic cases of child sexual exploitation in Oldham and can you confirm that the inquiry in Oldham does not exclude any Council officer's councillors or members of the Council who were and are still employed by the council? Will the Leader of the Council demand that the Prime Minister apologise for claiming that those fighting for justice are far-right?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied that once more I have to apologise to the survivors, who made their statements at the start of this Council meeting. I think it is really unacceptable that we keep drawing this out and trying to use it politically. It is unfair, it is also disrespectful. The only voice that matters is theirs and they've made it clear they don't want to hear from me they don't want to hear from anyone else and they don't want anyone to try to politically point score. What I'm not going to accept though is any kind of division. Perpetrators, like I said in my statement, come from all backgrounds - religion and race don't come into it.

I will not ask the prime minister to apologise for his comments. He takes his responsibilities seriously, just like every single member in this chamber should and that is why we should unite and bring communities and people together. I have said previously that we need to look at drivers in certain communities to see what drives them and what drives those patterns of behaviours. We need to look at that that is important but actually abuse does not discriminate everybody is affected by this and we have to like use this and accept what the survivors have asked of us.

b. Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Decent Homes

The Deputy Leader and Decent Homes Portfolio Holder presented her report.

Question from Councillor Harkness - I understand that the Government is looking to introduce a legal responsibility for Councils to provide accommodation for veterans in locations where they have links to a community. However, those plans appear to provide no additional funding to enable this housing to be provided. While the principle of this is to be lauded, is this another instance of central Government passing responsibility

for issues onto local councils without the required funding, leaving council taxpayers in Oldham faced the bill, when the country as a whole should be ensuring that veterans get the support and housing that they deserve?

Councillor Taylor replied stating that Members may be aware that Veterans already have priority need for the Council's Housing register.

You might have also seen today that the Government has announced the biggest ever increase in funding for homelessness prevention services to council, and we expect Oldham will benefit significantly from this new money. So no I disagree with the premise of Cllr Harkness' question, the government has already put their money where their mouth is. We will continue to support veterans in the same way as all our residents through advice, guidance and housing support.

Question from Councillor Arnott seeking an update on properties at Union Street in Royton.

Councillor Taylor replied that the Council was aware that number 12 Union Street had been converted into a number of flats.

A letting agent had been in touch with us offering the units for temporary accommodation – as is often the case, we get offers from letting agents regarding property across the borough every week.

While we are always in need of homes and properties to meet our Temporary Accommodation needs, we must always consider the price, the suitability and the appropriateness of the facilities.

We have not entered into a conversation with the letting agent in question regarding the property on union street, however this be considered and will follow standard processes at the appropriate time.

Question from Councillor Harrison - The Cabinet Member's report outlines good progress in delivering a brownfield first policy and much need affordable and specialist homes. However, too many families are waiting for permanent homes in temporary accommodation this Christmas – can Cllr Taylor explain what changes are planned to reduce the numbers of people needing temporary accommodation mentioned in her report?

Councillor Taylor replied that one of the Council's priorities was to reduce the need for Temporary Accommodation: however, this sort of change will take time as there are simply neither enough suitable nor enough affordable homes for Oldham's residents.

Therefore, in the meantime a range of solutions have been accelerated since we declared a number of local solutions to the national housing crisis to ensure that we are able to provide quality temporary accommodation facilities for residents in need. This includes projects like the SHAP - the Single Homelessness Accommodation Project - at Foundry Street; new contracts with providers who can provide access to more suitable and affordable properties; the refurbishment of existing Council

premises; and, where appropriate the strategic acquisition of properties.

In response to the housing crisis, we have been working closely with private landlords, developers and social housing providers to accelerate the delivery of new housing across the borough. This work has included accelerating the delivery of new homes on Council owned sites such as Southlink and South Chadderton. A key aspect of these housing plans is the accelerated provision of the 500 truly affordable homes over the next 5 years. Finally, the housing team are now taking a more prevention led approach to support our residents who find themselves at risk of homelessness when eviction notices or properties are condemned on safety grounds, to help residents stay in their homes while the concerns and issues are resolved.

c. Councillor Jabbar Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Value for Money and Sustainability

The Deputy Leader and Value for Money and Sustainability Portfolio Holder presented his report.

Question from Councillor Islam - Can the Cabinet Member explain what the benefits to residents will be of the successful a bid to GMCA to fund digital inclusion work across the borough with the aim of increasing access to digital support closer to home?

Councillor Jabbar replied that he was delighted to share that following a successful bid to GMCA, we will be receiving 70k funding in early January with the specific remit of increasing the number of Oldham residents who can access digital support within 15 minutes of home.

Building on our comprehensive Library offer, we are using the funding to embed a partnership approach across the borough together with Inclusive Bytes CIC. Over the 6-month funding period, Inclusive Bytes will be working with partners and across the VFCSE sector to set up digital hubs and a digital champions network so that residents can get digital help closer to where they live. Inclusive Bytes will be providing training to support this as well as online resources and mapping to show how and where to get support.

Further information will be available in early 2025. I'm delighted that we have been successful in obtaining this much needed funding and I know that it will make a big difference for residents who need support to get online.

Question from Councillor Ghafoor – could the Portfolio Holder clarify the Council's financial undertaking in respect of work that MUSE are carrying out on behalf of the Council and if the associated legal advice could be published?

Councillor Jabbar replied that this issue had been considered at length at a meeting of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 17th December 2024.

Question from Councillor Al-Hamdani - Council has announced the upcoming departure of the Chief Finance Officer, effective from January.

In the run up to the Budget-setting Council Meeting for 2025/26, how confident is the Cabinet Member that this change in senior

leadership within his directorate will not have any adverse impact on Oldham Borough's finances?

Councillor Jabbar replied that he did not consider that the imminent departure of the Director of Finance would have an adverse impact on the Council's finances. The Director of Finance leaves at the end of January at which point budget setting will be very advanced. Throughout the process she will have been supported by her very able Assistant Directors, who will provide continuity throughout the rest of the process whilst we appoint a replacement.

d. Councillor Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People presented his report.

Question from Councillor Aslam - the Labour Government's Plan for Change includes a milestone of 75% of five-year-olds being school ready. How is Oldham performing against this target and what is the plan to achieve or exceed it?

Councillor Mushtaq replied that Oldham's Good Level of Development (GLD) at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) increased from 62.8% in 2023 to 63.6% in 2024. This was a larger improvement than nationally and the gap between Oldham and the National position has continued to narrow from 7.4% in 2018 to 4.1% in 2024. A plan of support to continue to improve outcomes for children at the end of EYFS is in place through schools and our Family Hubs to support the home learning environment and speech and language development.

Question from Councillor Al-Hamdani - At the September meeting of Council, Councillor Mushtaq announced that the Council was reviewing the residential model for children's homes and creating another three homes for a further 7 placements, which would deliver 20 council run placements over the next three years. At the same time, Greater Manchester has introduced its Project Skyline, to introduce 10 children's homes across Greater Manchester that can accommodate 24 children. In the report received by the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, there was no information on either of these two projects, although I would like to commend officers for their work towards delivering an initial three houses. So, could the Cabinet member confirm that the further 7 placements are going ahead; on what date this will start; and whether this is separate to the Project Skyline children's homes which are being delivered?

Councillor Mushtaq replied that he could confirm that an additional 8 placements will be delivered in 2025/26 across three new council run children's homes with the first home on track to open from April 2025 for 4 placements whilst progress continues on homes 2 and 3. As outlined at the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board the creation of new children's homes can take a minimum of 12 months due to a significant number of factors and inter-dependencies including property search, purchase, procurement and delivery of refurbishment work, change of use, resident engagement Ofsted

registration, workforce recruitment and training, preparing the home environment, and matching and placing children and young people.

Greater Manchester Regional Care Cooperative (RCC) as one of two National Pathfinders are delivering project skyline to create 24 new placements in 10 new children's homes across GM. These placements are separate to those being created by Oldham Council and will be available for all 10 LAs in GM to place children and young people locally close to their communities and networks.

Question from Councillor Malik - Councillor Mushtaq's reports confirms the progress Oldham has made in improving Children's Services and outlines what more we need to work on. The horrific abuse suffered by Sara Shariff highlights yet again why vulnerable children need protection. How will councillors and residents know progress is being made in the Achieving Excellence strategy and improvement plan?

Councillor Mushtaq replied that this was a tragic national case, and we welcome the government strengthening multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and having oversight of elective home education.

The Achieving Excellence strategy and improvement plan has been shared with Ofsted and progress will be monitored by them through focused visits as part of Ofsted Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services chairs fortnightly meetings to maintain progress on the delivery of actions.

Quarterly progress reports are provided to the independently chaired Achieving Excellence Board and to me at my Children and Young People portfolio, highlights will be included in my council reports.

Bi-annual progress reports are scrutinised by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.

e. Councillor Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills presented his report

Question from Councillor Lancaster - since our last Council Meeting, the Partnership Week which seeks to promote and encourage close working between independent and state schools has been held. Locally, I attended an event with my alma mater, Hulme Grammar School, and Briscoe Lane Academy from the neighbouring local authority area, to learn about their sharing of resources, facilities, and best practice, to aide the academic and personal development of students, particularly those from poorer backgrounds. With the public policy climate for independent schools being challenging at present, to say the least, can the Cabinet Member please detail any additional actions which Oldham Council could take to improve partnerships between all types of schools across our Borough, and to maximise opportunity for local pupils?

Councillor Mohon Ali replied that Oldham Council encouraged collaboration between all of the settings, schools, academies

and colleges educating our children and young people. We do this through regular communications with the whole sector, hosting the independently chaired Oldham Learning Partnership and providing some universal and other traded services to these establishments.

Hulme Grammar School and other provisions in our borough provide an option for those residents who choose to access independent education. These independent schools will be operating in a more challenging environment in the New Year, so I will encourage our officers to consider additional support to improve collaboration between schools to maximise opportunity for local children. Oldham Learning Board does not currently have a representative from the independent sector, so I will ask for this to be rectified and hope that they can contribute to the work in addressing the current borough priorities in SEND, attendance, literacy and workforce.

Question from Councillor Iqbal - There have been national challenges in Speech and language development in the early years for the past decade and I welcome the reduction in waiting times for speech and language therapy. Can the Cabinet Member explain how this has been achieved and whether further improvements in accessing this service are planned? Councillor Mohon Ali replied that the waiting list for children and young people to access the Speech and Language Therapy service has reduced from around 1,800 at summer 2023 to below 750 currently.

This significant improvement has been achieved by additional investment into this NHS service by both the Oldham Integrated Care Partnership and Oldham Council. In addition to this the Start for Life and Family Hubs programme has invested £390,000 in early intervention and prevention to supporting early language by funding the Early Years Better Communication Team and commissioning work in schools and early years settings to build capacity within the workforce to support early language development and support early identification of need. Significant work with families has also been funded. The SALT service is now delivering clinics within our Family Hubs and in local schools to support easier access to specialist support and reduce missed appointments.

I acknowledge that some families are still waiting too long to access this service, and we are working with colleagues in the NHS to further strengthen and develop this service.

f. Councillor Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise
The Cabinet member for Enterprise presented his report.

Question from Councillor Murphy - does the council have any plans to encourage small businesses to tender for council contracts, especially those below 25k by joining other GM council like Stockport and Trafford on the STAR Procurement portal, recently highlighted by GM Federation of Small Business?

Councillor Fida Hussain replied that the initiative to which you refer is a pilot that is being run by STAR procurement on behalf of its members with the Federation of Small Businesses.

Unfortunately as we are not a member of STAR Procurement we can't access this.

However we absolutely value our local small suppliers and when we updated our Contract Procedure Rules we amended them to allow more flexibility and targeting of local suppliers. The updated CPRs go into this in much more detail and I would be more than happy to share more specific detail in a written response.

Question from Councillor Sajed Hussain - Could the Cabinet Member give me some examples of practical outcomes for Oldham businesses from the GM LINK programme Cisco Demo Day? And could Cllr Hussain explain further the support for businesses available at the Hive?

Councillor Fida Hussain replied that located on the upper floor of the Spindles, the Hive is a place where businesses can access practical information, advice and guidance. It is a place for businesses to network, collaborate, share ideas and do business with each other.

The Hive also hosts a range of business events such as the Cisco Demo Day last week. This is a GM wide programme that enables start-ups and SME's to respond to a number of challenges through innovative solutions.

At the Cisco Demo Day hosted in Oldham at the Hive last week, 10 businesses showcased potential solutions for mental health care and decarbonisation of public sector buildings.

As a direct result of this session Cisco are attending Oldham Strategic Estates Group in the New Year so we can explore ways to make energy savings, reduce operational costs and support sustainability goals through these innovative local businesses.

Holding these type of regional business events is great for the reputation of our Borough, and they really help to showcase the Hive as a place to collaborate, innovate and do business in a socially responsible way.

Question from Councillor Arnott seeking clarification on apprenticeship schemes in the borough of Oldham?

Councillor Fida Hussain replied that in September 2024, the Government had announced its intention to reshape how the apprenticeship levy will work. Skills England is reviewing where the key skills gaps are and will work with employers to create new frameworks which will include foundation apprenticeships that will support more young people to get into good work by creating stepping stones into intermediate, advanced and higher apprenticeships. This will see the Apprenticeship Levy change into a new "growth and skills levy" which will be more responsive for businesses and young people.

We are committed to ensuring our young people and our business community can access the right skills provision to grow our economy.

We are continuously reviewing our approach to enhancing our offer for apprenticeships in the council to ensure we are creating opportunities for residents. We are aiming to create a clear talent pipeline for every service, to build on the successes we have seen with the Social Work Academy model which has seen

us recruit 42 Social Worker degree apprentices, to provide routes into the council for young people within the borough. This will also include an expansion on our existing offer with other early career pathways such as T Level's, Work Experience and Graduate Programmes. We are also focusing on how we can specifically support disadvantaged young people in the borough to achieve their potential. A positive example of this was our involvement with the Care Leavers' Summer Jobs programme that has resulted in a council apprenticeship for one of the young people. We have committed to running another placement scheme and we are constantly reviewing all avenues where we can remove barriers to support our young people.

g. Councillor Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing

The Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing presented er report.

Question from Councillor Bashforth - can Councillor Brownridge explain which Providers are involved in the development and support of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and what this initiative means for people who use those services?

Councillor Brownridge replied that in November our colleagues in the NHS committed to make a step change in their work in order to better connect with the Administration's policy of integrated working at neighbourhood level. Over the last few years, the Council has been progressing work on public service reform. At the November Integrated Care Partnership Committee, it was agreed that all NHS providers and healthcare providers more widely will now also place integrated working at neighbourhood level at the heart of their strategies. Work will progress in the New Year to align the corresponding work programmes to this.

Question from Councillor Arnott which sought clarification on the community grants programme, available from the One Oldham Fund?

Councillor Brownridge replied that The One Oldham Fund is a strategic single investment fund that uses pooled resources from a range of sources VCFSE sector in Oldham. The fund is administered by Action Together. Since its launch in October 2021 the fund has distributed £1.6m to voluntary and community organisations in Oldham

These grants have been awarded across a range of outcome themes, including health and wellbeing, hate crime, children & young people, cost of living.

The majority of grant awards are to organisations working across the borough, or across more than one district. North district has fewer applications coming in than from other districts so Action Together and the Council's District team are working with groups in that district.

The One Oldham Fund is not affected by the recent news that GMCVO has gone into administration. GMCVO are not an investor in this fund.

Question from Councillor Hamblett seeking clarification on electric vehicle charging points across the Borough?
Councillor Brownridge undertook to provide Councillor Hamblett with a written answer to his question.



h. Councillor Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Don't Trash Oldham

The Cabinet Member for Don't Trash Oldham presented his report.

Question from Councillor Nasheen – Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that people who fly tip for profit or because they are lazy should be ashamed of themselves & the amount of money they cost council taxpayers to clean up after them? How can people make sure the 'man with a van' who is taking their rubbish away has a licence and will dispose of it legally?
Councillor Godwin replied that fly-tipping is a scourge that effects the whole of the borough and can cause significant public health issues.

Council teams investigate and clear thousands of tips each year as it blights Oldham's beautiful landscapes and the costing hundreds of thousands of pounds, we encourage all residents to ensure that any 'man with a van' service they use is registered with the Environment Agency and the details are checked on the Agency's website. If the material is fly tipped, the resident will be responsible and could be fined or prosecuted for it. Therefore, we encourage all to use reputable, honest and licensed waste carriers.

Question from Councillor Hamblett - could the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the disabled car park behind the Tommyfield pub? When will the car park be operating at its original capacity so that blue badge holders can have proper access to parking without the current congestion.

Councillor Goodwin replied that Hackney carriage bays were relocated to the New Radcliffe Street car park when the rank was lost on Dan Fold due to the ongoing redevelopment works in the town centre. In order to increase capacity, new disabled bays were implemented on the carriageway off New Radcliffe Street, close to the Integrated Care Centre.

Work is ongoing to locate other suitable locations within the town centre to implement further blue badge bays. There are no immediate plans to make changes to New Radcliffe Street car park. However, a review of accessible parking forms part of the car parking strategy work and we will look to support additional capacity where possible.

In the meantime, if users of the car parks are having issues, we will investigate and take appropriate action. Problems can be reported at any time to the council's parking enforcement team.

Question from Councillor Lancaster - I recently attended an Elected Member Local Transport Plan session with Transport for Greater Manchester, at which I learnt of their Vision Zero for Safer Roads, which sets the noble ambition of zero fatalities and life changing injuries on our roads by 2040. In order to make meaningful progress against that ambition, enforcement of

excessive speeds will need to be improved – traffic calming measures alone will not suffice – and so many more permanent speed cameras must be erected and maintained. At present, however, the criteria for new speed cameras is prohibitive and nigh impossible to satisfy. Will the Cabinet Member commit to raising the example of Leicestershire, where speed cameras have been introduced at locations of known community concern, at the GM Casualty Reduction Partnership, and pursue any other opportunities to increase permanent speed camera coverage?

Councillor Goodwin replied thanking Councillor Lancaster for his question and for attending the Local Transport Plan session with Transport for Greater Manchester.

I share resident concerns about the road safety issues associated with speeding vehicles and I'm very keen, as I know every other councillor here is, to ensure that the roads in Oldham are safe for all users. Where issues are identified, we will continue work with our partners and residents to secure safety improvements.

Greater Manchester Safer Roads Partnership is, along with the 10 Greater Manchester boroughs, collaborating on the drafting of a new Safety Camera Handbook.

The new handbook includes revised criteria for assessing applications for Safety Cameras. The new criteria will give Highway Authorities much greater flexibility over the location of new safety camera sites and is due to "go live" in 2025. Once live, we will work closely with the Partnership, residents and Greater Manchester Police to bring forward sites that require improvements. We will share more details in due course.

Question from Councillor Marland - Leaf clearance on our pavements and footpaths this autumn/winter has been abysmal. Residents are reporting slips and falls and inaccessible pavements as a result of this Administration completely failing to get the basics right.

Could the Cabinet Member explain why leaf clearance across Oldham has been so below standard this year; and outline what steps will be taken to ensure improvements are made?

Councillor Goodwin replied that every year, the Street Cleansing teams start Autumn leaf clearance in September and much of this work depends on the weather, as milder weather leads to a prolonged period of leaf fall.

Leaf fall and debris blocking drains causes localised standing water / flooding when there is rain, therefore these areas have had to be prioritised to protect properties and ensure highway safety and prevent road closures.

Work remains ongoing by the team who remove over 1,300 tonnes of leaves from the borough's roads and footpaths every year.

In order to increase capacity and efficiency, we are looking to replace some of the sweeper vehicles but they will only arrive in the new year.

- i. Councillor Dean – Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities and Culture

The Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities and Culture presented his report.



Question from Councillor Aftab Hussain - What kind of activities are being provided for eligible children by the Household Support Fund over the Christmas period? And does the Cabinet Member know how many eligible children will be able to join in? Councillor Dean replied that the Household Support Fund was providing support to approximately 19,000 children and young people on means tested free school meals during the Christmas holidays in the form of a £40 voucher per child.

Household Support Fund is also supporting the expansion of the HAF programme to families above the free school meals threshold. This will provide a further 1600 places at Holiday activity provision enabling children and young people to access enriching and fun activities over the Christmas holiday period alongside a hot nutritional meal. The programme also includes specific activities targeted at children and young people living in temporary accommodation.

Question from Councillor Bishop - Graduates from Oldham Theatre Workshop were shown around the new location for the Workshop in November, in the Old Library building, which will also house the council chambers. What does this mean for the previous plans to use a single space to house and coordinate the many arts organisations that Oldham has together? And what does it mean for the "arts quarter" concept, given that the Coliseum is now due to return to Fairbottom Street?

Councillor Dean replied that as well as creating a fantastic space for Oldham Theatre Workshop we are also on track to open the new event space which will host much of the programme from the QE Hall as well as the theatre on Fairbottom Street next year.

Through the Cultural Partnership Board, of which I am the Chair, we work with a range of arts and cultural organisations across the borough and are actively working with them to understand their needs, mapping use of assets across the wider estate to give more cultural organisations opportunity to access the most suitable space for their needs.

The cultural programme is a key part of our town centre regeneration programme with the heritage, arts and cultural focus still very much within this part of the town centre.

Question from Councillor Charters - has the Council had any information about plans to introduce a new "right to buy" for community assets, outlined in the King's Speech in July, will make it easier for people to purchase empty heritage assets and convert them into cultural venues, with the government providing "seed funding" to help them to do it?

Councillor Dean replied that as you have outlined The UK government is advancing plans to introduce a "right to buy" for community assets as part of its legislative agenda, highlighted in the King's Speech.

This initiative aims to empower communities to purchase and revitalise valued but underused or empty heritage assets, such

as pubs, shops, and cultural venues, converting them into community-beneficial spaces like arts centres or music venues. The policy, expected to be part of the English Devolution Bill, reflects a commitment to community-driven regeneration and economic participation. It is expected to support these efforts, the government will provide "seed funding" to assist communities in acquiring and developing these assets.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Leader and Portfolio Holder reports be noted.
2. That the Minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held 14th October 2024 and 18th November 2024 and the Minutes of the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 25th October 2024, be noted.

10

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Motion 1: Get Britain Working

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Ali SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council notes the publication of the Get Britain Working White Paper which signals a cross-Government approach to building an economy where everyone can have the opportunity of secure, rewarding and fulfilling work.

This Council further notes that Get Oldham Working has been providing support for employees, employers and those seeking employment since 2013 and has created almost 20,000 opportunities including filling 12,000 jobs, nearly 2,000 apprenticeships and 400 traineeships plus helping just under 1,800 residents into work experience placements.

This Council supports the approach laid out in the White Paper which will provide:

- support for people to get back into work if they are outside the workforce (and help to stay in employment if they have a health condition)
- access to training, an apprenticeship, or help to find work for young people (including help to avoid losing touch with the workforce at a young age)
- help for people to get a job, upskill, and get on in their career, whether they are unemployed or in employment, alongside clear obligations on people to take up support and do in return everything they can to work.
- support for employers to recruit, retain and develop staff.

This Council welcomes the joined-up proposals including investing in the NHS to get people treated more quickly, expansion of mental health support and setting up a Jobs and Careers Service (replacing JobCentre+) with the focus on supporting people back into work by providing a personalised service. Every 18-to-21-year-old in England will have access to an apprenticeship, quality training and education opportunities

or help to find a job under a new 'Youth Guarantee'. The Connect to Work scheme will provide voluntary employment offers to people with disabilities, health conditions or complex barriers to work.



This Council looks forward to the outcome of the Independent Review to better support employers to take on, and keep in work, people with disabilities.

This Council believes that the experience of Get Oldham Working and the Greater Manchester Live Well programme means Oldham is well placed to make the most of these opportunities, in particular the investment from the Greater Manchester trailblazer to mobilise local work, health and skills support.

This Council resolves to:

1. Organise a Get Britain Working summit as soon as practicable to brief partners on the White Paper and to work through the opportunities from the Labour Government's investment, including the trailblazer, to design a Get Britain Working Plan for Oldham.
2. Review the impact of Get Oldham Working and consider how Get Britain Working can enhance our local offer building on the good links with 800 local employers, integrated and personalised advice, guidance and skills support and mental health therapy already available.
3. Do everything possible to ensure Oldham residents benefit from the opportunities offered by Get Britain Working, including ensuring that our young people make the most of the 'Youth Guarantee'.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was CARRIED

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves to:

1. Organise a Get Britain Working summit as soon as practicable to brief partners on the White Paper and to work through the opportunities from the Labour Government's investment, including the trailblazer, to design a Get Britain Working Plan for Oldham.
2. Review the impact of Get Oldham Working and consider how Get Britain Working can enhance our local offer building on the good links with 800 local employers, integrated and personalised advice, guidance and skills support and mental health therapy already available.
3. Do everything possible to ensure Oldham residents benefit from the opportunities offered by Get Britain Working, including ensuring that our young people make the most of the 'Youth Guarantee'.

Motion 2: Bee Network

Councillor Charters MOVED and Councillor Taylor SECONDED the following Motion:

In August 2022, Greater Manchester became the first major city outside of London to introduce a cap on bus fares, prices for adults were capped at £2 a journey or £5 a day, and £1 for journey or £2.50 a day for children under 16.



Oldham was chosen to host the launch of the Tranche 2 bus franchising area in March 2024 and four months later we hosted a visit from the new Secretary of State for Transport. On both occasions we were able to showcase our new space in the Spindles, the relocated, integrated TfGM Travelshop and the fully electrified bus depot at Mumps.

The upcoming network review in Oldham is a real opportunity to affect change on future bus services in Oldham. As an example, Bolton and Wigan have seen services reintroduced and new all-night services introduced to serve the night-time economy and large employment sites such as Bolton Hospital being served through the night.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester announced that due to the Bee Network model, which relies on low fare, high patronage system like in London, that Greater Manchester will continue with the £2 bus fare until the end of 2025, subject to a mid-year review to ensure that it is still financially viable.

This Council notes:

- The per-kilometre cost of Bee Network contracts are on average one third cheaper than previous tenders under the deregulated system
- Control of Greater Manchester's buses means that profits from rising patronage of buses will be re-invested into the service and for the benefit of residents rather than going into the pockets of shareholders.
- Control of the system means that we can help residents in other ways, such as offering an annual Bee Network bus pass through Oldham Credit Union, cutting the cost of bus travel by around £5 a week.
- That the Bee Network has been a success for Oldham's commuters, ensuring that they are able to get to work or school on time for less money than under the deregulated system.

This Council resolves to:

- 1 Continue to work alongside our Greater Manchester partners, including the GMCA, Transport for Greater Manchester and the other 9 GM authorities to ensure that decisions made around public transport are focused on improving the resident experience.
- 2 Engage pro-actively with the Network Review in early 2025, ensuring that all residents voices are heard in the process.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was CARRIED

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council continues to work alongside our Greater Manchester partners, including the GMCA, Transport for Greater Manchester and the other 9 GM authorities to ensure that decisions made around public transport are focused on improving the resident experience.
2. That the Council continues to engage pro-actively with the Network Review in early 2025, ensuring that all residents voices are heard in the process.

11

NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS

Motion 1 – Social Care Funding Crisis: National Insurance Contributions.

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

Council notes that: From April next year employer's National Insurance contributions will increase by 1.2% and the threshold at which employers must contribute to National Insurance will be reduced to all employees earning £5,000 or more.

The Institute of General Practice Management has estimated that the rise will mean the average GP surgery's tax bill will go up by around £20,000 a year. The 6,275 GP practices in England could end up facing a total of £125.5M a year in additional costs. This and other key parts of our health services unlike hospital staff are not except from this increase.

This is the equivalent of providing 2.24 million GP appointments, at £56 per appointment. The average GP surgery could therefore lose the equivalent of 357 appointments a year.

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has revealed that, by its calculations, local authorities would face £1.8B in extra costs in 2025-26 due to increases in employers' NICs and the national living wage (NLW) announced in the last Budget, along with inflation.

While principal councils will be exempt from the rise in employer NICs, the Government it has offered no such protection to care providers, which the Nuffield Trust has estimated will face £940m in extra costs from the measure in 2025–26.

Council further notes that:

This is likely to have a significant impact on the cost of the social care to Oldham Council, which is already this year facing a £20 million overspend predicted, with overspend on adult social care at £3.8m, and children's services at £6.6m. This increase in NICs will severely hamper the Council's attempts to cut its overspend and could wipe out any predicted improvements in its financial position as a result of changes to the formula for spending indicated.

Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to demand that the NIC exemption is

changed to ensure that health services and social care – which makes up such a significant proportion of local government spending – are included, in line with their statement that “Reform and prevention are critical if we are to turn around the cycle of system failure and cost escalation.”

2. To write to local MPs Jim McMahon, Debbie Abrahams, and Lucy Powell asking for their support in a review of the impact of the increase, including:
 - the cost implications for funding health and social care in Oldham of the NIC increase;
 - the implications for Council Tax rises to meet the demand for social care funding;
 - the potential reduction in availability of GP services which are already stretched.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Dean MOVED and Councillor Aftab Hussain SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

Council notes that:

From April next year employer’s National Insurance contributions will increase by 1.2% and the threshold at which employers must contribute to National Insurance will be reduced to all employees earning £5,000 or more.

The Institute of General Practice Management has estimated that the rise will mean the average GP surgery’s tax bill will go up by around £20,000 a year. The 6,275 GP practices in England could end up facing a total of £125.5M a year in additional costs. This and other key parts of our health services unlike hospital staff are not except from this increase.

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has revealed that, by its calculations, local authorities would face £1.8B in extra costs in 2025-26 due to increases in employers’ NICs and the national living wage (NLW) announced in the last Budget, along with inflation.

While principal councils will be exempt from the rise in employer NICs, the Government it has offered no such protection to care providers, which the Nuffield Trust has estimated will face £940m in extra costs from the measure in 2025–26.

Council further notes that:

This could have a significant impact on the cost of the social care to Oldham Council, which is already this year facing a £20 million overspend predicted, with overspend on adult social care at £3.8m, and children’s services at £6.6m. This increase in NICs could hamper the Council’s attempts to cut its overspend and could potentially negate any predicted improvements in its financial position as a result of changes to the formula for spending indicated.

That as per the Care Act (2014) the Council has a duty, to ensure a diverse, sustainable and quality adult social care

market for Oldham residents meeting their assessed eligibility needs.

This Council will outline the projected and potential financial impact to Oldham's commissioned social care providers as part of the annual fee review, with the rates modelling process that takes place for annual budget setting and is due to be ratified at Budget Council on March 6th.

Council resolves to:

- a. Write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to urge them to consider the potential impact of NIC on the cost of commissioned social care services when confirming the Local Government Finance Settlement, as social care services make up such a significant proportion of local government spending and welcoming the government's recognition in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement that "Reform and prevention are critical if we are to turn around the cycle of system failure and cost escalation."
- b. To write to local MPs Jim McMahon, Debbie Abrahams, and Lucy Powell to inform them that Oldham Council is exploring:
 - the cost implications for funding health and social care in Oldham of the NIC increase.
 - the implications for budget setting to meet the demand for social care funding.
 - And seek their support to lobby government to minimise any potential adverse impacts from NIC rises.
- c. Ask the Deputy Chief Executive (Health & Care) and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing to investigate the potential impact on existing and future GP services in the Borough.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT which was CARRIED.

On being put to the vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to urge them to consider the potential impact of NIC on the cost of commissioned social care services when confirming the Local Government Finance Settlement, as social care services make up such a significant proportion of local government spending and welcoming the government's recognition in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement that "Reform and prevention are critical if we are to turn around the cycle of system failure and cost escalation."

2. To write to local MPs Jim McMahon, Debbie Abrahams, and Lucy Powell to inform them that Oldham Council is exploring:
 - the cost implications for funding health and social care in Oldham of the NIC increase.
 - the implications for budget setting to meet the demand for social care funding.
 - And seek their support to lobby government to minimise any potential adverse impacts from NIC rises.
3. Ask the Deputy Chief Executive (Health & Care) and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing to investigate the potential impact on existing and future GP services in the Borough.

Motion 2 – Ethical Investment: Divestment from Fossil Fuels and Arms by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund

Councillor Kouser MOVED and Councillor Azad SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council notes - Oldham's Ethical and Climate Leadership:

- In July 2019, Oldham Council declared a **Climate Emergency**, committing to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2038. As part of this, the Council agreed to encourage the **Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF)** to divest from fossil fuels.

Investments in Fossil Fuels and Arms:

- Approximately **6% of GMPF's portfolio** (around £1.5 billion) is invested in fossil fuel companies such as Shell, BP, and Glencore.

GMPF also holds over **£241 million** in arms companies, including BAE Systems, Boeing, and Honeywell, which supply weapons to regimes implicated in human rights abuses and violations of international law, including in Palestine and Yemen.

Momentum for Divestment:

- On 1 November 2024, **Manchester City Council** passed a motion calling for GMPF to divest from fossil fuels and arms, joining a growing number of councils across the UK.
- Councils such as **Liverpool, Waltham Forest, Islington, and Inverclyde** have also passed motions demanding divestment from fossil fuels and arms.
- These councils, like Oldham, recognise that investments in fossil fuels and arms are incompatible with their ethical, environmental, and social responsibilities.

Human Rights and Legal Context:

- Arrest warrants issued by international legal bodies against political figures like **Benjamin Netanyahu** for alleged war crimes underline the urgent need to ensure public funds are not complicit in human rights violations.
- Arms companies in GMPF's portfolio supply weapons used in illegal wars, repression, and breaches of international law.

Environmental and Financial Risks:

- Fossil fuel investments directly contribute to climate destruction and risk becoming stranded assets as global decarbonisation accelerates.
- Arms manufacturing and deployment result in environmental devastation, the destruction of habitats, and carbon-intensive recovery processes, further exacerbating the climate crisis.

GMPF's Policy Contradiction:

- GMPF's Responsible Investment Policy commits to considering the environmental and social impact of investments, but its holdings in fossil fuels and arms directly contradict this policy.

This Council believes:

- a. Investments in fossil fuels and arms perpetuate climate destruction, human suffering, and global instability, making them morally indefensible and financially risky.
- b. Divestment aligns with Oldham's commitments to human rights, climate action, and ethical governance, while mitigating financial risks.
- c. Arrest warrants against figures like Netanyahu emphasise the urgent need to act decisively against complicity in human rights abuses.

This Council resolves to:

- **Demand Divestment:**
Request the Leader of the Council to write to GMPF and the Mayor of Greater Manchester, urging GMPF to:
- Develop a clear plan to **divest from fossil fuels** and arms within 12 months.
- Align with GMCA's **2038 net-zero target** (instead of GMPF's current 2050 target) and establish a medium-term milestone for 2030.
- Commit to divesting from arms companies supplying weapons to regimes engaged in breaches of international law and human rights abuses.
- **Ensure Transparency:**

Request GMPF to implement robust and transparent reporting mechanisms, including annual updates on:

- Investments in fossil fuels, arms, and companies operating in **occupied territories** under international law.
- Progress towards divestment and outcomes of company engagements.
- **Empower Representation:**
 - Mandate Oldham's representative on GMPF to advocate for divestment from fossil fuels and arms at all meetings and provide regular updates to this Council on progress.
- **Collaborate Regionally:**
 - Request the Leader of the Council to write to the other nine Greater Manchester councils, urging them to join Oldham, Manchester, and other councils in advocating for ethical investment reforms at GMPF.

5. Promote Ethical Reinvestment:

- Work with GMPF to explore reinvestment in industries aligned with Oldham's ethical and environmental priorities, such as renewable energy, social housing, and sustainable infrastructure.

6. Engage the Public:

- Collaborate with residents, advocacy groups, and trade unions to build awareness and support for ethical investment in Greater Manchester.

Supporting Statement:

This motion builds on the recent decision by **Manchester City Council**, which joins other councils like **Liverpool, Waltham Forest, Islington, and Inverclyde** in calling for divestment from fossil fuels and arms. Oldham has the opportunity to strengthen its leadership on climate and human rights by standing in solidarity with these councils and advocating for change at GMPF.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Mushtaq MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

This Council notes:

Oldham's Ethical and Climate Leadership:

- In September 2019, Oldham Council declared a Climate Emergency, committing to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2038. As part of this, the Council agreed to encourage the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) to divest from fossil fuels.

Investments in Fossil Fuels and Arms:

- Approximately 6% of GMPF's portfolio (around £1.5 billion) is invested in fossil fuel companies such as Shell, BP, and Glencore.
- The GMPF also invests over £241 million in companies such as BAE Systems, Boeing and Caterpillar, which indirectly profit from arms sales to states involved in conflicts including Palestine, Lebanon, the Congo, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen.

Momentum for Divestment:

- On 1 November 2024, Manchester City Council passed a motion calling for GMPF to divest from fossil fuels and arms, joining a growing number of councils across the UK.
- Councils such as Liverpool, Waltham Forest, Islington, and Inverclyde have also passed motions demanding divestment from fossil fuels and arms.
- These councils, like Oldham, recognise that investments in fossil fuels and arms are incompatible with their ethical, environmental, and social responsibilities.

Human Rights and Legal Context:

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants on November 21, 2024, for several high-profile individuals in relation to the situation in Gaza. The warrants were issued for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, and Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif.

Environmental and Financial Risks:

- Fossil fuel investments directly contribute to climate destruction and risk becoming stranded assets as global decarbonisation accelerates.
- Arms manufacturing and deployment result in environmental devastation, the destruction of habitats, and carbon-intensive recovery processes, further exacerbating the climate crisis.

GMPF's Policy Contradiction:

- GMPF's Responsible Investment Policy commits to considering the environmental and social impact of investments, but its holdings in fossil fuels and arms directly contradict this policy.

This Council believes:

1. Investments in fossil fuels and arms perpetuate climate destruction, human suffering, and global instability, making them morally indefensible and financially risky.
2. Divestment aligns with Oldham's commitments to human rights, climate action, and ethical governance, while mitigating financial risks.
3. Arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, and Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif emphasise the urgent need to act decisively against complicity in human rights abuses.

This Council resolves to:

1. Step up divestment:
Request the Leader of the Council to write to GMPF and the Mayor of Greater Manchester, urging GMPF to:
 - within 12 months develop a clear plan to divest from fossil fuels and arms.
 - Align with GMCA's 2038 net-zero target (instead of GMPF's current 2050 target) and establish a medium-term milestone for 2030.
 - Commit to divesting the millions it invests in companies involved either directly or indirectly in arms production.
2. Ensure Transparency:
Request GMPF to implement robust and transparent reporting mechanisms, including annual updates on:
 - Investments in fossil fuels, arms, and companies operating in occupied territories as defined in international law.
 - Progress towards divestment.
3. Empower Representation:
Mandate Oldham's representative on GMPF to advocate for

divestment from fossil fuels and arms and provide regular updates to this Council on progress.

4. Collaborate Regionally:

Request the Leader of the Council to write to the other nine Greater Manchester councils, urging them to join Oldham, Manchester, and other councils in advocating for ethical investment reforms at GMPF.

5. Promote Ethical Reinvestment:

Work with GMPF to explore reinvestment in industries aligned with Oldham's ethical and environmental priorities, such as renewable energy, social housing, and sustainable infrastructure.

6. Engage the Public:

Collaborate with residents, advocacy groups, and trade unions to build awareness and support for ethical investment in Greater Manchester.

Supporting Statement:

This motion builds on the recent decision by Manchester City Council, which joins other councils like Liverpool, Waltham Forest, Islington, and Inverclyde in calling for divestment from fossil fuels and arms. Oldham has the opportunity to strengthen its leadership on climate and human rights by standing in solidarity with these councils and advocating for change at GMPF.

Arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, and Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif for alleged war crimes highlight the moral imperative to ensure public investments are not complicit in such acts. Divesting from fossil fuels and arms not only addresses these ethical concerns but also aligns with our fiduciary responsibility to mitigate financial risks and support sustainable, long-term investments.

By supporting this motion, Oldham Council can reaffirm its commitment to ethical governance, climate action, and human rights, paving the way for a more sustainable and just future.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the AMENDMENT as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	FOR
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	AGAINST	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	FOR
Azad Montaz Ali	FOR	Kouser Aisha	FOR

Ball Sandra	FOR	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moores Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	FOR
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	FOR	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	APOLOGIES
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	FOR
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	FOR	Wilkinson Mark	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	APOLOGIES

On a recorded VOTE being taken 52 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT with 5 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore CARRIED.

On being put to the vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves to:

1. Step up divestment: Request that the Leader of the Council write to GMPF and the Mayor of Greater Manchester, urging GMPF to:

- within 12 months develop a clear plan to divest from fossil fuels and arms.
- Align with GMCA's 2038 net-zero target (instead of GMPF's current 2050 target) and establish a medium-term milestone for 2030.

- Commit to divesting the millions it invests in companies involved either directly or indirectly in arms production.
- 2. Ensure Transparency:
 - Request GMPF to implement robust and transparent reporting mechanisms, including annual updates on:
 - Investments in fossil fuels, arms, and companies operating in occupied territories as defined in international law.
 - Progress towards divestment.
- 3. Empower Representation:
 - Mandate Oldham's representative on GMPF to advocate for divestment from fossil fuels and arms and provide regular updates to this Council on progress.
- 4. Collaborate Regionally:
 - Request the Leader of the Council to write to the other nine Greater Manchester councils, urging them to join Oldham, Manchester, and other councils in advocating for ethical investment reforms at GMPF.
- 5. Promote Ethical Reinvestment:
 - Work with GMPF to explore reinvestment in industries aligned with Oldham's ethical and environmental priorities, such as renewable energy, social housing, and sustainable infrastructure.
- 6. Engage the Public:
 - Collaborate with residents, advocacy groups, and trade unions to build awareness and support for ethical investment in Greater

Motion 3 – The Old Failsworth Library

Councillor Ball MOVED and Councillor Wilkinson SECONDED the following Motion:

The Old Failsworth Library, on Main Street, Failsworth which was bequeathed to the people of Failsworth by the Sidlow Family has fallen into a great state of disrepair. A Nursery that currently rents part of the building is a popular and well used facility in Failsworth and wants to stay in the current building, as it is an ideal and well-known location.

The Council has not fully utilised The Old Failsworth Library and it is only half used. It is a large and spacious building which could have partially replaced the old Community Centre and allowed local groups to use the space.

The state of repair to the building is less than satisfactory. There have been reports of leaks, damp, mould and other issues which should have been addressed before they became too expensive to repair. It is shocking that a public building has been left to rot.

The evidence of damp and mould is clear to see. The current tenant has been proactive in trying to maintain the building, while doing so they have continued to ask for repairs to be completed.

Some Failsworth Councillors have contributed by trying to help, and the money donated helped the nursery to source much needed furniture, as they had been spending nursery funds allocated for the furniture on trying to spruce up the interior of the building.

Councillors and the tenant have written to the former Member of Parliament and Deputy Prime Minister Angela Raynor MP, Jim McMahon MP and Lucy Powell MP to see what help they can provide.

Inside the nursery we have seen where parts of a ceiling had come down, where the window area had rotted away and with gaps large enough for children to put fingers into the gap. There was a room so cold and damp that OMBC had to fit a very small electric wall heater high up near the ceiling which was inadequate.

We know of a number of buildings which are publicly owned, or considered public assets, which have sadly fallen into a state of disrepair. It is disappointing that buildings outside of Oldham Town Centre, such as the Old Failsworth Library are being put at risk and could end up costing the Council more in the long run due to inaction rather than taking proactive steps to protect our public assets.

The Council therefore resolves to:

1. Inform and work with all Failsworth Councillors to ensure that the current tenant of the building is kept up to date with all information regarding the lease and the repairs needed to the building.
2. That Council officers will keep all Failsworth Councillors up to date with quarterly reports on the repairs needed to the building and other issues that may arise.
3. That the Old Failsworth Library is renovated and brought up to a workable standard so that it can be used by other local community groups and or businesses.
4. That the underuse of the building for the past decade has meant the Council has lost revenue and the people of Failsworth have lost out on a community facility.
5. That a plan is put in place involving all Failsworth Councillors to save this building for future community use.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Hindle MOVED and Councillor Hobin SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

The former Failsworth Library, on Main Street, Failsworth which was bequeathed to the people of Failsworth by Sidlow Family has fallen into a great state of disrepair. A Nursery that currently rents part of the building is a popular and well used facility in Failsworth and wants to stay in the current building as it is an ideal and well-known location.

The Council has not fully utilised the former Failsworth Library because of the renovation of the Town Hall', and the former

Failsworth Library is only half used. It is a large and spacious building which could have partially replaced the old Community Centre and allowed local groups to use the space.

The state of repair to the building is less than satisfactory. There have been reports of leaks, damp, mould and other issues which should have been addressed before they became too expensive to repair. It is shocking that a public building has been left to rot.

The evidence of damp and mould is clear to see. The current tenant has been proactive in trying to maintain the building, while doing so they have continued to ask for repairs to be completed.

Some Failsworth Councillors have contributed in trying to help, and the money donated helped the nursery to source much needed furniture as they had been spending nursery funds allocated for the furniture on trying to spruce up the interior of the building.

Councillors and the tenant have written to the former Member of Parliament and Deputy Prime Minister Angela Raynor MP, Jim McMahon MP and Lucy Powell MP to see what help they can provide.

Inside the nursery we have seen where parts of a ceiling had come down, where the window area had rotted away and with gaps large enough for children to put fingers into the gap. There was a room so cold and damp that OMBC had to fit a very small electric wall heater high up near the ceiling which was inadequate.

We know of a number of buildings which are publicly owned, or considered public assets, which have sadly fallen into a state of disrepair.

This Council notes:

- The renovation of Failsworth Town Hall and the extension to include the library mean that the former library was no longer used as a community asset but was leased to a nursery and recently used as storage while Royton Town Hall and Library underwent renovations.

The Council therefore resolves to:

1. Continue to keep the current tenant of the former library on Main Street up to date with information regarding the lease and potential repairs to the building.
2. That Council officers will keep all Failsworth Councillors up to date potential renovations and future uses of the former Failsworth library building.
3. Explore opportunities to renovate the former Failsworth Library on Main Street so that it can be used by other local community groups and or businesses subject to funding.

4. That all Failsworth Councillors are given opportunities to be involved in plans to potentially renovate this building for future community use.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT which was CARRIED.

On being put to the vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Council resolves to:

1. Continue to keep the current tenant of the former library on Main Street up to date with information regarding the lease and potential repairs to the building.
2. That Council officers will keep all Failsworth Councillors up to date potential renovations and future uses of the former Failsworth library building.
3. Explore opportunities to renovate the former Failsworth Library on Main Street so that it can be used by other local community groups and or businesses subject to funding.
4. That all Failsworth Councillors are given opportunities to be involved in plans to potentially renovate this building for future community use.

12

**TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEAR REVIEW
REPORT 2024/25**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report of the Director of Finance that advised Council of the performance of the Treasury Management function for the first half of 2024/25 and provides a comparison of performance against the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy and the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

Council was required to consider the performance of the Treasury Management function to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2021). The submitted report provided an additional update and included the new requirement in the 2021 Code, which had been mandatory from 1st April 2023, of quarterly reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The report therefore presented the key Treasury Management issues for Members' information and review and outlines:

- An economic update for the first half of 2024/25 (External Context).
- Net Borrowing and Investments (Local Context).
- A review and updates of the Council's current treasury management position.
- Council Borrowing.
- Treasury Investment Activity.
- Treasury Performance for the first half of the year.
- Compliance.
- Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

1. Approves the Treasury Management Half Year Review report.
2. Approves the proposed revisions to the Maturity Structure of Borrowing, outlined in section 2.10.5, of the submitted report.
3. Approves the proposed revision to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts outlined in section 2.8 and Appendix 2 of the submitted report.
4. Approves the proposed revision to the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy outlined in section 2.7 and Appendix 4, of the submitted report.

13

UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Taylor SECONDED a report of the Interim Borough Solicitor which updated members on actions taken following the meeting of the Council held on 6th November 2024 and also on any updated responses from meetings held in the last 12 months.

RESOLVED:

That the actions regarding motions and issues from the meeting of the Council held on 6th November 2024, be noted and confirmed.

14

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025/26

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED a report of the Interim Borough Solicitor which sought approval of the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council's Calendar of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2025/2026 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
2. Approval of any outstanding dates be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with Group Leaders.

15

GAMBLING POLICY

Councillor Taylor MOVED and Councillor Goodwin SECONDED a report of the Director of Environment which updated members of the Council following a review of the Council's Gambling Policy and to seek approval of the update policy.

RESOLVED that:

Council approves the Council's Gambling Policy, as detailed in the Appendix to the Director of Environment's report, with an implementation date of 1st January 2025, for a three-year period.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 9.35pm

Present: The Mayor – Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Adams, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Arnott, Aslam, Azad, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Ghafoor, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Harrison, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hughes, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Kouser, Lancaster, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Navesey, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sharp, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson, Williamson and Woodvine

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malik.

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

There were no declarations of interests.

3 **REQUEST FOR A NATIONAL PUBLIC INQUIRY THAT
INVESTIGATES THE SCOURGE OF CHILD SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION'**

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor Arnott SECONDED the following MOTION:

We humbly request that this Council call upon His Majesty's Government to initiate a national public inquiry that investigates the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham but also across the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

We request that a full national public inquiry is held urgently, as villages, towns and cities up and down the spine of the country have been affected by child sexual exploitation which was carried out by evil rape gangs on an unprecedented scale.

This Council notes that:

1. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the Rochdale rape gang which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: "Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years.

Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A.”

2. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.
3. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.
4. That at the reconvened Council meeting on the 20th January 2025 that the Chairman of the Council meeting sanctioned a Conservative Councillor and asked her to withdraw her remarks for using the term “Pakistani heritage rape gangs” when asking if the Council Leader would support a national inquiry.
5. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked across other towns, abducted, beaten and threatened with guns. Children had even been doused in petrol. Girls as young as 11 had been raped. Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a “widespread perception” that they should “downplay’ the ethnic dimensions” for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: “It is never an excuse to use race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”— [Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.]”
6. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “The whole country is shocked by the rape gang scandal. Over years or decades, thousands or maybe tens of thousands of vulnerable young girls were systematically raped by organised gangs of men, predominantly of Pakistani heritage. Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so-called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims. Those raising concerns were frequently accused of racism. Never again can people be silenced in that way. I pay tribute to people who have raised these cases over the years, starting with former Labour MP Ann Cryer, who first raised these problems nearly two decades ago and bravely persevered despite accusations of racism and worse,

including from her own colleagues. In that vein, let me say a word on the Prime Minister's comments this morning: it is not far right to stand up for victims of mass rape."

7. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed national inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.

This Council resolves to:

Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

AMENDMENT 1:

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Bishop
SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

Survivors of sexual violence must at all times be given the opportunity to lead the process of seeking both support and justice over the traumatic abuse that they have undergone, and to determine what support they need to achieve those goals.

Two survivors' statement was read out at the last Council meeting. These are their words, not ours. The first stated the following:

"Whilst we hoped for and would have liked a national inquiry, we appreciate they have come up with a compromise. For now, we are satisfied that our voices are finally being heard, although we will continue the fight in a way that works for us, to lobby for changes we feel are necessary in shaping a suitable inquiry. Our biggest priority is to hope we can achieve that it be a statutory one."

The second stated the following:

"We are still not happy with the overall decision, but we are happy to continue with a local inquiry ... we hope the Council remain transparent and politics are kept aside."

The Council, and all commentators, must listen to and amplify the voices of young women, particularly young, working-class women, those who have lived in care, and those who have survived abuse and violence.

This Council notes that:

It is important that the language that is used when discussing the issue of abuse and sexual violence is clear and does not hide the violence that has taken place, while it must not

retraumatise the survivors by using terms of extreme violence casually.

Following requests from survivors, this amendment has specifically removed some of the extremely explicit descriptions of sexual violence, as when survivors hear this in a public forum it plays a role in re-traumatising them. We humbly request that this Council call upon His Majesty's Government to ensure a statutory public inquiry that investigates the scourge of both historic and current child sexual exploitation in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham.

Any national investigations into the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must not relegate an examination of Oldham into a paragraph in another report.

We request that a full statutory public inquiry is held urgently, as villages, towns and cities up and down the spine of the country have been affected by child sexual exploitation and abuse which was carried out by evil criminal gangs on an unprecedented scale, and the even more widespread levels of sexual and sexually motivated violence that are endemic in British society, across people of all colours and creeds.

This Council further notes:

1. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the gang that sexually abused so many girls in Rochdale which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: "Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years. Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A."
2. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it was agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.
3. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.
4. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; "Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators,

trafficked across other towns, ... Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a “widespread perception” that they should “downplay’ the ethnic dimensions” for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: “It is never an excuse to use race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”— [Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.]”

5. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims.
6. That no individual or political group should ever seek to exploit the tragedies of sexual violence that have been committed, everyone must at all times ensure that they listen to what survivors want, to ensure their voices are at the heart of all proposals, and to ensure that they are heard, supported and empowered.
7. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed statutory inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty’s Government ensure without any further delay a statutory public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation both historic and current by gangs and individuals in Oldham. A specific inquiry into Oldham is required so that an examination of Oldham does not relegate it into another paragraph in another report.
2. Support further national inquiries into the endemic levels of sexual violence against women and girls – and also against men – both in Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to explore all the factors which contribute to this level of violence. This must never avoid confronting harsh truths, about who has committed violence, or about who has failed to deal with sexual violence, in a country which has failed to do this for too long.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT 1, which was CARRIED.

AMENDMENT 2:

Councillor Hobin addressed Council and announced that he was WITHDRAWING his AMENDMENT to the MOTION that was to be seconded by Councillor Hince.

AMENDMENT 3:

Councillor Wahid MOVED and Councillor Ghafoor SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

This Council notes that:

- a. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the Rochdale rape gang which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: "Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years. Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A."
- b. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.
- c. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.
- d. That at the reconvened Council meeting on 20th January 2025 that the Chairman of the Council meeting sanctioned a Conservative Councillor and asked her to withdraw her remarks for using the term "Pakistani heritage rape gangs" when asking if the Council Leader would support a national inquiry.
- e. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; "Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked across other towns, abducted, beaten and threatened with guns. Children had even been doused in petrol. Girls as young as 11 had been raped. Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a "widespread perception" that they should "downplay" the ethnic dimensions" for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: "It is never an excuse to use

race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”— [Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.]”.

- f. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “The whole country is shocked by the rape gang scandal. Over years or decades, thousands or maybe tens of thousands of vulnerable young girls were systematically raped by organised gangs of men, predominantly of Pakistani heritage. Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so-called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims. Those raising concerns were frequently accused of racism. Never again can people be silenced in that way. I pay tribute to people who have raised these cases over the years, starting with former Labour MP Ann Cryer, who first raised these problems nearly two decades ago and bravely persevered despite accusations of racism and worse, including from her own colleagues. In that vein, let me say a word on the Prime Minister’s comments this morning: it is not far right to stand up for victims of mass rape.”.
- g. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed national inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.
- h. That following repeated calls for a local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham, the Council voted in July 2024 to establish a non-statutory local inquiry. This decision came after years of resistance, despite multiple reports highlighting institutional failures. However, concerns remain that without statutory powers, this inquiry will lack the ability to compel key witnesses, access crucial documents, or hold individuals and organisations fully accountable.
- i. That survivors, campaigners, and members of this Council have consistently argued that only a statutory inquiry can deliver full transparency and justice. A statutory inquiry would ensure that all survivors and individuals who have given testimony are legally compelled to provide evidence, while also creating a safe and supportive process for new witnesses and survivors to come forward.
- j. That the credibility and effectiveness of the local inquiry depend on an independent panel determining the terms of reference, ensuring that the investigation is free from political influence and fully focused on uncovering the truth.

This Council RESOLVES to:

1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
2. Write to the Home Office to request that His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account.
3. Request that an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust.
4. Seek confirmation from the inquiry leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward.
5. Engage with survivor support organisations, legal experts, and national agencies to guarantee that all testimony is collected safely, ethically, and with appropriate safeguarding in place.
6. Call upon the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to publicly support granting statutory powers to the local inquiry, reinforcing the need for full transparency and accountability.

Council debated Amendment 3 and there had developed that there were elements of this Amendment that Council was prepared to support, notwithstanding that Amendment 1 had previously been approved as the substantive Motion. Therefore, the Mayor requested and it was **RESOLVED** that Council Procedure Rule 14 (Rules of Debate) be suspended to enable further discussion thereon and to allow for parts of Amendment 3 to be incorporated into the substantive Motion. Therefore, Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Wahid SECONDED the following composite AMENDMENT (that was effectively a hybrid of AMENDMENT 1 and AMENDMENT 3):

Survivors of sexual violence must at all times be given the opportunity to lead the process of seeking both support and justice over the traumatic abuse that they have undergone, and to determine what support they need to achieve those goals.

Two survivors' statement was read out at the last Council meeting. These are their words, not ours. The first stated the following:

"Whilst we hoped for and would have liked a national inquiry, we appreciate they have come up with a compromise. For now, we are satisfied that our voices are finally being heard, although we will continue the fight in a way that works for us, to lobby for

changes we feel are necessary in shaping a suitable inquiry. Our biggest priority is to hope we can achieve that it be a statutory one.”

The second stated the following:

“We are still not happy with the overall decision, but we are happy to continue with a local inquiry ... we hope the Council remain transparent and politics are kept aside.”

The Council, and all commentators, must listen to and amplify the voices of young women, particularly young, working-class women, those who have lived in care, and those who have survived abuse and violence.

This Council notes that:

It is important that the language that is used when discussing the issue of abuse and sexual violence is clear and does not hide the violence that has taken place, while it must not retraumatise the survivors by using terms of extreme violence casually. Following requests from survivors, this amendment has specifically removed some of the extremely explicit descriptions of sexual violence, as when survivors hear this in a public forum it plays a role in re-traumatising them.

We humbly request that this Council call upon His Majesty’s Government to ensure a statutory public inquiry that investigates the scourge of both historic and current child sexual exploitation in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham. Any national investigations into the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must not relegate an examination of Oldham into a paragraph in another report.

We request that a full statutory public inquiry is held urgently, as villages, towns and cities up and down the spine of the country have been affected by child sexual exploitation and abuse which was carried out by evil criminal gangs on an unprecedented scale, and the even more widespread levels of sexual and sexually motivated violence that are endemic in British society, across people of all colours and creeds.

This Council further notes:

- a. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the gang that sexually abused so many girls in Rochdale which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: “Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years’ imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years. Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member

of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A.”

- b. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it was agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.
- c. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.
- d. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked across other towns, ... Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a “widespread perception” that they should “downplay’ the ethnic dimensions” for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: “It is never an excuse to use race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”—[Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.]”.
- e. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims.
- f. That no individual or political group should ever seek to exploit the tragedies of sexual violence that have been committed, everyone must at all times ensure that they listen to what survivors want, to ensure their voices are at the heart of all proposals, and to ensure that they are heard, supported and empowered.
- g. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed statutory inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.
- h. That following repeated calls for a local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham, the Council voted in July 2024 to establish a non-statutory local inquiry. This decision came after years of resistance, despite multiple reports highlighting institutional failures. However, concerns remain that without statutory powers, this

inquiry will lack the ability to compel key witnesses, access crucial documents, or hold individuals and organisations fully accountable.

- i. That survivors, campaigners, and members of this Council have consistently argued that only a statutory inquiry can deliver full transparency and justice. A statutory inquiry would ensure that all survivors and individuals who have given testimony are legally compelled to provide evidence, while also creating a safe and supportive process for new witnesses and survivors to come forward.
- j. That the credibility and effectiveness of the local inquiry depend on an independent panel determining the terms of reference, ensuring that the investigation is free from political influence and fully focused on uncovering the truth.

This Council RESOLVES to:

- 1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- 2. Write to the Home Office to request that His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account.
- 3. Request that an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust.
- 4. Seek confirmation from the inquiry leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward.
- 5. Engage with survivor support organisations, legal experts, and national agencies to guarantee that all testimony is collected safely, ethically, and with appropriate safeguarding in place.
- 6. Call upon the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to publicly support granting statutory powers to the local inquiry, reinforcing the need for full transparency and accountability.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.45pm

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Present: The Mayor – Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Arnott, Aslam, Azad, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Ghafoor, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hughes, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Kouser, Lancaster, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Navesey, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sharp, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson, Williamson and Woodvine

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Malik.

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

There were no declarations of interests.

3 **OLDHAM COUNCIL REQUESTS TO WITHDRAW FROM
PLACES FOR EVERYONE**

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

Following recently published reports and debates, this council
resolves to:

Instruct the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief
Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities and Local Government requesting that they
remove Oldham Borough from the 'Places for Everyone'
development plan.

Councillor Hince Spoke in support of the Motion.
Councillor Shah spoke on the Motion.
Councillor Sharp spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Charters spoke on the Motion
Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Marland spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Shuttleworth spoke on the Motion
Councillor Hamblett spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Dean spoke on the Motion
Councillor Hindle spoke on the Motion
Councillor Davis spoke on the Motion
Councillor Murphy spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Jabbar spoke on the Motion
Councillor Ghafoor spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Byrne spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Lancaster spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Brownridge spoke on the Motion
Councillor Akhtar spoke in support of the Motion

Councillor Taylor spoke on the Motion.

Councillor Sykes exercised his right of reply

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the MOTION as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	FOR	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	FOR
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST
Arnott Dave	FOR	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Aslam Naseem	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	FOR
Azad Montaz Ali	FOR	Kouser Aisha	FOR
Ball Sandra	FOR	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	APOLOGIES
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	FOR
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Davis Peter	AGAINST	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	FOR
Ghafoor Kamran	FOR	Rustidge Ken	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	AGAINST	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	FOR
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	AGAINST	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	AGAINST	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	FOR	Wilkinson Mark	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	AGAINST

On a recorded VOTE being taken 31 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION with 28 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore CARRIED.



RESOLVED:

That the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government requesting that they remove Oldham Borough from the 'Places for Everyone' development plan.

The meeting started at 7.55pm and ended at 9.00pm

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Present: The Mayor – Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Aslam, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Harrison, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hughes, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Lancaster, Malik, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Navesey, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sharp, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson and Woodvine

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Arnott, Azad, Ghafoor, Ibrahim, Kouser and Sheldon.

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

There were no declarations of interests.

3 **APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF
PAID SERVICE**

Councillor Shah MOVED, Councillor Sykes SECONDED and Councillors Byrne and Wahid SUPPORTED the recommendations of a report of the Assistant Director for Strategy and Transformation, which sought to appoint a Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and to designate the role of the Section 151 Officer.

The Appointments Committee met on 25th February 2025 and that Committee had unanimously resolved to recommend appointing Shelley Kipling as the permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 7th March 2025 and to note that Fiona Greenway had been appointed as the authority's Interim Section 151 Officer/Director of Finance for a six-month period.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE SUBMITTED REPORT (to appoint Shelley Kipling as Chief Executive and head of Paid Service) as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed	FOR

		Nazrul	
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	AGAINST	Wilkinson Mark	AGAINST
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	ABSENT
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 45 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE SUBMITTED REPORT with 5 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The RECOMMENDATIONS were therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

1. That Shelley Kipling be appointed as the permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 7th March 2025.
2. That Shelley Kipling be appointed as the Place Lead, following a joint appointment with the Integrated Care Partnership Chief Executive, who was in attendance for

the final interview, at the Appointments Committee meeting on 25th February 2025.

3. That Shelley Kipling be appointed as Electoral Registration Officer for a constituency or part of a constituency coterminous with or contained in Oldham Metropolitan Borough under section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and Returning Officer for Local Elections and Parish Council Elections, Acting Returning Officer for Parliamentary elections and local Returning Officer for Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayoral elections and other elections or referenda.
4. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Appointments Committee to:
 - a. Amend the secondment agreement with Tameside Council while Tameside Council undertake their own permanent recruitment.
 - b. Undertake a review of the secondment arrangement by the end of May (within the six months agreed by previous Council meeting October 2024).
 - c. Make changes to any arrangements relating to Harry Catherall and his employment with the council.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the RECOMMENDATION IN THE SUBMITTED REPORT (Designation of the Section 151 Officer) as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	ABSTAINED	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	ABSTAINED	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan	ABSTAINED	Nasheen Umar	FOR

Naveed			
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	AGAINST
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	ABSTAINED
Hughes Jade	AGAINST	Wilkinson Mark	AGAINST
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	ABSENT
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 37 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the RECOMMENDATION IN THE SUBMITTED REPORT with 9 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 4 ABSTENTIONS. The RECOMMENDATION was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That Council notes the designation of Fiona Greenway, Interim Director of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, while recruitment is undertaken for a permanent replacement.

The meeting started at 5.30pm and ended at 5.56pm

Present: The Mayor – Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Aslam, Ball, Bashforth, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chowhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harkness, Harrison, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hughes, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Lancaster, Malik, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Navesey, Quigg, Rustidge, Shah, Sharp, Shuttleworth, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Wilkinson, Williamson and Woodvine.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was opened by the Deputy Mayor and was adjourned at 6.01pm, reconvening at approximately 6.35pm with the Mayor, Councillor Chauhan in the Chair.

The Deputy Mayor stated that as this meeting was being held during Ramadan, Council had agreed to suspend Procedure Rules to allow an adjournment of approximately 30 minutes for prayers and to allow members the opportunity to have refreshments.

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adams, Arnott, Azad, Ghafoor, Ibrahim, Kouser and Sheldon.

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

There were no declarations of interests.

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

There were no communications recorded relating to the business of the Council.

4 **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE BUDGET CABINET MEETING HELD ON 17TH FEBRUARY 2025 AND TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET IN RELATION TO THE BUDGET FOR 2025/26 AND FURTHER TO THE FOLLOWING ATTACHED REPORTS**

The Mayor requested and it was **RESOLVED** that Council Procedure Rule 14 (Rules of Debate) be suspended to enable Councillor Jabbar, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Value for Money and Sustainability to exceed the time limit for his contribution in moving the Administration Budget to 15 minutes with a 30 second extension and the seconder, Councillor Shah, the Leader of the Council 7 minutes, the Mover of the Main Opposition Group in moving the opposition budget, a time limit of 7 minutes 30 seconds if required, and the seconder 6 minutes and the mover of the Oldham Group and the

Conservative Group's amendments 6 minutes each with a right of reply of 6 minutes. All other speakers will be limited to 4 minutes.

The Mayor informed members that regulations had been implemented which required recorded votes on specific decision at the Budget Council meeting. Members would be advised when a recorded vote was required.

Prior to the consideration of the Budget Proposals, the Mayor asked the Council to note the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th February 2025.

On a vote being taken, the recommendation was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th February 2025 be noted.

a. Housing Revenue Account Estimates for 2025/26 to 2029/30 and Projected Outturn for 2023/24

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Taylor SECONDED a joint report which, sets out for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the detailed budget estimates for 2025/26, the strategic estimates for the four years 2026/27 through to 2029/30 and the projected outturn for 2024/25. The report also set out the recommended dwelling, non-dwelling rents and service and concierge charges to be applied from April 2025.

The submitted report sets out the HRA 2025/26 proposed original budget and the forecast outturn for 2024/25. The opportunity is also taken to present the provisional strategic budgets for 2026/27 through to 2029/30. HRA activities are a key element of the Council's Housing Strategy (approved by Council on 10 July 2019) which aims to provide a diverse Oldham housing offer that is attractive and meets the needs of different sections of the population at different stages of their lives.

After taking all relevant issues into account, the projected financial position for 2024/25 was estimated to be a £1.643m favourable variance when compared to the original budget forecast for 2024/25, approved at the Budget Council meeting on 28th February 2024. Of this variance, £0.531m is due to increased rental income (mainly backdated rental income in relation to Holly Bank and Primrose Bank), £0.492m is a reduction in forecast capital spend and the balance is across a number of areas but mainly utility charges and aids and appliances. The HRA balances brought forward into 2024/25 were also £0.222m greater than had been forecast. The estimated balances at the end of 2024/25 are projected to be £21.214m, which would be sufficient to meet future operational commitments and the potential financial pressures identified in the risk assessment.

The 2025/26 position has been presented after allowing for a proposed increase in dwelling rents of 2.7%, an increase in non-dwelling rents in line with individual contracts, a nominal increase of 2% on service charges and the setting of Extra Care Housing concierge charges to fully recover costs. The majority of HRA tenants are either the recipient of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and coupled with the recent increase in the Local Housing Allowance, it is assumed that the proposed increase in rents will not be an additional financial pressure to the majority of tenants.

The financial projections for the HRA over the period 2024/25 to 2029/30 show an overall reduction in the level of balances from £21.106m at the start of 2024/25 to £14.625m at the end of 2029/30. These will be supplemented by a new smoothing reserve that will be created to allow for a change in the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (MRP), approved in December 2024. Although this will see a significant increase in overall HRA reserves each year until 2036/37, the balances accrued in this reserve will be fully required to pay MRP over the proceeding ten years. For the purposes of this report, the new smoothing reserve balance is not included in the figures shown, as it is not available to fund other HRA activity.

The HRA detailed budget for 2025/26 and strategic estimates for the four years 2026/27 to 2029/30 and the outturn estimate for 2024/25 were presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 29 January 2025. The Committee was content to commend the report to Cabinet without amendment. Cabinet duly considered and approved the report at its meeting 17 February 2025 and commended the report to Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Forecast HRA outturn for 204/25, as outlined at Appendix A of the report, be approved.
2. The Proposed HRA budget for 2025/26, as outlined at Appendix B of the report, be approved.
3. The Strategic estimates for 2025/26 to 2029/30, as outlined at Appendix D of the report, be approved.
4. The proposed increase to dwelling rents for all properties of 2.7%, be approved.
5. The proposed increase to non-dwelling rents as per individual contracts be approved.
6. The proposal that service charges are increased by 2%, be approved.
7. The proposal to set Extra Care Housing concierge charges to fully recover actual costs, be approved.

b. The Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2025/26:

- i. **Revenue Budget 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30**

- ii. **Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement**
- iii. **Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 including the Annual Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy and Prudential Indicators**



Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED moved a report that provided the Council with the budget reduction requirement and the Administration's budget proposals for 2025/26 and a forecast of the 2026/27 position having regard to the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) published on 18 December 2024 and the subsequent Final Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) published on 3 February 2025. The report also presents the financial forecasts for the remainder of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period 2026/27 to 2029/30.

The submitted report presented the Council's Revenue Budget for 2025/26 together with the budget reduction requirement and the Administration's budget proposals for 2025/26 including Council Tax intentions. It also provides a forecast of the 2026/27 position and the financial forecasts for the remainder of the MTFS period, 2027/28 to 2029/30.

A version of the Revenue Budget 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 - based on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement received on 18 December 2024 - was presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 29 January 2025. The Board scrutinised the report and the other reports on the agenda that form a core part of the Council's strategic financial planning framework and recommended them to Cabinet. Cabinet met on 17 February 2025 and subsequently approved the reports and commended them to Council.

Section 1 presents an introduction to the report and explains the report format.

Section 2 sets out key Council Policies and Strategies including the Co-operative Council Values, Corporate Plan, Constitution and Rules of Procedure, as the framework within which the Budget has been prepared.

Section 3 presents the Local Government Finance Policy Statement which set out the Government's intentions to assist financial planning for Councils. It also details the impacts of the 2025/26 Provisional and Final LGFS which was the seventh consecutive one-year Settlement. This included key information in relation to overall funding levels, Council Tax referendum limits and grants for 2025/26.

Section 4 presents the 2024/25 revised budget and year end forecasts. The starting point for preparing the 2025/26 revenue

budget estimates is the underlying base budget of £289.1m. The 2024/25 revenue budget forecast outturn position highlights a current unfavourable projected variance of £14.2m; which will need to be financed from reserves. This is in addition to the general contribution from reserves of £10.8m towards the 2024/25 budget approved by Council in February 2024, plus contributions from other Earmarked Reserves for specific projects/initiatives of some £4.6m. This means the total contribution from reserves in 2024/25 will be £29.5m: a situation that is not sustainable and which has significantly reduced the financial resilience of the Council.

Section 5 summarises the proposed budget for 2025/26 and provides the context for the strategy adopted. It forecasts a budget forecast whereby £1.05m can be used to replenish reserves. A more detailed breakdown of the indicative budget for 2025/26 can be found at Appendix 7.

Section 6 presents a range of expenditure pressures that contribute to the budget gap. In total they contribute £42.4m to the 2025/26 position, an increase of £19.3m compared to the forecast presented to Full Council on 28 February 2024. The expenditure pressures for 2026/27 are projected at a further £29.9m. The main pressures arise from pay, expenditure on Council buildings, increased demand and prices for Children's and Adults' Social Care service provision and an increased demand for temporary accommodation. The section also outlines the forecast impact of the payment of levies and contributions to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Environment Agency (EA).

Section 7 presents the impacts of both the Provisional and Final LGFS announced on 18 December 2024 and 3 February 2025 respectively with regard to central Government Grants. This has resulted in a net increase of some £19.8m in resources from that forecast at Budget Council in February 2024.

Section 8 sets out how the Locally Generated Income from both Business Rates and Council Tax will support the Council budget. The LGFS confirmed referendum limits for general purpose Council Tax will remain at 3% each year from April 2025 without the need to hold a referendum. In addition, the threshold for Adult Social Care Precept (ASCP) will remain at a maximum of 2% each year from April 2025. There remains a requirement to evidence that the funds generated from this precept are used for Adult Social Care expenditure. The section sets out:

- the income to support the budget from Retained Business Rates and how this helps to reduce the level of budget reductions required. In total, Retained Business Rates income has increased marginally from a forecast £55.2m to £58.6m as the Council continues to benefit from the GMCA Business Rates Retention Scheme. The GMCA is entitled to part of this benefit, currently estimated at £1.2m. The Business Rates income figure reflects the

Council's NNDR1 Government return submitted on 31 January 2025.



- the Council Tax position for 2025/26, advising that:
 - a. The Council Tax Base is 59,501, up from 59,380 in 2024/25 and slightly under the position assumed in February 2024. o A 2.99% general purpose Council Tax increase is proposed together with a 2% increase for the Adult Social Care Precept.
 - b. An increase of 4.99% would not require a Council Tax referendum as it would be within the referendum criteria issued by the Government in the LGFS.
 - c. The Council proposes to continue to provide no Council Tax Empty Property Discount and increase the Empty Property Premium to 100% on second homes from 1 April 2025 – as outlined at 8.22 to 8.23.
 - d. Total Council Tax to be generated for use by the Council based on the Tax Base and the 4.99% increase (including the Adult Care Social Precept) is £122.2m in 2025/26.
 - e. The Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner precept was confirmed on 27 January 2025 with an increase of £14 for a Band D Council Tax.
 - f. The Greater Manchester Mayoral General Precept (including Fire Services) was confirmed on 7 February 2025.
 - g. Saddleworth Parish Council agreed its precept on 27 January 2025 and Shaw and Crompton Parish Council agreed its precept on 28 January 2025. Confirmed figures are presented in the report.
- the impact of the Collection Fund (the ringfenced account within which Council Tax and Business Rates are managed). The 2024/25 Collection Fund forecast outturn projection as outlined in the Month 9 financial monitoring report produces a net deficit of £1.2m of which the vast majority is Oldham Council's share and must be financed from the 2025/26 revenue budget.

Section 9 outlines the proposed savings that are required to balance the 2025/26 budget. There are a total of 25 savings proposals presented in accordance with Political Portfolios. Overall, approximately 120 FTE posts are affected, of which over 80% are currently vacant. The proposals also have a marginal impact on 2026/27 of £0.8m. It also confirms the use of capital receipts flexibly to finance expenditure leading to transformation in the sum of £2.6m for 2025/26 and a further £2.6m in 2026/27. All the proposals are presented in summary at Appendix 3 and in detail at Appendix 4.

Section 10 outlines the risks and uncertainties inherent in the budget forecast.

Section 11 presents the expected level of Reserves at the end of 2024/25 at £40.4m, which can support the 2025/26 budget

including the Balancing Budget and Fiscal Mitigation reserves for 2025/26.

Section 12 sets out the proposed fees and charges for the financial year 2025/26.

Section 13 sets out the Medium-Term Financial Strategy covering the financial years 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Section 14 presents the Statement of Robustness, a requirement under Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 which is the assurance by the Director of Finance on the robustness of the estimates used for the purposes of the revenue budget calculations and the adequacy of proposed reserves and balances. It remains the recommendation that general reserves are increased from £20m to £30m over the MTFS period, reflecting the increasingly volatile expenditure pressures the Council faces and the low tax base from which the Council is able to raise additional income. The planned replenishment of £1.05m towards reserves in 2025/26 together with the return of an estimated £3m in respect of the GM Waste Disposal Authority's reserves is a welcome first step in this direction. However, the strategy will need to be developed further in 2025/26 to continue to raise the level of general reserves over the MTFS period and improve the financial resilience of the Council. The Director of Finance is able to provide Members with the necessary assurances in respect of 2025/26 but the Council's financial position in later years remains uncertain. A more detailed commentary is provided in Section 14 and at Appendix 5.

Sections 15 to the end of the report include options to consider, consultation comments and Legal comments in accordance with standard practice. Given the importance of delivering budget reductions and embedding the programme of transformational change, during 2025/26, there will be a regular review of the progress of existing change programmes against the delivery milestones and financial targets. It will also ensure that there is continuous emphasis on the delivery of change and the achievement of the budget reductions required. As advised above, the Revenue Budget 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 was presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 29 January 2025 based on the information available at that time. The Board scrutinised the report and the other reports on the agenda that form a core part of the Council's strategic financial planning framework.

The Board considered in detail the Administration's 25 budget reduction proposals and was content to commend to Cabinet at a value of £8.788m in 2025/26 and a further £0.250m in 2026/27. The Board was also content with all other aspects of the report, including the proposed changes to fees and charges and therefore commended it to Cabinet. A further meeting of the Scrutiny Board took place on 6th February 2025 which

considered budget proposals put forward by the main Opposition Parties.



As detailed, the Final Local Government Finance Settlement was received on 3rd February 2025. The results are incorporated into this version of the Revenue Budget 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30 report.

Since the publication of the Final LGFS, Public Health allocations for 2025/26 have been awarded. This increased allocation is included within this report.

Recommendations That Council approves:

- 1 The policy landscape and context in which the Council is setting its revenue budget for 2025/26.
- 2 The financial forecasts for 2025/26 and 2026/27 having regard to the Local Government Finance Settlements and associated funding announcements.
- 3 The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts at a value of £2.6m for 2025/26 and 2026/27.
- 4 A proposed overall 2025/26 Council Tax increase of 4.99% for Oldham Council services (2.99% for general purposes and 2% Adult Social Care Precept) resulting in the charges set out at Table 8-3 of the report.
- 5 The 2025/26 Budget Reduction proposals at a value of £8.8m.
- 6 The proposed transfer of reserves of £1.05m to improve the financial robustness of the Council.
- 7 The proposal to draw on the Collection Fund for major preceptors of £146.0m for Borough Wide services and £122.2m for Council services.
- 8 The proposed net revenue expenditure budget for 2025/26 for the Council, set at £322.9m as outlined in Table 5.1 and at Appendix 7.
- 9 The proposed fees and charges as set out in the schedule included at Appendix 6.
- 10 The level of general fund balances supporting the 2025/26 budget of £18.9m underpinned by the agreed policy on Earmarked Reserves.
- 11 To adopt the introduction of a 100% Council Tax Premium to be levied on Periodically Occupied Properties from 1 April 2025 as approved at Council on 28 February 2024.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the amendment to the budget, on behalf of the Liberal Democrats, circulated and detailed in the Council Summons. Councillor Al-Hamdani expressed his thanks to staff who had assisted in the preparation of the report.

Councillors Harkness, Wilkinson, Williamson and Bishop spoke in support of the Amendment.

Councillors Lancaster, Hince, Shah, Charters, Taylor and Harrison spoke against the Amendment.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.

Councillor Al-Hamdani exercised his right of reply.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the AMENDMENT as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Aslam Naseem	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	FOR	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	AGAINST
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Davis Peter	AGAINST	Navesey Lisa	AGAINST
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	AGAINST	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	AGAINST
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Hince Marc	AGAINST	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	AGAINST	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	AGAINST	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	FOR	Wilkinson Mark	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan	AGAINST

		Zahid (MAYOR)	
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Oldham
Council

On a recorded VOTE being taken 15 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT with 36 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor Woodvine SECONDED the amendment to the budget, on behalf of the Conservatives, as circulated and detailed in the Council Summons.

Councillor Sharp spoke in support of the Amendment.

Councillors Marland, Hince, Dean, Brownridge, Hobin, Mushtaq, Harkness, Rustidge, Bishop and Taylor spoke against the Amendment.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.

Councillor Quigg exercised his right of reply.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the AMENDMENT as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	AGAINST	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	ABSTAINED	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Ali Zaheer	AGAINST	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Aslam Naseem	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	FOR	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	ABSTAINED	Malik Abdul	AGAINST
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	ABSTAINED
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moore Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST

Chowhan Naveed	AGAINST	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Davis Peter	AGAINST	Navesey Lisa	AGAINST
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	FOR
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	AGAINST	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	ABSTAINED	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	ABSTAINED	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Hince Marc	AGAINST	Sykes Howard	ABSTAINED
Hindle Neil	AGAINST	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	AGAINST	Wahid Abdul	AGAINST
Hughes Jade	FOR	Wilkinson Mark	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	ABSTAINED
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	AGAINST

On a recorded VOTE being taken 9 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT with 35 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 7 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Wahid MOVED and Councillor Akhtar SECONDED the amendment to the budget, on behalf of the Oldham Group, as circulated and detailed in the Council Summons.

Councillors Al-Hamdani spoke to the Amendment.

Councillors Hince and Taylor spoke against the Amendment.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.

Councillor Wahid exercised his right of reply.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the AMENDMENT as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	ABSTAINED	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST

Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Aslam Naseem	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	ABSTAINED	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	ABSTAINED	Malik Abdul	AGAINST
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	ABSTAINED
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Davis Peter	AGAINST	Navesey Lisa	AGAINST
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	AGAINST	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	ABSTAINED	Sharp Beth	AGAINST
Harkness Garth	ABSTAINED	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Hince Marc	AGAINST	Sykes Howard	ABSTAINED
Hindle Neil	AGAINST	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	AGAINST	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	ABSTAINED	Wilkinson Mark	ABSTAINED
Hurley Maggie	ABSTAINED	Williamson Diane	ABSTAINED
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	AGAINST

On a recorded VOTE being taken 4 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT with 36 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 11 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

The following Councillors then spoke on the ORIGINAL MOTION:

Councillors M. Ali and Charters spoke in support of the Original Motion.

Councillors Lancaster, Al-Hamdani and Wahid spoke against the Original Motion.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.



A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the MOTION as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	ABSTAINED	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	AGAINST	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	AGAINST
Bishop Helen	AGAINST	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	AGAINST
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	AGAINST	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	ABSTAINED	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	AGAINST	Sharp Beth	AGAINST
Harkness Garth	AGAINST	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	AGAINST
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	ABSTAINED
Hughes Jade	AGAINST	Wilkinson Mark	AGAINST
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	AGAINST
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	AGAINST
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 31 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION with 16 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 4 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION (and the reports) was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED

That Council approves:

1. The policy landscape and context in which the Council is setting its revenue budget for 2025/26.
2. The financial forecasts for 2025/26 and 2026/27 having regard to the Local Government Finance Settlements and associated funding announcements.
3. The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts at a value of £2.6m for 2025/26 and 2026/27.
4. A proposed overall 2025/26 Council Tax increase of 4.99% for Oldham Council services (2.99% for general purposes and 2% Adult Social Care Precept) resulting in the charges set out at Table 8-3 of the report.
5. The 2025/26 Budget Reduction proposals at a value of £8.8m.
6. The proposed transfer of reserves of £1.05m to improve the financial robustness of the Council.
7. The proposal to draw on the Collection Fund for major preceptors of £146.0m for Borough Wide services and £122.2m for Council services.
8. The proposed net revenue expenditure budget for 2025/26 for the Council, set at £322.9m, as outlined in Table 5.1 and at Appendix 7.
9. The proposed fees and charges as set out in the schedule included at Appendix 6.
10. The level of general fund balances supporting the 2025/26 budget of £18.9m underpinned by the agreed policy on Earmarked Reserves.
11. To adopt the introduction of a 100% Council Tax Premium to be levied on Periodically Occupied Properties from 1st April 2025, as approved at Council on 28th February 2024.

c. Pay Policy Statement 2025/26

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report which, sets out the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26.

RESOLVED: that the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2025/25, be approved.

Resolution 1 and 2 related to the Council Tax Base for the Financial year 2025/26, as approved by the Cabinet on 16th December 2024 (subject to minor amendment) and the Resolution related to the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024/25, as detailed in the summons.

No members spoke on this item.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the RESOLUTION as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	ABSTAINED	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	ABSTAINED	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	ABSTAINED	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	ABSTAINED	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	ABSTAINED
Hughes Jade	ABSTAINED	Wilkinson Mark	ABSTAINED
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 42 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the RESOLUTION with 2 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 7 ABSTENTIONS. The RESOLUTION was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED

1. That it be noted that on 16th December 2024, the following amounts were approved by the Cabinet (subject to minor amendment) as the Council's Council Tax Base for the financial year 2025/26:
 - a) 59,501 for the whole Council area [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]
 - b) 9,490 for dwellings in the Saddleworth Parish area to which a Parish precept relates
 - c) 5,906 for dwellings in the Shaw and Crompton Parish area to which a Parish precept relates
2. That the Council Meeting approve the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2025/26 (excluding Parish precepts) as being £122,199,584.

Resolution 3 related to the amounts calculated by the Council for the year 2025/26 in accordance with sections 31A to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

No members spoke on the item.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the RESOLUTION as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	ABSTAINED	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR
Ali Zaheer	ABSTAINED	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	ABSTAINED	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moore's Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT

Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	ABSTAINED	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	ABSTAINED
Hughes Jade	ABSTAINED	Wilkinson Mark	ABSTAINED
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 42 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the RESOLUTION with 2 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 7 ABSTENTIONS. The RESOLUTION was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED

That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2025/26 in accordance with sections 31A to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, be approved as follows:

- a) £751,594,030 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account any Precepts for the Saddleworth and Shaw & Crompton Parish areas
- b) £629,013,509 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(3) of the Act.
- c) £122,580,521 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
- d) £2,060.14 being the amount at 3(c) above, all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- e) £380,937 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in section 34(1) of the Act, being the Saddleworth and Shaw & Crompton Parish precepts.

- f) £2,053.74 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.
- g) £2,082.10 Saddleworth Parish area
being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned at 3(e) above divided by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.
- h) £2,072.67 Shaw & Crompton Parish area
being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned at 3(e) above divided by the amount at 1(c) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

Resolution 4 – relating to the Mayoral Police and crime Commissioner Precept and the Mayor General Precept (including Fire Services)

No members spoke on this item.

On being put to the VOTE the RESOLUTION was CARRIED.

RESOLVED

That for the year 2025/26 the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept and the Mayoral General Precept (including Fire Services) for Greater Manchester have been issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below, be noted.

Resolution 5 – Relating to the Setting of the Council Tax for 2025/26

No members spoke on this item.

A recorded vote, in line with the Regulations was then taken on the RESOLUTION as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	APOLOGIES	Hussain Junaid	FOR
Akhtar Shoab	FOR	Hussain Sajed	FOR
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	APOLOGIES
Ali Mohon	FOR	Iqbal Nadeem	FOR

Ali Zaheer	FOR	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	FOR
Arnott Dave	APOLOGIES	Jabbar Abdul	FOR
Aslam Naseem	FOR	Kenyon Mark	ABSENT
Azad Montaz Ali	APOLOGIES	Kouser Aisha	APOLOGIES
Ball Sandra	FOR	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	FOR
Bashforth Marie	FOR	Marland Alicia	FOR
Brownridge Barbara	FOR	McLaren Colin	FOR
Byrne Pam	FOR	Moores Eddie (Deputy Mayor)	FOR
Charters Josh	FOR	Murphy Dave	ABSENT
Cosgrove Angela	FOR	Mushtaq Shaid	FOR
Chowhan Naveed	FOR	Nasheen Umar	FOR
Davis Peter	FOR	Navesey Lisa	FOR
Dean Peter	FOR	Quigg Lewis	FOR
Ghafoor Kamran	APOLOGIES	Rustidge Ken	FOR
Goodwin Chris	FOR	Shah Arooj	FOR
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	FOR	Sheldon Graham	APOLOGIES
Harrison Holly	FOR	Shuttleworth Graham	FOR
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	FOR
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hughes Jade	FOR	Wilkinson Mark	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	FOR	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	FOR	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	FOR

On a recorded VOTE being taken 51 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the RESOLUTION with 0 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The RESOLUTION was therefore CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

RESOLVED

That the Council, in accordance with sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2025/26 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.



Authority/Parish	Council Tax Bands (£)							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Oldham Council	1,369.16	1,597.35	1,825.54	2,053.74	2,510.12	2,966.51	3,422.90	4,107.48
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept	180.20	210.23	240.26	270.30	330.36	390.43	450.50	540.605
Mayoral General Precept (including Fire Services)	85.97	100.29	114.62	128.95	157.61	186.26	214.92	257.90
Saddleworth Parish Precept	18.90	22.05	25.20	28.36	34.66	40.96	47.26	56.72
Shaw and Crompton Parish Precept	12.62	14.72	16.82	18.93	23.13	27.34	31.55	37.86

AGGREGATE OF COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS

Authority/Parish	Council Tax Bands (£)							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Saddleworth Parish Area	1,654.23	1,929.92	2,205.62	2,481.35	3,032.75	3,584.16	4,135.58	4,962.70
Shaw & Crompton Parish Area	1,647.95	1,922.59	2,197.24	2,471.92	3,021.22	3,570.54	4,119.87	4,943.84
All other parts of the Council's Area	1,635.33	1,907.87	2,180.42	2,452.99	2,998.09	3,543.20	4,088.32	4,905.98

That the Council, in accordance with section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby determines that the Council's relevant basic amount of council tax for 2025/26 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined by the Secretary of State under section 52ZC of the Act.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 9.40pm

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of Oldham Council & Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Devolution:

The Government has confirmed that Greater Manchester will receive an historic new £630 million funding settlement, as part of its trailblazing devolution deal. The new integrated settlement replaces a system of separate funding pots from the various different Government departments and gives Greater Manchester more freedom and flexibility to invest in our priorities, to fund local services, and so we can take a more preventative approach by getting to the root causes of the issues facing our communities and allow us to take a more practical approach to delivering everyday support.. This new funding settlement will also support the ambitious ten-year plan to turbocharge growth and deliver tens of thousands of new homes and jobs over the next decade for our future generations.

Bee Network:

The new contactless 'tap and go' system was launched 23 March 2025, which now allows all Oldham residents and all Greater Manchester Bee Network passengers to use their debit / credit card, phone or smart device for seamless travel on trams and buses – no longer needing a ticket before travelling.

Anyone wanting to pay cash or purchase tickets can still do so, with tickets also available for purchase via the Bee Network app. Residents are reassured that they will always pay the best value fare over the day or week, as fares are automatically calculated up to the daily or weekly amount. A new annual Bee Network ticket has also been announced recently allowing unlimited travel on both the tram and buses for the equivalent of between £2.76 and £4.10 a day.

There is also an option to spread the payments of an annual ticket weekly or monthly – at no extra cost – with the support of a Credit Union loan. There is more information on the Bee Network website if residents and members wish to see more information on this.

Building a Better Oldham: Community Regeneration Partnership – Grant Acceptance

Cabinet accepted receipt of the new £20m Community Regeneration Partnership grant from Government following various community engagement activities held last year. A total of seven community regeneration projects were identified for funding support:

- **District Growth Funding** - £4.4m capital and £100k of revenue to support the delivery of district growth priorities across the whole borough via co-produced plans and prioritised through the District Councils; ensuring residents, communities and businesses are engaged with improvements in their local areas.
- **Tommyfield Market Traders** - £2m to support Market Traders move to the new Market Hall in the Spindles by establishing a new grant scheme for purchasing modern, low-carbon fit-for-purpose kit.
- **George Street: Outdoor Market Relocation** – £1m to match the Council £1m to radically transform George Square into a multifunctional high quality public space which will be the new home for the Oldham Outdoor Market.
- **SportsTown:** £5m to support an ambitious public / private partnership to bring together Oldham's sporting excellence, health care and much needed enhanced educational pathways through the creation of a new centre of excellence whilst also increasing participation for residents at the heart of the community.

-
- **Yorkshire Street and Implementation of the Cultural Co-Operative Model** – £2.5m to support the implementation of the Cultural Co-operative model for the refurbished Fairbottom Street Theatre (Town Deal Funding), and will see vacant retail unit brought back into use on Yorkshire Street.
 - **Town Centre Homes** - £5m to support the development of a planning strategy and associated pre-development costs to help de-risk the four key town centre housing sites including Civic, Magistrates Court, Leisure Centre site and Princes Gate.

This funding announcement forms a key part of what we are badging as a year of delivery for Oldham's regeneration plans when residents will see major change finally coming to life, including the completion of our new indoor market and event space, the redevelopment of the Old Library and the re-opening of the Coliseum.

Located in the heart of the town, The Egyptian Room, a beautifully restored historic space, continues to strengthen our town centre offer and I'm delighted to report that this new thriving eatery continues to receive positive feedback since opening at the end of last year.

Meanwhile, The Hive serves as a collaborative business hub in Spindles, fostering networking, skills development, as business growth continues to go from strength to strength including the space recently being used as a key meeting and collaboration hub, recently hosting a Bank of England event and the launch of the Oldham Trading Platform – something which would not have happened without The Hive bringing key people together.

Building a Better Oldham is more than just the projects as the social value generated to date exceeds £31m of additional benefits to local businesses and communities, including:

- 1,005 weeks of apprenticeships
- 4,479 hours of Career Support sessions
- 173 locally employed individuals
- £46.9m of Local Spend
- 700 Volunteer Hours

Strategy and Performance:

Armed Forces Covenant: Oldham has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community through the recent signing of the Armed Forces Covenant. Work continues toward achieving Gold Award accreditation under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, strengthening our support for veterans, reservists, and their families.

Shortlisting for 'Most Improved Council' – Local Government Chronicle Awards: Oldham Council has been successfully shortlisted for the 'Most Improved Council' award at the 2025 Local Government Chronicle Awards! The shortlisting highlights the impact of collective efforts to drive positive change and deliver better outcomes for residents.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

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CABINET

02/12/2024 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain,
Jabbar, Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Brownridge and Councillor Jabbar each declared an other-registerable interest, in Minute 5 (Minutes), insofar as they were both Council appointees as Trustees of Northern Roots.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th November 2024, be approved as a correct record.

6 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEAR REVIEW
REPORT 2024/25**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance which informed members that in April 2023 the Authority had adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code), which required the Council to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

The submitted report therefore advised the Cabinet of the performance of the Treasury Management function of the Council for the first half of 2024/25 and provided a comparison of performance against the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy and the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

The report set out the key Treasury Management issues for Members' information and review and outlined: an economic update for the first half of 2024/25 (External Context); Net Borrowing and Investments (Local Context); A review and updates of the Council's current treasury management position; Council Borrowing; Treasury Investment Activity; Treasury Performance for the first half of the year; Compliance; and Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

Options/alternatives considered:

In order that the Council complied with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Cabinet had no option other than to consider and approve the current Treasury Management position. Therefore, no options/alternatives could be presented in respect of the factual information contained in this report. However, in respect of the potential changes in policy outlined in this report, the options available to the Cabinet were:

Option 1 – to accept the recommendations of the Council's Treasury Advisers and change the MRP policy as outlined in section 2.7 & Appendix 4.

Option 2 - to approve the use of up to £2.000m of capital receipts to fund the costs of voluntary redundancy payments.

Option 3 - to approve both the change in MRP policy and the use of flexible capital receipts to fund the costs of voluntary redundancy payments.

Option 4 – to approve neither the change in MRP policy nor the use of capital receipts.

The preferred option was Option 3.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Endorses the Treasury Management Half Year Review report.
2. Accepts the proposed revisions to the Maturity Structure of Borrowing outlined in section 2.10.5 of the submitted report.
3. Accepts the proposed revision to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts outlined in section 2.7 and Appendix 2, of the submitted report.
4. Accepts the proposed revision to the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy outlined in section 2.8 and Appendix 4, of the submitted report.
5. Commends the report to Council.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.05pm

Present: Councillor Taylor (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain,
Jabbar and Mushtaq.

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shah.

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 18th November 2024, be approved as a correct record.

6 **COUNCIL TAX BASE AND NON-DOMESTIC RATES TAX
BASE FORECAST 2025/26**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance which presented Members details of the Council Tax Base and provisional Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Tax Base forecast for 2025/26, which would underpin the forthcoming Council Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, that is scheduled for consideration at the Budget Council meeting on 6th March 2025.

The report also sought delegated authority to finalise the 2025/26 Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates) forecast to reflect up to date Non-Domestic Rates details to be submitted to Central Government via the annual NNDR 1 return by the statutory deadline of 31st January 2025.

The total number of chargeable properties included in the Council Tax Base calculation in Oldham for 2025/26 was 98,912. This figure was reduced to 88,245.2 after allowing for discounts and exemptions and translated to the equivalent of 70,180.8 Band D properties. After applying adjustments for the Local Council Tax Support scheme offset by the additional charging for empty properties and an anticipated increase in the number of properties to be included in the valuation list over the forthcoming year, the number of Band D equivalent properties reduced to 61,499.5. The final Tax Base after the application of the anticipated collection rate of 96.75% is 59,501 which was an increase of 121 when compared to the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 of 59,380.

An estimate of the 2025/26 Tax Bases for Saddleworth and Shaw and Crompton Parish Councils of 9,250 and 5,784 respectively, this would be confirmed once tax base information became available.



The Director of Finance's report highlighted that the preparation of Council Tax and Business Rates Tax Bases was being undertaken in a period of unprecedented uncertainty and volatility. The current economic climate included uncertain prospects for economic growth, Government changes in policy in year, the decoupling of business rates multipliers and changes to relief schemes are amongst the issues which make forecasting challenging.

The Collection Fund (combined) had moved into a projected deficit position in 2024/25 resulting in additional pressure on the 2025/26 budget. This was largely the result of slower than anticipated growth in the council tax base during 2024/25.

Options/Alternatives considered:

- a. The Council has little discretion in the calculation of the number of properties incorporated into the Council Tax Base given the legislative framework that is currently in place. However, there was some discretion in estimating the number of new properties that will be included on the Council Tax register during 2025/26 and the change to the number of claimants of Council Tax Reduction. A prudent view had been taken in this regard. The main area for an alternative approach was over the level of assumed collection rate. An increase in the collection rate would boost the anticipated Council Tax income and a decrease in the rate would decrease income. The Council has chosen to maintain its 2025/26 collection rate at 96.75%. This decision had been influenced by prevailing economic circumstances and current trends in collection rates.
- b. The NNDR1 return generated the figures upon which the Business Rates Tax Base is prepared. It is not therefore appropriate to consider an alternative approach. However, as the figures included on the NNDR1 return on 31 January 2025 may vary from the estimated level, delegation is sought to allow the opportunity to revise the Business Rates forecast and approve a revised and more accurate position for budget setting.

The preferred option is Option b.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves:
 - a. The Council Tax Base for 2025/26 at 59,501 Band D equivalent properties.
 - b. The latest estimate for 2025/26 Business Rates revenue that is attributable to Oldham Council as being £56.177m.
 - c. The drawing down from the Collection Fund of £4.607m of Business Rates retention gains

anticipated for 2025/26, of which the Council will utilise £3.455m (75%)

2. That the Cabinet notes the estimate for Saddleworth and Shaw and Crompton Parish Councils Tax Base of 9,250 and 5,784 respectively.
3. That the Cabinet delegates the decision to vary the final Business Rates forecast and hence the Business Rates Tax Base, if required, to the Cabinet Member for Value for Money and Sustainability in consultation with the Director of Finance.



7

REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2024/25 (MONTH 8)

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance, which provided Members with an update, as at 30th November 2024 (Month 8), of the Council's 2024/25 forecast revenue budget position and an update on the Medium Term Financial position (as outlined at Annex 1 to the report), alongside the financial position of the capital programme together with the revised capital programme 2024/25 to 2028/29 (as outlined at Annex 2 to the report).

The forecast overspend position based on the Month 8 profiled budget was £13.594m which if not addressed would result in a year-end overspend of £20.390m (£19.912m at month 6).

This financial monitoring report followed on from the position reported at month 6 and is a warning of the potential year end position if no further action is taken to reduce net expenditure. The management actions already implemented for 2024/25 have been factored into the Month 8 forecasts. Work continued across the organisation to address this position and it was anticipated that by the year end, the current outturn deficit position should reduce even further.

As part of its budget setting process, the Council annually updates its Medium-Term Financial Plan.

It was proposed that the Council seeks external support through a strategic partner to help complete a sophisticated and detailed review that would underpin the comprehensive work needed to support sustainable service reductions and better outcomes over the medium to long term. It was also proposed that Delegated Authority be granted to the Deputy Chief Executive for Health and Care, in conjunction with the Director of Finance to progress the procurement to support this work.

The report outlines the most up to date capital spending position for 2024/25 to 2028/29 for approved schemes. The revised capital programme budget for 2024/25 is £99.553m at the close of month 8 (£99.505m at month 6), a net increase of £0.047m. Actual expenditure to 30 November 2024 was £46.557m (46.77% of the forecast outturn).

Options/Alternatives considered:

The options that the Cabinet considered were:

- a. To consider the forecast revenue and capital positions presented in the report, including proposed changes and an update on the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30.
 - b. To propose alternative forecasts.
- The preferred Option was Option a.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet notes the report.
2. That the Cabinet approves forecast profiled budget, being an adverse position of £13.594m, at Month 8 (30th November 2024) and the forecast potential adverse position by year end of £20.390m, with mitigations in place to reduce expenditure, as detailed at Annex 1 to the report.
3. That the Cabinet notes the Medium-Term Financial Plan update for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 included within Section 7, of Annex 1 to the report.
4. That the Cabinet approves the delegation of authority to the Deputy Chief Executive for Health and Care, in conjunction with the Director of Finance, to progress the procurement of an external strategic partner to support the work around transformation across three key areas.
5. that the Cabinet approves the revised capital programme for 2024/25 including the proposed virements and the forecast for the financial years to 2028/29 as at Month 8 as outlined in Annex 2, to the report.

8

OLDHAM'S STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT 2024

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy which sought approval for the publication of Oldham Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2024.

The SHLAA was a technical document identifying land that might have potential for housing at some future stage. The requirement to undertake a SHLAA was set out in paragraph 68 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The SHLAA formed a key component of the evidence base underpinning housing policies and land allocations and will help to meet the area's housing needs.

The SHLAA assessed the development potential of land that could be capable of delivering homes through an assessment of suitability, availability and achievability (economic viability). It then indicates when it may come forward for development.

The base date of the submitted SHLAA was 1st April 2024. It provides an update to previous SHLAA (1st April 2023) published in January 2024. The SHLAA 2024 identifies a total housing land supply of 13,475 homes (including allowances) over the short to long term.

More detail on the method used to carry out the assessment, along with the findings of the SHLAA were detailed in the submitted report and the appendices.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - To approve and publish the SHLAA 2024 to provide evidence for the housing land supply position, Brownfield Register and Local Plan Review.

Option 2 – To not approve and publish the SHLAA 2024

The preferred Option was Option 1 - a fully assessed SHLAA provided the evidence base for identifying sites to be included in the housing land supply and for other requirements such as the Brownfield Land Register. It means the council has a full understanding of the borough's currently available land supply which helps to inform decisions on allocating land in the future and can be used by the development industry to identify land with potential for housing development within the borough. Not publishing the SHLAA (option 2) would leave the council with an outdated published housing land supply position and does not effectively promote the potential supply of housing land within the borough to interested parties for development.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2024 for publication.

9

OLDHAM'S INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT 2023/24

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy, which sought approval for the publication of Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023 - 2024.

As required under the 2019 revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations, the council had prepared an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). The IFS provided a summary of financial contributions that the council has secured through section 106 (s106) agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through section 278 (s278) agreements. The IFS was attached at Appendix One, to the report.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - to approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2023 - 2024 for publication on the council's website and send it to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). (Advantages – approving the IFS meets the requirements of the regulations and is transparent). (Disadvantages – there are no disadvantages to approving the IFS).

Option 2 - to not approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2023 – 2024 and not publish it on the council's website and not send it to MHCLG. (Advantages – there are no advantages in not approving the IFS.) (Disadvantages – not approving the IFS would result in us not meeting the regulations.)

The preferred Option was Option 1.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023 - 2024 for publication.

OLDHAM'S BROWNFIELD LAND REGISTER 2024

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy that sought approval for the publication of Oldham's 2024 Brownfield Land Register.

The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 required that each local planning authority in England prepare, maintain and publish a register of previously developed (brownfield) land suitable for housing. The government considered the purpose of the register being to provide up-to-date and consistent information on sites that local authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development. The Brownfield Register update for 2024 included 185 sites.

A Brownfield Register is made up of two parts, Part 1 comprises all brownfield sites that the council has assessed to be appropriate for residential development and could include sites with or without planning permission. Part 2 identified sites that the local authority had decided should be granted (planning) permission in principle (PiP) for residential development. PiP is an alternative route to obtaining planning permission which separated "in principle" matters, such as use and location, from technical details, which were left to be agreed later.

It is not proposed to include sites on Part 2 of the Register currently. The decision not to progress Part 2 would be kept under review. This was particularly the case given that the council may, in future, become obligated by the government to start granting PiP.

The report detailed Oldham Council's 8th Brownfield Register.

Options/Alternatives considered:

The following options were considered:

Option 1 - To approve and publish Part 1 of Oldham's Brownfield Land Register 2024 in line with the Regulations. Part 2 was not proposed.

Option 2 - To not approve and publish an updated Brownfield Land Register as the 2024 SHLAA already contained all brownfield land considered suitable for housing development. This would not comply with the current Regulations.

The preferred Option was Option 1, as this would comply with Regulations (there is no current obligation to include sites on Part 2 of the Register).

Resolved:

1. That the Oldham Brownfield Land Register 2024, be approved and published, in line with the Regulations.
2. That the Cabinet notes the It is recommended to note the approach to determining sites be included in Part 1 and 2 of the Brownfield Register.

3. That the Cabinet approves a 2024 update of the Brownfield Land Register (Part 1 only) for publication.
4. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to make any minor amendments and updates to the register throughout the year, if and when required.

11

STREET LIGHTING ATTACHMENT POLICY

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment which sought approval for a Street Lighting Attachment Policy for the Borough of Oldham. Under Section 178 of The Highways Act 1980, there was a legal requirement for any individual who wishes to attach signage or equipment to a street lighting asset to obtain a licence from the local highway authority.

The Cabinet was advised that to date, the Street Lighting Service had been using a robust process to allow attachments to its lighting columns. However, the service had identified that there was no formal Council policy in place covering the requirements of the The Highways Act and the current contract for replacement of the streetlighting assets. The Director of Environment's report therefore requested approval of a policy, which outlined the legal and council requirements for anyone wish to attached items to the streetlights.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Due to the Highways Act and the current PFI contractual requirements, there was no alternative option for Street Lighting Attachments. A robust process had been undertaken to ensure that the policy is fit for purposes and compliant with both the Highways Act 1980 and PFI obligations.

Resolved:

That the Street Lighting Attachment Policy (detailed at Appendix 1, to the submitted report), be approved for implementation, thereby allowing the Council to formally provide the requirements needed for Applicants to gain an Attachment Licence, and therefore, ensure compliance with The Highways Act 1980 and the council's contractual requirements.

12

OLDHAM MBC – TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FAIR SHARE POLICY

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which asked members to consider enactment of a new policy, allowing for charges to be made for occupation of temporary accommodation (TA), based on appropriate affordability checks.

The proposed policy sought to ensure fairness by focusing on: ensuring affordability for the resident; not discouraging residents from seeking employment; ensuring there are no disincentives to residents seeking to move on from temporary accommodation; making sure residents have access to the support that they need to move on and live independently; and recouping as much of the costs to the Council as is reasonable, while remaining in line with the above principles.

If adopted, all residents being placed into TA would receive an affordability assessment, carried out by Housing Options, at the first point of contact. In addition, affordability assessments would also be carried out on current residents of TA, to assess whether they should be required to contribute to costs going forward.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 – to approve the proposed policy in its entirety in order to ensure that residents receive appropriate support to remain independent, and contributions towards costs are obtained from those who can afford to pay.

Option 2 - do nothing.

The preferred Option was Option 1 to approve the policy.

Resolved:

That the proposed Temporary Accommodation Fair Share Policy, as outlined in the submitted report, be approved and adopted.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.20pm

Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain,
Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jabbar.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Brownridge declared a 'registerable interest' in agenda items 13 and 17 (Northern Roots - Contract Award and Next Steps for Phased Delivery), by virtue of the fact that she was a Council appointed Trustee of Northern Roots. Councillor Brownridge left the room during the consideration of these agenda items.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

6 **SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shareholder Committee, held 5th December 2024 be approved, as a correct record.

7 **OLDHAM TOWN CENTRE BUILT HERITAGE PROJECT**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy, which outlined a project to develop a clear vision and delivery plan incorporating surveys and appraisals of a minimum of five heritage buildings. The aim was to increase the understanding of at-risk heritage buildings with the objective of enabling their restoration and repurposing back into viable uses.

The delivery of the project aligned with the Creating a Better Place framework to regenerate and enhance Oldham town centre and across the wider borough.

The Cabinet was advised that the listed and heritage buildings in Oldham town centre make a positive contribution to the town's character. However, the historic nature of the buildings and associated high costs to repurpose has discouraged their renovation and occupation leading to their declining use and creating a heritage deficit. The recommendations contained in this report seek to unlock these obstacles by setting out a clear pathway to understand the costs to refurbish, repurpose and

align future uses to provide a sustainable economic and social value.

The proposed Heritage Vision and Asset Delivery Plan responds to the concerns of the local community about the deterioration of Oldham town centre heritage assets, obtained during public conversations and consultations including Oldham's Big Conversation; the Oldham Town Centre Vision linked to the Creating a Better Place strategic regeneration framework; and meetings of the Oldham High Street Partnership (since February 2024) and Oldham Town Centre Board (since February 2020).

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: to accept the external revenue grants offered by Historic England and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. This will commit the Council to providing revenue funding to the maximum value of £100,000 for spend by 31 March 2026.

Option 2: decline the offer of external grants from Historic England and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. This would lead to there being insufficient budget to proceed with the project and increase hurdles to the future use and occupation of the heritage buildings in the town centre.

Preferred Option: Option 1.

Resolved:

The Cabinet authorises the following:

1. The delivery of a project to survey a minimum of five heritage buildings in Oldham town centre and generate a new strategic vision and delivery plan for these assets by 31st March 2026.
2. The acceptance of a revenue grant worth £200,000 from Historic England.
3. The acceptance of a revenue grant worth £100,000 from Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
4. The Council to provide match funding towards the external grants at a ratio of 25% subject to a maximum Council commitment of £100,000.
5. The delegation of approval to the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham in consultation with the Director of Economy, the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, the Director of Finance (or their appointed nominees) to:
 - (i) appoint external advisors (for the provision of professional services) up to contract value of £400,000 in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures and
 - (ii) select the buildings which are to be part of the project.
6. The Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer or his nominated representative to sign and/or affix the Common Seal of the Council to all the documents and associated or ancillary documents referred to above and/or required to give effect to the recommendations in this report.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health that sought approval for the award of the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSFE) infrastructure grant of £270,500 per annum to Action Together CIO and for a grant funding agreement to be entered into with Action Together CIO under which the total funding of total £811,500 would be provided for the period 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2028 (3 years).

The Cabinet was informed that the Council had, for a number of years, provided grant funding to Action Together CIO (AT) in contribution to a project designed and delivered by AT under which free support is provided to a range of voluntary, community and faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector organisations. The grant is funded through the Council's Priority Programme Fund (PPF). The grant funding includes VCFSE infrastructure provision.

AT provided a range of VCFSE infrastructure support in Oldham, as well as in both Tameside and Rochdale. They also play a prominent role in the leadership of the sector at a Greater Manchester level through 10GM and the GM VCFSE Leadership Group which champions the role of communities in devolution. Further, AT has an influential voice within these forums, which contributes to Oldham's co-operative ambition to influence across the Greater Manchester city region.

In considering the report the Cabinet expressed their gratitude to the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Dean, the Director of Public Health and her staff and to Action Together for the work involved in the compilation of this report.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 - Cabinet approves the award of the VCFSE infrastructure grant of £811,500 (£270,500 per year) to Action Together CIO (subject to a satisfactory subsidy control assessment), and authority is given for the Council to enter into a suitable form of grant funding agreement with Action Together CIO for a period of three years (1st April 2025 – 31st March 2028), as detailed in this report. The grant funding agreement would be drafted by Legal Services on standard terms and conditions and subject to a fit for purpose project specification. Also, Cabinet approves the Borough Solicitor carries out all necessary legal formalities. The grant does not cover the full costs of delivery and represents a real term cut year on year taking into account the increase of costs. Given the limitations of the funding available the agreement should ensure continued focus on core provision of community development, volunteering and strategic representation. The option would provide medium-term continuity of provision and strategic support for the wider VCFSE sector.

Option 2 – The VCFSE Infrastructure Grant is renewed for a further one year (1st April 2025 – 31st March 2028) at the same level. This would be out of line with current NAVCA best practice and commitment in the Greater Manchester GM VCFSE Accord.

The short-term nature of the agreement may impact on the level and quality of support available for the wider VCFSE sector. Option 3 – Do not award the infrastructure grant. This is not regarded as a viable option as there would be a loss of infrastructure support to the VCFSE sector in Oldham. This would impact upon the capacity of the sector to develop and grow, the recruitment and placement of volunteers, and opportunities for securing external funding.

Preferred Option: Option One.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approves the recommendation that a VCFSE infrastructure grant of £811,500 to Action Together CIO is approved (subject to a satisfactory subsidy control assessment), and that authority is given for the Council to enter into a suitable form of grant funding agreement with Action Together CIO for a period of three years (1st April 2025 – 31st March 2028), as detailed in this report. The grant funding agreement would be drafted by Legal Services on standard terms and conditions and subject to a fit for purpose project specification.
2. Cabinet is also asked to grant approval for the Borough Solicitor, or his nominated representative, to carry out all necessary legal formalities.

9

ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDING ALLOCATIONS 2024-2025 FOR OLDHAM LIFELONG LEARNING SERVICE

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Education, Early Years and Skills which sought the acceptance of the funding allocation for the academic year 2024/2025 for the Lifelong Learning Service.

The submitted report detailed the funding offer received from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in respect of the Adult Education Budget grant for the 2024/2025 academic year and highlighted how this funding will be used to meet GMCA's and the Council's key priorities.

The Cabinet were informed that following devolution of the Adult Education Budget, the Council's Lifelong Learning Service is now funded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (prior to devolution this was directly awarded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency). The Service is designed to meet the GMCA Strategy, the Council's ambition and key objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and to support the Oldham Partnership Our Future. The Service works with the 5 district partnerships with a focus upon the Council's 'Get Oldham Working' campaign and the Co-operative Agenda. The funding will support the Service to specifically assist the Council to deliver outcomes against the Healthier, Happier Lives corporate mission.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: To accept the funding and to enter into suitable funding agreements.

Option 2: To decline the funding.

Preferred Option: Option 1.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet accepts the Adult Education funding offer from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority for the academic year 2024/2025.

10

OLDHAM'S MONITORING REPORT 2023/24

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy that sought approval for the publication of the Oldham's Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023/2024.

Under Regulation 34 and 35 of The Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, local planning authorities must make monitoring information available for inspection as soon as possible after the information becomes available. The Monitoring Report covers the previous financial year that is 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. In terms of housing land supply, the Monitoring Report presents the position as at 1st April 2024.

Oldham's Monitoring Report was attached at Appendix One to the submitted report. In line with the Regulations the Monitoring Report provided details on whether the council is meeting the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for preparing the various Local Plan documents. Performance is monitored against the LDS that was in place at the start of the monitoring period. The Monitoring Report also monitors a range of planning indicators, such as housing, employment and biodiversity, which seek to assess the effectiveness of the council's land-use planning policies, and whether they are achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development. The submitted report was Oldham Council's 20th Monitoring Report.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1 – To approve the authorities Monitoring Report and send it to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). (Advantages – approving the Monitoring Report will help with implementing and reviewing our local planning policies, whilst also being transparent and meets the requirements of the regulations). (Disadvantages – there are no disadvantages to approving the Monitoring Report and sending it to MHCLG.)

Option 2 – To not approve the authorities Monitoring Report 2023 – 2024 and not send it to MHCLG. (Advantages – there are no advantages in not approving the Monitoring Report.) (Disadvantages – not approving the Monitoring Report could result in less certainty and confidence in developments coming forward and would result in us not meeting the regulations.)

Preferred Option: Option 1.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet approves the Monitoring Report 2023/2024 for publication.

11

DEMOLITION OF OFFICE BLOCK 1, SOUTHLINK,

OLDHAM

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy which advised Members that in February 2020, the Council, via a delegated decision, had approved, the demolition of Office Block 1 at Southlink. The submitted report updated Members on the latest position and sought re-approval to demolish the vacant building.

The Cabinet had approved Vistry Partnership to develop land at Southlink following the completion of a competitive land sale process in October 2024. Vistry were to deliver 146 affordable homes, including 32 at Social Rent, on the Southlink site which includes the land in question.

Options/alternatives considered:

The options were detailed in the confidential report.

Resolved:

that the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, in the report, at agenda item 15.

12

SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy that sought to appoint Rowland Homes to develop land at South Chadderton following the completion of a competitive land sale process. Rowland's will deliver 149 homes, including 60 affordable homes with 15 for Social Rent. All homes were to be constructed to the low carbon 'Future Homes Standard'.

Options/alternatives considered:

The options were detailed in the confidential report.

Resolved:

that the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, in the report, at agenda item 16.

13

NORTHERN ROOTS - CONTRACT AWARD AND NEXT STEPS FOR PHASED DELIVERY

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy and the Chief Executive of the Northern Roots Charity, which advised that the Cabinet had previously approved the Northern Roots project/masterplan (2019) and acceptance of external funding allocations: namely Town Deal Fund (Cabinet 14 November 2022) and Levelling Up Round 2 (20 March 2023) grant awards, where allocations have been ringfenced for a new visitor centre and forestry skills centre.

With planning approvals in place for the proposals, the submitted report sought to draw down the funds and award a construction contract with Wilmott Dixon Construction, WDC so that the works can start on site. A fully compliant procurement process undertaken to award WDC a pre-construction services agreement (PCSA, 18 September 2023) and through this work WDC have confirmed a lump sum for the works, (which has been reviewed and verified by the Council's cost estimator) and

this is within the external budget allocation. The legal, commercial, and technical details of the contract award were set out in Part B of this report.

Cabinet members were also asked to note that the delivery of the works set out in this report would act as an enabler and facilitator to further works at the site, to delivered by the Northern Roots Charity and funded from other external funding sources awarded directly to the charity.

In considering the report Cabinet Members expressed their gratitude to Northern Roots for their valuable work in the community.

Options/alternatives considered:
The options were detailed in the confidential report.

Resolved:
that the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, in the report, at agenda item 17.

14 **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 five 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.

15 **DEMOLITION OF OFFICE BLOCK 1, SOUTHLINK, OLDHAM**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 11: Demolition of Office Block 1, Southlink, Oldham.

Resolved:
Approval be granted for the demolition of Office Block 1, Southlink, Oldham, with a budget estimate of £270,000.

16 **SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 12: Selection of Preferred Developer.

Resolved:
That Rowland Homes be selected for the purchase for the former South Chadderton School Site, Butterworth Lane, Chadderton.

17 **NORTHERN ROOTS - CONTRACT AWARD AND NEXT STEPS FOR PHASED DELIVERY**

Consideration was given to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 13: Northern Roots – Contract Award and Next Steps for Phased Delivery.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

1. Notes the progress to date within the report and the various objectives to be achieved by the progression of the Northern Roots project
2. Approves the draw down of the allocated external grant awards to progress with the visitor centre, skills centre and associated works at the site.
3. Approves awarding a Stage 2 design and build contract to Willmott Dixon Construction Limited to undertake the contract works as set out in this report. Noting robust monitoring of the works to ensure delivery on time, within budget and to the required standards to meet the funding criteria/objectives.
4. Agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with Portfolio holders, the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to approve the procurement and appointment of sub-contractors and service providers to supply any works, supplies or services needed to deliver the project.
5. Agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with Portfolio holders, the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, or his nominated representative, to progress leasing/licensing arrangements to facilitate delivery of the capital build and delivery of the masterplan.
6. Agrees to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with Borough Solicitor, or his nominated representative, to reset the governance arrangements with the Northern Roots Charity to ensure effective working relationships, effective management of the site, and monitoring of the required objectives.

18

**INCLUSION FOR OLDHAM MUMPS, PRINCESS GATE
INTO THE TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP - PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY
RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy that set out the position in respect of the recommendations presented by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board at their meeting held on 17th December 2024, where the Cabinet Report 'Inclusion for Oldham Mumps, Princess Gate into the Town Centre Development Partnership', that was presented to the Cabinet's meeting on dated 18th November 2024 and which was then subject to review through the Councils Call In Process.

The Cabinet considered the Director of Economy's report and the recommendations presented by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board. Following consideration of the content of the Director of Economy's report, the Cabinet agreed to endorse their original recommendations, which were set out in the Cabinet meeting held 18th November 2024 (minute 14 refers).

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet Members approve the inclusion of the Oldham Mumps into the Master Development Agreement (dated 11th September 2023) via a Supplementary Agreement to ensure MUSE's obligations and timescales for stratifying the core sites are maintained.
2. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Leader, Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and to the Interim Borough Solicitor to agree the final details and then finalise the supplemental agreement with Muse.
3. That the Cabinet agree to delegate authority to the Leader, Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and Director of Finance to review all legal, financial and commercial details, ahead of entering into relevant agreements to support pre-development partnership costs (up to £5 Million).

19

SCHOOL CATERING REVIEW

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy that set out the position in respect of the recommendations presented by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board at their meeting held on 17th December 2024, where the Cabinet Report 'School Catering Review', that was presented to the Cabinet's meeting on dated 18th November 2024 and which was subject to review through the Councils Call In Process.

The Cabinet considered the Director of Economy's report and the recommendations presented by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board. Following consideration of the content of the Director of Economy's report, the Cabinet agreed to endorse their original recommendations, which were set out in the Cabinet meeting held 18th November 2024 (minute 11 refers – Catering Review Implementation).

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approve the transition of the school catering provision from Oldham Education Catering Service to schools through a comprehensive and supportive change management process.
2. That the Cabinet approve the withdrawal of the OECS from the school meal provider market no later than September 2025.

The meeting started at 4.00pm and ended at 4.20pm

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Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, F Hussain, Jabbar,
Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Goodwin.

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 17th February 2025, be approved as a correct record.

6 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2025**

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which advised Members that on 12th December 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister had written to all local authority leaders and Metro Mayors across England to introduce the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposed planning reforms, and to request all councils to review and update their timetables for getting an up-to-date development plan in place within the next 12 weeks – thus by 6th March 2025.

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), was adopted on 21st March 2024, formed part of Oldham's Development Plan. However, as a high-level strategic plan it did not cover everything that a Development Plan needs to address, and it was always intended for each borough to adopt their own "Part 2" Local Plan to sit alongside PfE.

As such, there remains a need to progress the Oldham Local Plan to provide locally specific and up-to-date policies, particularly in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and achieving the right housing mix to meet our needs and address the housing crisis across the borough. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is effectively a project plan and timetable for preparing development plan documents. Oldham's LDS was last updated on 22nd December 2023 and the timetable for the Part 2 Local Plan had slipped since this time. As a result, the current

LDS was not up-to-date and there was a need to prepare a new LDS that covers the Part 2 Local Plan in order to meet the requirements set out in the letter from the MHCLG and to ensure that the Council has an up-to-date local planning policy framework in place for the Borough.

On 12th February 2025, a Motion was agreed at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to write to the Deputy Prime Minister to ask her to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough. At the time of writing this report, the Deputy Prime Minister has not replied to that letter, and so PfE is still a part of the Development Plan for Oldham. Subject to the response received from the Deputy Prime Minister there are two options regarding how to progress the Local Plan and LDS – which are set out below:

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - To approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025 Update. The advantages were that it would ensure that an up-to-date timetable for the Oldham Local Plan was available by 6th March 2024, as per the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister dated 12th December 2024. There were no reported disadvantages to updating the LDS.

Option 2 – Not to approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025. There were no advantages in not updating the LDS. The reported disadvantages, were that failing to update and publish the LDS by 6th March 2025, would not meet the requirements set out in the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister, dated 12th December 2024. It was clear that the MHCLG were prepared to use their interventionary powers, if necessary, to ensure that updated timetables were prepared and that suitably ambitious plans were progressed and ensure sound plans be adopted.

Preferred Option – Option One.

The Cabinet was advised that the report was time limited, insofar that the government had requested that all local authorities must publish details of their Local Development Scheme, three days after this Cabinet meeting, on 6th March 2025. This deadline would be impossible for Oldham Borough Council to reach if this particular decision was subject to the normal call-in process, which would likely not expire until 11th March 2025, at the earliest. Therefore, the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Board (Place, Economic Growth and Environment), had, under Rule 14 of the Council's Constitution exempted this decision from the call-in process.

Resolved:

1. That, if, the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is rejected, the Local Plan would continue to be progressed as a Part 2 Local Plan alongside PfE, in line with programme set out in the LDS 2025 Update and this report and, if this were the case Cabinet would approve the update and publication of the Council's Local Development Scheme 2025 Update.

Or;

2. Were the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is accepted, PfE would no longer be part of the Development Plan for Oldham and a new LDS would need to be prepared setting out a programme for preparing a brand new single Local Plan document for Oldham, and the deadline set by the Deputy Prime Minister for publishing a new LDS would not be met. Officers would prepare a new LDS as soon as possible and bring it to the first scheduled Cabinet meeting of the 2025/26 municipal year, on 16th June 2025 for consideration. If this were the case Cabinet would note that the deadline for publishing a new Local Development Scheme by 6th March 2025 will not be met by Oldham Council but that a revised LDS, for the preparation of a brand new, single Local Plan for Oldham borough will be brought to Cabinet on 16th June 2025 for consideration.
3. That the actions of the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, in exempting this decision from the call-in process, be noted.

7

UNITED UTILITIES GREEN RECOVERY FUND - ADDITIONAL FUNDING - GRANT ACCEPTANCE

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that was seeking approval to accept an additional £600,000 United Utilities Green Recovery Fund (UUGRF) grant allocation, following confirmation of award from United Utilities Plc in February 2025.

Oldham Council's Highways and Engineering Team had submitted applications seeking financial support with increasing the National Capital Value (NCV) of Oldham. The previous successful submissions were:-

West Street	£441,000
Rock Street	£700,000
Market Street	£600,000
Curzon Street	£250,000
Sub Total	<u>£1,991,000</u>
Snipe Gardens	<u>£600,000</u>
Total	<u>£2,591,000</u>

All initiatives were to be delivered by the end of March 2025 and were works supplemented and match funded by the Greater Manchester Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: 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 have significant implications for delivery on the project budgets and, therefore, the achievement of regeneration ambitions and objectives.

Option 2: To formally accept the additional UUGRF award allocation for £600,000 and enter the FCA as set out in this report.

Preferred Option - Option 2 is the preferred option to help ensure delivery of the projects in the agreed timescales and

budgets and, therefore, achieve the regeneration ambitions and objectives.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the acceptance of the £600,000 UUGRF grant against the increased National Capital Value criteria specified by Ofwat in collaboration with United Utilities Plc.
2. That the Cabinet approves the Snipe Gardens – allocation £600,000 – Increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, increase amenity space i.e. dwell space, pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase soft landscaping infrastructure.
3. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) or their nominated representative to agree the terms of the Legal Agreement in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Interim Borough Solicitor and approve appointments of professional teams and contract award in respect of the agreed budgets.
4. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Interim Borough Solicitor, or their 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.
5. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Environment, or their nominated representative, to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2024/2025.
6. That the Cabinet notes that as accountable body for UUGRF, 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.
7. That the Cabinet note and endorse that the internal governance and administration for the UUGRF 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 Environment or their nominated representative.

8

CONTINUATION OF THE HAF PROGRAMME

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Communities that sought acceptance of a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme grant award from the Department for Education (DfE). Also, the report sought to approve the implementation of the HAF programme in Oldham for 2025/26, including the proposed onward payment of the grant to providers and the extension of the dedicated internal delivery team via fixed term secondments, covering the 1 year confirmed extension to the programme for 2025/26 (with an option to extend the

programme further for up to three years should the DfE confirm additional funding).

The Department for Education (DfE) had made funds available to every local authority in England under the HAF programme to coordinate free holiday club/activity provision, including healthy food and enriching activities, for children receiving benefits-related free school meals for the Easter, Summer, and Christmas holidays from April 2021 to the end of March 2025.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Acceptance of the HAF Grant:

Option 1: Accept the HAF Grant from the DfE, enter into a grant agreement with the DfE subject to a legal review of the agreement by Legal Services, and allocate the grant by awarding and entering into grant agreement with successful local providers, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the HAF grant and any additional terms and conditions approved by Legal Services.

Option 2: Do not accept the HAF Grant. This is not recommended because the Council would lose the funding, which it has established benefits the community.

Payment terms for delivery providers:

Option 1: To pay all providers in advance of delivering their holiday activities and food provision. This would allow adequate funding for activities to be delivered by small providers with limited reserves. This option presents a level of risk to the council and there is potential for needing to claw money back if they fail to deliver in full.

Option 2: To have a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider.

- 50% of total grant paid in advance.
- Up to 50% of remain grant total paid based on paying only for placed filled and taken up.

This option allows us to balance the need of small providers with the risk presented to the council. It also ensures that the grant is being spent on direct delivery and reduces the risk of paying for unattended places. It should also be noted that many of these providers are known to the council.

Option 3: To pay all providers on completion of delivering their Holiday Activities and Food provision. This option provides maximum security to the council but will exclude many providers from taking up the HAF grant and will ultimately limit the provision we are able to make available for our children and young people.

Dedicated HAF programme team:

Option 1: To not have a dedicated team for the management and delivery of the HAF programme and to bring the current secondment to an end. This option would mean we are not in compliance with the DfE guidance for the programme and would not have sufficient staffing resource for the onward delivery of the programme in Oldham. Option 2: To continue the secondment arrangements in place for one HAF manager and 1 HAF coordinator to lead delivery of the programme for the

duration of the programme. This option allows us to ensure the effective management and delivery of the programme.

Preferred Options:

Acceptance of the HAF Grant:

Option 1: To accept the HAF Grant from the DfE and to enter into grant agreements with successful providers delivering the HAF programme from time to time.

Payment Terms for Delivery Partners

Option 2: To have a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider.

- 50% of total grant paid in advance.
- Up to 50% of remain grant total paid based on paying only for placed filled and taken up.

Dedicated HAF programme team:

Option 2: – To continue the secondment arrangements in place for 1 HAF manager and 1 HAF coordinator to lead delivery of the programme for the duration of the programme. This option allows us to ensure the effective management and delivery of the programme.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves acceptance of the DfE grant funding for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2025/2026 and for up to a further 3 years if the DfE confirm a longer continuation of the national HAF programme and for the Council to enter into a grant agreement with the DfE subject to a legal review of the grant agreement.
2. That the Cabinet approves the award of grants by the Council and for a grant agreement to be entered into on terms approved by Legal Services with those providers who successfully apply to the Council for funding to deliver the HAF programme locally and approval for an alteration to the onward allocation of the grant to local providers, specifically a change to create a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider with 50% of total grant made in advance and up to 50% paid based on places filled and taken up.
3. That the Cabinet approves the extension to the secondment arrangements in place for the HAF programme manager for 2025/6 and for up to 3 years if DfE confirm a longer continuation of the national HAF programme.

FAMILY HUBS AND START FOR LIFE PROGRAMME

The Cabinet considered a report of the director of Education, Skills and Early Years that was seeking approval to receive associated funding from the Department for Education (DfE) and Department of Health and Social Care (DH&SC) to deliver Year 4 of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme.

Approval was also sought to delegate authority to agree all spending decisions related to the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and noting the role of the Family Hub Board.

On 20th December 2024, Oldham Council had received notification of its provisional funding allocation of £1,381.400 for the 2025/26 fiscal year to continue delivery of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme. Payment of the 2025/6 funding allocations was subject to: firstly, meeting the current programme expectations up to March 2025; and secondly to signing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise the Council's agreement to the programme's expectations for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: To approve the recommendations set out in the report; to approve the receipt of Family Hubs and Start for Life funding for the 2025/26 financial year. This would enable the continued delivery of the programme which provides more integrated and accessible services to parents and carers. This is crucial to the delivery of Oldham's early intervention and prevention offer, ultimately contributing to a reduction in inequalities in health and education outcomes for babies, children and families. This Option facilitates the approval that authority to make all spending decisions relating to Family Hubs and the Start for Life Programme (including key decisions) be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years and the Director of Public Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. This Option enables authority to be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years and the Director of Public Health to award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process and that authority be delegated to the Interim Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities. The services are fully funded through the Department for Education grant. This option poses no financial risk to Oldham Borough Council.

Option 2: To do nothing. This would result in the loss of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme funding. This would pose a significant reputational risk to Oldham Council as it will no longer be able to deliver its Family Hub and Start for Life programme to families. Without funding, these crucial and highly valued early family support services to families will end on the 31st March 2025. This could potentially lead to an escalation of need in families and referrals to specialist and more costly services.

Preferred Option - Option 1 is the preferred option.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted, and that approval is given to accept the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme funding from Government.
2. That the Cabinet approves authority to make all spending decisions relating to Family Hubs and the Start for Life

Programme (including key decisions) be delegated to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

3. That authority be delegated to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health to award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process and authority be delegated to the Interim Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities.

10

ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT TO HOUSING NEEDS

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Adult Social Care/DASS that was looking to extend the contract term of each of the three contracts referenced in the submitted report, in accordance with the terms and conditions of each contract for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 following the transfer.

The report also sought to transfer the budget that currently resided in the Adult Social Care cost centres and the management of the contracts to the Housing Needs Team.

The Cabinet was advised that the Council was party to three separate contracts for the delivery of Accommodation Based Services. The initial term of each contract was due to expire on 31st March 2025, but there was provision within each contract to extend the initial term for up to two years. The proposed one-year extension would enable a wider review of the commissioned services to take place across Housing Needs.

Historically, the services had sat within the Council's Adult Social Care services, however this was no longer considered to be appropriate, as the scope and focus of the commissioned services and the needs of the individuals had altered. It was therefore recommended that the budget and contract management arrangements of the services be transferred to Housing Needs.

Options/Alternatives considered:

The options and alternatives were detailed in the confidential report at Part B (agenda item 13).

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 13.

11

REDUCED PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING INVESTMENT TO THE ALL-AGE EARLY INTERVENTION CONTRACT

The Cabinet considered a jointly compiled report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services and the Director of Public Health, that was seeking approval of the implementation of the revised contract value for the All Age Early Intervention service (AAIE) from 1st April 2025, by means of a deed of variation to the

existing contract. This reduction had previously been approved by Cabinet on 18th November 2024.

The current agreement had an initial contract period of five years from 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2025, with the option to extend for up to two years. The report was also seeking approval to exercise the option to extend, up until 31st December 2027.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 – to implement the previously approved revised budget from 1st April 2025 for the AAEI service through the issuing of a deed of variation and to exercise the option to extend up until 31st December 2027, as outlined in the original tender and award.

Option 2 – that the decision to implement a revised budget is not implemented; meaning approved savings will not be realised and thereby increasing budgetary pressures on the Council.
Preferred Option - Option 1.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 14.

12

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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 two 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.

13

ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT TO HOUSING NEEDS

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 10: 'Accommodation Based Services Including the Transfer of Service Management to Housing Needs.'

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves a one-year extension to the initial contract term in respect of those contracts referenced in this report, each of which relates to the delivery of Accommodation Based Services, noting that this is within the delegated authority of the Director of Adult Social Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Adult Health and Social Care Portfolio.
2. That the Cabinet approves the transfer of the budget for the 3 affected contracts and the in-scope services from Adult Social Care to Housing Needs from 1st April 2025.
3. That the Cabinet notes that contract management in respect of the three in scope contracts and oversight of these commissioned services will transfer to Housing Needs from Adult Social Care from 1st April 2025.

**REDUCED PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING INVESTMENT TO
THE ALL-AGE EARLY INTERVENTION CONTRACT**

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 11: 'Reduced Public Health Funding Investment to the All-Age Early Intervention Contract.'

**Resolved:**

1. That the Cabinet approves the implementation of the revised contract value of £984,520.43 for AA EI from 1st April 2025 by means of a deed of variation to the existing contract.
2. That the Cabinet approves the implementation of the option to extend up until 31st December 2027, as outlined in the original tender and award.
3. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Interim Borough Solicitor, or their nominated representative, to carry out all necessary legal formalities.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.18pm

Leader's Report on Urgent Decisions taken June 2024 – March 2025

Decision By	Title	Reason for Urgency	Decision taken
Cabinet 7 th April 2025	Household Support Fund 7 – Utilisation of Grant Allocation	Cllr McLaren Chair of Governance Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board agreed to the 28 days' notice for a key decision to be made, being waived allowing an urgent decision to be made and to exempt the report from the call-in process, under Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution. The reason for urgency was to ensure the full grant funding was spent in accordance with the grant funding criteria from the DWP within the limited time allocated.	Not yet taken
Cabinet 3 rd March 2025 (Minute 7 refers)	United Utilities Green Recovery Fund – additional Funding – Grant Acceptance	Cllr Junaid Hussain Chair of Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board agreed to exempt the report from the call-in process, under Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution. The reason for urgency was to ensure delivery of the projects in the agreed timescales and budgets and, therefore, achieve the regeneration ambitions and objectives.	AGREED
Cabinet 3 rd March 2025 (Minute 6 refers)	Local Development scheme	Cllr Junaid Hussain Chair of Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board agreed to exempt the report from the call-in process, under Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution. The reason for urgency was to allow for the publication of the scheme before the statutory deadline.	AGREED
Shareholder Committee 5 th December 2024 (Minute 5 refers)	MioCare Annual Report	Cllr Moores Chair of Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board agreed to the 28 days' notice for a key decision to be made, being waived allowing an urgent decision to be made and to exempt the report from the call-in process, under Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution. The reason for the urgency was to allow the Shareholder Committee to consider the financial position of the organisation.	AGREED
Shareholder Committee 3 rd October 2024 (Minute 6 refers)	Northern Roots	Cllr McLaren Chair of Governance Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board agreed to the 28 days' notice for a key decision to be made, being waived allowing an urgent decision to be made and to exempt the report from the call-in process, under Rules 13 and 14 of the Constitution. The reason for the urgency was to allow the Shareholder Committee to consider the financial position of the organisation.	AGREED

**NOTICE OF DECISIONS AGREED AT THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY
HELD ON FRIDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER, 2024**

PRESENT:

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

GM Transport Commissioner	Vernon Everitt
GMFRS	CFO Dave Russel
GMP	Supt. Gareth Parkin

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Paul Marshall
Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Kuiama Thompson
Salford	Tom Stannard

Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Harry Catherall
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Steve Warrener
TfGM	Peter Boulton
GMCA	Mark Atherton
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

1. Apologies

That apologies be received from Steve Rumbelow (Rochdale), Councillor Nadim Muslim (Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee), Dame Sarah Storey (GM Active Travel Commissioner) & Warren Escadale (Chair of GM VCSFE Leadership Group).

2. Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

That an update on the announcement of £10 million of support from government in the form of an inactivity trailblazer, and how this in turn will support the region's Live Well plan be received.

3. Declarations of Interest

That it be noted that Deputy Mayor Kate Green declared an interest in Item 15 (GM Investment Zone) in respect to her role as a Governor of Manchester Metropolitan University

4. Minutes of the GMCA Meeting Held on 25th October 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 25^h October 2024 be approved.

5. GMCA Resources Committee Minutes – 25 October 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA Resources Committee held on 25 October 2024 be approved including:

- (a) That the extension of delegations to the Group Chief Executive and associated changes to the terms of reference of the Resources Committee to be included within the GMCA Constitution regarding staffing matters to align with common practice in local government be approved.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the GMCA Monitoring Officer to update the GMCA Constitution to reflect the changes.

6. GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes – 23 October 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 October 2024 be noted.

7. GMCA Bee Network Committee Minutes – 24 October 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 24 October 2024 be noted.

8. GMCA Audit Committee Minutes – 22 October 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 22 October 2024 be noted.

9. GM Appointments

- 1. That the appointment of a GMCA Member to the GMCA Standards Committee and a GMCA Member to the Growth Company Board be deferred to the December 2024 meeting of the GMCA.
- 2. That the appointment of Councillor Yvonne Klieve to replace Councillor Paula Wakefield (Wigan) as a substitute member of the GM Police, Fire & Crime Panel be noted.

10. Bee Network Update

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That it be noted that the timelines for GM Rail Integration into the Bee Network will be confirmed in the new year.

11. Vision Zero for Greater Manchester (Key Decision)

1. That the GMCA record its thanks to the family of Frankie Jules-Hough for their bravery and support for the Vision Zero Strategy.
2. That condolences be expressed to the family of Marcus Simmons-Allen.
3. That the contents of the Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan be noted.
4. That the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan and the formal adoption of a Vision Zero ambition for GM, where no one will suffer death or life changing injuries on our roads, be approved.
5. That the launch of the £1m Vision Zero Innovation Fund earlier in November be noted.
6. That the GMCA record its thanks to Dame Sarah Storey for her support in driving forward the implementation of the Vision Zero Strategy and the School Streets initiative.
7. That it be noted that the development of a code of practice to address safety issues arising as a result of food delivery cyclists will be progressed in the new year.
8. That the GMCA record its thanks be to all first responders at road traffic accidents for their admirable dedication to what was an extremely emotionally demanding job.
9. That the importance of highways priorities within phase 2 of the Bee Network and wider active travel ambitions be noted.

12. Implementation of the GM VCFSE Accord

1. That the progress update and the next steps, as outlined at section 4, of the report submitted, be noted and that a further report be submitted to the GMCA for consideration early in 2025.
2. That an invitation should be extended to the Chair of the GM VCFSE Leadership Group to attend future meetings of the Combined Authority.

13. Five Year Environment Plan 2025-2030 (Key Decision)

1. That the Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan, as contained within Annex 01, of the report submitted, be approved.
2. That the development process and next steps for its' professional design, publication and launch at the Green Summit on 9th December be noted.
3. That the Greater Manchester Climate Risk Assessment, as a technical appendix to the Plan (Annex 02), be noted.
4. That it be noted that the co-benefits sustainability assessment of the Plan was positive.
5. That the comments highlighted from the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee consideration of the Plan be noted.
6. That the ongoing position in relation to the Pilsworth South Landfill be noted.
7. That the need to revisit the Waste & Minerals plan be noted and that this will be considered to AGMA in the new year.

14. GM Children & Young People Programme Update

1. That the updates on the Children and Young People's Programme be noted.

2. That the proposal to extend the existing travel offer for care-experienced young people up to age 25 be endorsed, subject to funding being identified and approved as part of the Transport Budget setting process.
3. That it be noted that an update on early years SEND education would be submitted to the GMCA in the new year.
4. That the update received on Children's Services at Tameside be noted, with thanks expressed to partners across the region for their recent support.
5. That the Mayor of Greater Manchester approved the proposal to extend the existing travel offer for care-experienced young people up to age 25, subject to funding being identified and approved as part of the Transport Budget setting.

15. Greater Manchester Investment Zone (Key Decision)

1. That the proposed approach be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Treasurer and the Economy Portfolio Chief Executive and Leader, to negotiate with Government and agree project allocations in each financial year to 2028/29. An annual programme update will then be provided to the GMCA setting out project progress, risks, and the impact of the funded interventions.

16. Greater Manchester One Network Connectivity Partner Procurement (Key Decision)

1. That approval be given to the GMCA entering into the contract with Telent for GM One Network Connectivity Managed Services Partner

services valued at up to £3m to enable services that provide connectivity to more sites, creating an agreement that can be drawn on for the benefit of partners in GM One Network (at their cost); noting that orders under the contract will be subject to the governance set out in the report and decisions in accordance with the Constitution.

17. GMCA Revenue Update Quarter 2 2024/25

1. That the forecast position at 30th September 2024 be noted.
2. That an increase to the Mayoral budget of £80k funded from Mayoral reserves towards spend on mayoral priorities (para 3.2) be approved.

18. GMCA Capital Update Quarter 2 2024/25

1. That the current 2024/25 forecast of £581.8m compared to the previous forecast of £636.3m be noted.
2. That the addition of £0.3m National Highways funding to the 2024/25 capital programme to design and deliver a further 23 bus stop upgrades in Oldham, Tameside and Manchester, as outlined in section 2.7.5, as part of the Bus Infrastructure programme be approved.

19. Greater Manchester Investment Framework, Conditional Project Approval (Key Decision)

1. That an equity investment of up to £300,000 to Shopblocks Limited be approved.
2. That an equity investment of £250,000 to Molymem Limited be approved.
3. That an equity investment of £150,000 to Wull Technologies Limited be approved.
4. That the update on the loan to Sustainable Ventures (North) Limited be noted.

5. That authority be delegated to the Group Treasurer in consultation with the Group Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

20. Exclusion of the Press and Public

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART B

21. Greater Manchester Investment Framework Recommendations

That the report be noted.

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (Item 19 above refers).

A link to the full agenda and papers can be found here: [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

This decision notice was issued 02 December 2024 on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Broadhurst House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU. The deadline for call in of the attached decisions is 4.00pm on 09 December 2024.

Call-In Process

In accordance with the scrutiny procedure rules, these decisions would come into effect five days after the publication of this notice unless before that time any three members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to call-in a decision.

Members must give notice in writing to the Chief Executive that they wish to call-in a decision, stating their reason(s) why the decision should be scrutinised. The period between the publication of this decision notice and the time a decision may be implemented is the 'call-in' period.

Decisions which have already been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and where the GMCA's decision agrees with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may not be called in.

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**NOTICE OF DECISIONS AGREED AT THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY
HELD ON FRIDAY, 13TH DECEMBER, 2024**

PRESENT:

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Joanna Midgley
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Daalat Ali
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Andrew McLaren
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor Nadim Muslim
Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS	Dave Russel

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Paul Marshall
Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
Salford	Tom Stannard
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Julian Jackson

Trafford
Wigan
TfGM
TfGM
GMCA
GMCA

Sara Todd
Alison McKenzie-Folan
Martin Lax
Steve Warrener
Sylvia Welsh
Lee Teasdale

1. Apologies

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Bev Craig (Manchester), Councillor Neil Emmott (Rochdale), Councillor Eleanor Wills (Tameside), Councillor David Molyneux (Wigan) & Harry Catherall (Tameside).

2. Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

1. That the update on the CSE Assurance Review and the GMP Child Protection Inspection report be received.
2. That it be noted that the GMCA will be writing to the government to push for an extension into February 2025 on the consultation around reforms to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
3. That the update from the Mayor on achievements during 2024 and key aims heading into 2025 be received.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes of the GMCA Meeting Held on 29 November 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 29 November 2024 be approved.

5. GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes – 27 November 2024

1. That the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 November 2024 be noted.
2. That the update received from Cllr Nadim Muslim on the current work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted.

6. GMCA Bee Network Committee Minutes – 28 November 2024

That the minutes of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 28 November 2024 be noted.

7. GM Appointments

1. That Cllr Eleanor Wills be appointed as a GMCA Member to the GMCA Standards Committee.
2. That Cllr Eleanor Wills be appointed as a GMCA Member to the Growth Company Board.
3. That Cllr David Sweeton (Lab) (Tameside) and Cllr Brenda Warrington (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed as members and Cllr Charlotte Martin (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed as a substitute member to the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
4. That Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed as a member of the GM Waste & Recycling Committee.
5. That Cllr Leanne Feeley (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed as a member and Cllr Hugh Roderick (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed as a substitute member on the GM Culture & Social Impact Fund Committee.
6. That Cllr Andrew McClaren (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed to the GM Work & Skills Forum.
7. That Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) be appointed to the Green City Region Board.
8. That the appointment of Cllr Stephen Homer (Lab) (Tameside) as a member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen (Lab) (Tameside) as a substitute member on the Bee Network Committee be noted.
9. That the appointment of Cllr Eleanor Wills (Lab) (Tameside) as a member and Cllr Tafheen Sharif (Lab) (Tameside) as the substitute member of the GM Integrated Care Partnership Board be noted.
10. That the appointment of Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) as the member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen as the substitute member on the GM Clean Air Charging Authorities Committee be noted.
11. That the appointment of Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) as the member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen as the substitute member on the Air Quality Administration Committee be noted.

8. Greater Manchester's Approach to Building Safety

1. That it be noted that the governance structure had been established to ensure the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) Phase 2 report were being implemented effectively within the city-region.
2. That the contents of GM Remediation Acceleration Plan, set out in appendix A of the report, be noted.
3. That further update reports on this work will be submitted to the GMCA in the new year.

9. Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity - A Proposal for a Stronger Education System as Part of Greater Manchester's Strategy - to Enable Young People to Participate & Thrive across Greater Manchester

1. That it be agreed that there should be a greater focus on education in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
2. That it be agreed that the areas outlined in the report were the priorities for this work.
3. That it be agreed that work on promoting inclusive mainstream schools, improving attendance, on making GM the best place to teach and on post 16 sufficiency should be taken forward immediately, noting that these areas do not require agreement from central government.
4. That it be agreed that officers should further develop this proposal, working with the education sector and partners alongside senior officers from LAs. This will include developing proposals which can be taken forward at GM level now and proposing solutions which require national government action.
5. That the GMCA record its thanks to Tim Bowman, Gemma Marsh and the Education, Work & Skills Team at GMCA for all their work on bringing this

together.

6. That concerns raised about exclusions and pupil referral units be noted, and that work will take place to establish a best way in which all young people in the region can benefit from the best possible education system.
7. That it be noted that a renewed dedication to improving school readiness was required in the new year.
8. That consideration would be given to establishing a 'bank of teachers' to reduce pressures on schools and dependencies upon agencies in the new year.

10. Delivering the Bee Network Update - Performance

1. That the update received on the performance of Greater Manchester's Transport Network and preparation for completion of bus franchising be noted.
2. That the GMCA will call for the government to act upon the increasingly poor performance seen across the Greater Manchester and wider national rail network.

11. TfGM Power Purchase

1. That it be noted that TfGM were progressing work on the procurement of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) under a programme to address current and future energy demand.
2. That it be noted that the TfGM PPA will function as a pathfinder for future PPAs to encompass the wider GMCA Group and potentially other GM partners.
3. That the proposed procurement approach for the TfGM Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) project be noted.
4. That it be noted that a further report will be submitted to the GMCA in

Summer 2025, prior to entering into a PPA.

5. That the GMCA record its thanks to Mark Atherton and the GMCA Environment Directorate for the successful delivery of the 2024 GM Green Summit.

12. Brownfield Land New Allocations (Key Decision)

1. That the £10.8m allocations to projects identified at Appendix 1, of the report, be approved, subject to further due diligence
2. That the variations to projects detailed in Appendix 2, of the report, be approved.

13. Government Consultation – Remote Meeting Attendance and Proxy Voting

1. That the experience of the Covid 19 Pandemic whereby all GMCA meetings were held remotely in considering the response to the Government Consultation be noted.
2. That it be agreed that meetings of the GMCA should normally be held in person but the right to determine whether its meetings or meetings of its various committees were held in person or remotely should rest with the GMCA in order to consider local circumstances and retain flexibility and for this view to be fed back into the consultation.
3. That the Consultation questions and draft responses, based on feedback from Members, as set out in appendix 1 of the report, be noted and that authority be delegated to the Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to finalise the submission, in consultation with the Mayor.

14. Greater Manchester Investment Framework Fund – Conditional Project Approval (Key Decision)

1. That a loan facility of up to £9,500,000 to North West Evergreen Limited Partnership be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Group Treasurer in consultation with the Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART B

16. Greater Manchester Investment Framework – Conditional Project Approval

That the report be noted.

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (Item 14 above refers).

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 31TH JANUARY 2025 AT STOCKPORT TOWN
HALL**

PRESENT

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor Nadim Muslim
GM Active Travel Commissioner	Dame Sarah Storey

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Paul Marshall
Oldham	Shelley Kipling

Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
Salford	Melissa Caslake
Stockport	Paul Richards
Tameside	Harry Catherall
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Danny Vaughan
TfGM	Fran Wilkinson
GMCA	Nicola Ward
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

GMCA 01/25 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Cllr David Molyneux (Wigan), Tom Stannard (Manchester) & Michael Cullen (Stockport).

GMCA 02/24 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened the meeting by noting the welcome announcement that a new North Manchester General Hospital would be built during phase 1 of the new hospital building programme. The importance of this hospital for the north of the city region could not be underestimated. The existing estate was of Victorian origin and the residents of North Manchester deserved a much improved fit for purpose 21st century world class hospital. It was agreed that this was only a first step and that further investment was needed to modernise other hospitals in the region such as Wythenshawe and Stepping Hill.

There had also been a welcome announcement that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had now given in-principle support for the Old Trafford Regeneration Scheme as part of the pipeline of investment being brought forward. This would bring a wide array of benefits for the region, not least of which would be the removal of freight from the

Castlefield corridor, as well as the sports, leisure and entertainment development possibilities.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester stated that the Stockport MDC had provided a good model for development in the region, with Councillor Hunter stating that Stockport would be more than happy to provide learning and advice from their development work.

Some caution was expressed about the investment of public money towards schemes that could be funded by private investment. The Mayor of Greater Manchester stated that he fully understood these concerns and provided assurance that there would be maximum transparency and clarity around the use of all public monies on the regeneration scheme.

Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM, provided an update on the announcement of £630m of integrated settlement monies for the region as part of the devolution trailblazer. Reports would be brought back to the GMCA on the next phase and the flexibilities around the funding.

A first cross-Whitehall task and finish group had been held on 30th January. This group sought to see how the devolution journey could go even deeper and further. Updates from the group would be reported back to the GMCA as appropriate.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the announcement made by the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care of Phase 1 of a new North Manchester General Hospital, and the benefits that this will bring to residents of the area be welcomed.
2. That the Chancellor of the Exchequer's in-principle support for the Old Trafford regeneration scheme, and the multiple benefits for the whole region that would arise from this be noted.
3. That the update on the announcement of £630m integrated settlement monies for Greater Manchester be received and welcomed.

4. That updates from the cross-Whitehall trailblazer task and finish group will be reported back to the GMCA as appropriate.

GMCA 03/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were none.

**GMCA 04/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER
2024**

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 13 December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**GMCA 05/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2024**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 11 December 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 06/25 GMCA BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE MINUTES – 12
DECEMBER 2024**

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 12 December 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 07/25 GMCA STANDARDS COMMITTEE – MINUTES OF THE
MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2024**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Standards Committee held on 13 December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**GMCA 08/25 GMCA WASTE & RECYCLING COMMITTEE – MINUTES OF
THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee held on 22 January 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 09/25 GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE – MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 22 January 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 10/25 PROPOSED COMBINED AUTHORITIES (ADULT EDUCATION
FUNCTIONS) ORDER 2025**

Gillian Duckworth, GMCA Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer, presented a report seeking consent to the making of a proposed Order by the Secretary of State to grant a further funding power in relation to Adult Education to the GMCA.

The Department for Education (DfE) transferred statutory adult education functions to combined authorities via statutory instrument so they could decide, at a local level, which qualifications they wished to fund to support skills development in their areas. The DfE were now proposing to make a new Order to amend existing delegated functions to add a further education funding power.

RESOLVED /-

1. That consent be given to the making of the proposed Order Combined Authorities (Adult Education Functions) (Amendment) Order 2025.

GMCA 11/25 STRENGTHENING THE STANDARDS AND CONDUCT FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND – MHCLG OPEN CONSULTATION

Gillian Duckworth, GMCA Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer, presented a report informing of the current open consultation being undertaken by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) addressing possible changes to the ethical framework for elected members and to seek agreement as to whether to provide a formal response on behalf of the GMCA and if so, to agree the content of that response.

It was noted that each authority could additionally make their own individual submissions, and it was advised that any additional submissions for the GMCA led response could be sent to the Group Monitoring Officer ahead of the final submission date.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the submission of a consultation response on the government consultation entitled “Consultation: Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England”, to MHCLG be agreed.
2. That the contents of the consultation response on behalf of the GMCA be agreed.
3. That any additional submissions for the GMCA led response can be sent to the Group Monitoring Officer ahead of the final submission date.

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report setting out the proposals for the Mayoral General Budget and precept for 2025-26 for consideration by the members of the GMCA. The proposals being made included the budget for the Fire Service which had previously fallen to the GM Fire and Rescue Authority to determine.

The Mayor noted the disappointing settlement figure received for the Fire Service and advised that he and Deputy Mayor Kate Green would make the argument to government that there would need to be consideration around vital funding for fire services under increasing demands as part of the spending review.

Councillor Nadim Muslim, Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee, was invited to feedback on the Committee's comments following their consideration of the budget and precept proposals. The Committee had highlighted their concerns that the report had arrived late reducing their ability to fully scrutinise the report, and sought a minimum time frame for the receipt of the report in future. Other matters highlighted by the Committee included the importance of residents being able to see the improvements in their bus services, that further scrutiny of A Bed Every Night would be welcomed given increasing demands, and that overall that the Committee would like to see an evident culture of efficiency, highlighting where savings and cost minimisation had been sought across the GMCA in each future budget report. The Mayor of Greater Manchester expressed apologies for the lateness of the paper and committed to establishing a minimum time for budget scrutiny papers in future.

Discussion took place regarding the lack of system warnings ahead of the flooding that took place in the region on New Year's Day. A review group had now been established under the leadership of CFO Dave Russel to see how the system could collectively learn lessons from the incident, with a particular focus on data sharing and flood awareness.

Members highlighted the increasing frequency of flooding incidents in South Manchester related to the River Mersey. Events that had previously been considered once in a 100 years, had now happened 3 to 4 times in a 5 year period. Work would

need to take place with the Environment Agency and United Utilities to look at flood mitigation in much greater detail, with different kinds of modelling to those seen before. Consideration of this would be a key part of ongoing work on the Integrated Water Management Plan. The Mayor advised that similar work was also taking place following flooding incidents at Platt Bridge.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester advised those present that he had been in discussion with Sir John Cunliffe who was leading a review of the regulation of the water industry for the government. The plan was to hold a major stakeholder session in Manchester, and details around this would be circulated to GMCA members.

RESOLVED /-

1. That it be noted that the Mayor proposed to increase the Mayoral General Precept by £16 to £128.95 (for a Band D property), comprising of:
 - Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services - precept of £86.20 **(£5 increase)**;
 - Other Mayoral General functions - precept of £42.75 **(£11 increase)**.
2. That the following be noted:
 - i) the overall budget proposed for the Fire and Rescue Service,
 - ii) the use of the reserves to support the revenue and capital budgets, and the assessment by the Treasurer that the reserves as at March 2026 are adequate,
 - iii) the proposed Fire Service capital programme and proposals for funding,
 - iv) the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service covered by the Mayoral precept
3. That the detailed budget proposals for other Mayoral functions be noted.
4. That the use of reserves as set out in Paragraph 3.3 of the report be noted.
5. That consideration be given to the submission of any written comments to the Mayor in line with the legal process and timetable described in this report;

6. That it be noted that at its meeting on 7 February 2025 there will be an updated budget submitted, consistent with the precept proposals, to reflect final tax base and collection fund calculations and the final baseline funding settlement.
7. That the concerns raised about the disappointing fire budget settlement figure and the need for further Fire & Rescue Service funding solutions appropriate to the increasing scale of demand be noted.
8. That the comments raised through the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.
9. That it be noted that a review group has been instigated on data sharing amongst partners following the new year's days flooding incidents.
10. That as part of the Integrated Water Management Plan, a review take place of the frequent flooding incidents along the River Mersey in the south of the region.
11. That details will be circulated ahead of the launch of the Sir John Cunliffe led review of the regulation of the water industry with a stakeholder event in Manchester.

GMCA 13/25 ACTIVE TRAVEL ANNUAL UPDATE

Dame Sarah Storey, Active Travel Commissioner, presented a report seeking the approval of the the 2024 Annual Active Travel Report and agreement around the Active Travel Priorities for 2025.

Thanks were expressed at all involved in the successes to date and particular areas of focus for the next year were highlighted. These included a renewed focus on funding the schemes that enabled greater numbers of people to do their business actively, addressing the quality of pavements for walking, developing a strategic cycle network properly linking up centres and residential areas, delivering 100 school streets by

2028, and publishing an expansion plan for cycle hire, including incorporating the payments into the wider Bee Network multi-modal ticketing.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the Greater Manchester Annual Active Travel Report be approved.
2. That the Commissioner's Mission Priorities as laid out in the report and in the Greater Manchester Annual Active Travel Report be endorsed.

GMCA 14/25 GM CLEAN AIR PLAN – JANUARY 2025 UPDATE

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for GM Clean Air, presented a report that provided an update on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan following the government's acceptance that the assessment that an investment-led, non-charging Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan would achieve compliance with nitrogen dioxide levels on the local road network in the shortest possible time and Greater Manchester would not need to implement a charging Clean Air Zone (CAZ).

In terms of the taxi trade. Whilst not the full amount sought, some funding had been secured for cleaner taxis. Officers had been tasked with looking more comprehensively at the taxi trade on this issue, looking at ways in which they could be further support to transition to electric vehicles and be further attracted to registering their vehicles with locally licensed vehicles. It was made clear that support would only be provided to locally licensed taxis.

Concerns were raised around the planned alternative usage of existing signage and ANPR cameras. Given the rationale for the signage no longer existed, did this signage not now simply add to 'street clutter' and was removal not the best option? On ANPR cameras, was there a risk that if they were taken over by GMP that this would create issues around civil liberties, and any alternative usage needed to be weighed carefully in the balance with such issues.

It was advised that GMP had already been in an agreed position to make use of the cameras for investigative purposes and the detection of crime and had already assisted in the solving of some serious crimes. This would allow a continued usage by

them rather than any full-scale change of use – there would of course be a full consultation around this, GMP would be asked to fully evidence their case, and the GM Ethics Committee would fully consider all issues around civil liberty concerns. In terms of signage, the signs were in strategic locations, and it was considered that they could be used by TfGM to promote clear air initiatives such as local park and ride schemes for example, but again a full consultation process would take place.

RESOLVED /-

1. That it be noted that the government confirmed it has accepted the assessment that an investment-led, non-charging Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan will achieve compliance with nitrogen dioxide levels on the local road network in the shortest possible time and by 2026 and Greater Manchester will not need to implement a charging Clean Air Zone (CAZ).
2. That it be noted that the investment-led package of £86m confirmed by government consists of:
 - £51.1m towards bus investment, including 40 zero emission buses, 77 Euro VI standard buses and charging infrastructure;
 - £5m for local traffic management measures;
 - £8 million to support moving Greater Manchester's taxi fleet to cleaner vehicles;
 - Up to £21.9m for administration, delivery, monitoring and other associated costs.
3. That it be noted that a new direction from the government is expected to be issued to the Greater Manchester authorities imminently which will allow TfGM to understand the detailed breakdown of the funding awarded for Development, Administration, Risk & Contingency.
4. That it be noted that proposals on funding to support Greater Manchester's taxi fleet move to cleaner vehicles, including timelines for next steps, such as fund opening, will be presented at a future meeting.

5. That it be noted that TfGM and the GM Authorities are working together to assess the potential alternative use of signage, timelines for next steps will be presented at a future meeting.
6. That it be noted that a public consultation on the use of the cameras for potential law enforcement activity related to the detection of crime is anticipated for the summer of 2025, subject to a review of the financial, technological and legal options available to facilitate a change of use.
7. That it be noted that the GM Air Quality Administration Committee will consider a report at its meeting on 5 February 2025.

GMCA 15/25 GREATER MANCHESTER'S APPROACH TO DELIVERING OUR GROWTH AMBITION

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, presented a report setting out our approach to driving forward ambitious plans for growth in GM over the next 10 years.

GM was gearing up for a new decade of growth and would use its distinctive collaborative approach to deliver on massive ambitions for the city-region – so that all residents could thrive.

The ambitions were backed up by credible plans and a proven track record in delivery. The region would build on the strength of existing public private partnerships in GM to further develop innovative investment models, unlocking pension fund and institutional capital to derisk projects and unlock private investment. To maximise the productivity of the GM economy, it would require bravery, innovation and the taking of risks. This required a long-term view and for the CA and Local Authorities to back and invest in the city region, taking a 'patient capital' approach to investment.

The approach to investment sought to ensure GM remained the best place for the private sector to invest with confidence in the future and with a clear vision driven forward by strong leadership by the public sector.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the preparation of the rewritten GMS and underpinning Delivery Plan for Spring 2025 be endorsed.
2. That endorsement be given to preparing Greater Manchester's Spending Review submissions to Government, setting out our asks for Government to work alongside us in delivery of our collective ambition.
3. That endorsement be given to establishing a Place Advisory Panel, involving national experts, to support the progress of development proposals from our integrated pipeline, ensuring that these support delivery of the outcomes in the GMS and push the boundaries of what has previously been possible.
4. That endorsement be given to establishing partner forums in early 2025 from across the developer, construction and investor community to set out our plans and call the industry to action.
5. That endorsement be given to progressing plans to strengthen our delivery capacity through the development of a GM Delivery Vehicle and GM Academy.
6. That endorsement be given to developing the approach to the GM Investment Pot to maximise what can be delivered through public sector support and intervention and maximise the private capital that can be leveraged into Greater Manchester.
7. That endorsement be given to establishing the appropriate programme governance to oversee and direct our overall plans for growth, ensuring accountability and transparency of our approach.

GMCA 16/25 GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE PLAN

Kate Green, Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities presented a report that provided an update on the production of the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) Fire Plan for 2025-29. This plan outlined the strategic priorities and commitments of GMFRS over the next four years. The report provided an overview of

the engagement activities that had already shaped the draft and would continue to shape the final version of the Fire Plan, ensuring it met the needs of the city region's communities and helped to deliver the city-region's wider plans.

RESOLVED -/

1. That the contents of the draft plan found at Appendix A be noted.
2. That the consultation and the presentation slide pack found at Appendix B be shared with interested stakeholders and encouragement be given to them to share their views / feedback.

GMCA 17/25 PUBLIC SWITCHED TELEPHONE NETWORK (PSTN) UPDATE

Councillor Nick Peel, Portfolio Lead for Digital, presented a report providing an update on the risks of the implementation of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) Switchover and their mitigating activities, following incidents and concerns impacting vulnerable residents across the city region.

The significant importance of all districts entering into the Data Sharing Agreements was highlighted, and an offer of support was made to any district that required it ahead of sharing the Agreements.

RESOLVED -/

1. That encouragement be given to GM Local Authorities to sign Data Sharing Agreements with telecom providers (using the agreed LGA national template) to mitigate risks for vulnerable people, including those in receipt of private telecare services; and to review PSTN switchover readiness drawing upon the Guidance published by Government on 18th November 2025.
2. That monitoring take place of incidents of frauds related to the digital switchover to inform and influence the national communications campaign launched next year and understand the scale of the problem.

3. That the GMCA will maintain oversight of the risks associated with the PSTN switchover at least until January 2027 when switchover will be completed.
4. That it be noted that the GMCA can offer assistance wherever it is needed to the local authorities yet to sign the Data Sharing Agreements.

**GMCA 18/25 GM RAIL REFORM & DEVOLUTION – THE VISION AND
DELIVERY PROGRAMME FOR RAIL IN GREATER
MANCHESTER**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, provided an overview of the strategic context for rail reform, the case for change, the vision for GM Rail, and the outline programme of activity and milestones to deliver GM's ambitions for rail as part of the Bee Network.

RESOLVED /-

1. That endorsement be given to the development of a robust, evidence-based GM Rail Vision and programme for the future of rail across Greater Manchester in conjunction with GM Local Authorities.
2. That endorsement be given to the ambition and tranche-based approach to the integration of the 8 priority rail corridors into the Bee Network Rail by 2028.
3. That endorsement be given to the development of an Outline Business Case for Rail Reform, to assess and develop a preferred way forward for meeting the objectives set out in this paper, and identify the legislative and funding reforms, required to deliver GM's growth agenda.
4. That endorsement be given to the proactive engagement with Government in relation to the English Devolution and Rail Reform Bills, with particular regard to finalising the statutory role for the Combined Authority in the specification of services, fares and customer standards.

5. That endorsement be given to the development of further work to unlock the benefits of the Old Trafford Regeneration scheme through the relocation of the freight terminal at Trafford Depot.
6. That endorsement be given to the development of the Spending Review submission, working with Government, to ensure the opportunities set out in this report are prioritised and delivered.
7. That it be noted that the HM Treasury has now signed off the business case for tranche 1 of rail reform.

GMCA 19/25 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report updating on progress in delivering a pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to support the Bee Network: a high-quality, affordable and fully integrated public transport and active travel system which can support sustainable economic growth.

The report included an update on the ongoing work that is taking place between TfGM, GMCA and GM Local Authorities in relation to the potential reprioritisation of CRSTS1 funding, with a particular focus on strengthening the alignment between transport infrastructure and growth in the context of the GM Growth Plan and the opportunities afforded by the inclusion of CRSTS1 in the GM Integrated Settlement. The report also made a number of recommendations to support the continued development and delivery of the transport infrastructure pipeline.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the current position, recent progress and key milestones on the transport infrastructure pipeline be noted.
2. That the emerging proposals for the reprioritisation of CRSTS1 funding as detailed within section 2 be noted.

3. That approval be given to the allocation of CRSTS1 funding to enable a number of time-critical priorities to be advanced, subject to DfT approval, as follows:
 - Bee Network Rail Integration and Accessibility: up to £34m;
 - Acquisition of the existing GM Bus Shelter estate and related activity to develop a renewal programme for the estate: up to £15m;
 - Rochdale: Castleton Phase 2 Active Travel scheme: up to £12.66m; and
 - Capital & revenue switch applied to the revenue budget for Bus Franchising IS and Ticketing System Assets: up to £15.0m.
4. That approval be given to the allocation of CRSTS2 funding (estimated at £80m and awaiting approval from DfT) to fund the Bee Network Rail Integration Programme.

GMCA 20/25 BEE NETWORK FARES & TICKETING PRODUCTS

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report which proposed that new ticketing products be added to the Bee Network fares and ticketing proposition to increase access to public transport through improved affordability.

RESOLVED /-

1. That approval be given to the introduction of a suite of Annual Multi Modal Tickets, from March 2025.
2. That approval be given to the addition of these Annual Multi Modal Tickets to the TfGM scheme with local Credit Unions, from March 2025, to improve access to affordable annual products.
3. That approval be given to the addition of the existing Annual Tram Tickets to the TfGM scheme with local Credit Unions, from March 2025, to improve access to affordable annual products.

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report which presented the findings of the review and assessment of options when the current Metrolink Operations and Maintenance Agreement (MOMA) with Keolis Amey Metrolink Ltd (KAM) expires in July 2027. The report outlined the review undertaken, the options identified, the findings, and provided a recommendation as to how Metrolink should be operated from mid-2027.

RESOLVED /-

1. That endorsement be given to the procurement of a Metrolink franchise agreement with adjusted scope from the current Metrolink Operations and Maintenance Agreement, to commence from July 2027 when the current Agreement expires.
2. That the intention for TfGM to deliver a number of customer experience elements of the current Agreement from mid-2027, to increase TfGM's control and oversight over service delivery and asset management through the new Agreement be noted.
3. That the potential for a unified GM transport operation in the 2030's be noted.
4. That it be noted that, subject to GMCA feedback, procurement of the successor Franchise arrangements will commence.
5. That it be noted that a further report will be brought to GMCA before the award of any contract which is anticipated in the second half of 2026.

City Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, presented a report seeking GMCA approval to delegate authority to the GMCA Treasurer acting in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for housing. The purpose of the delegation was to approve new

projects for funding, urgent variations to existing funding from the Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) and to switch funding sources from other funds to the Brownfield Housing Fund, if required, to manage the year end programme position.

RESOLVED /-

1. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer acting in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for housing to approve new funding and urgent variations to existing funding from BHF, 31st January 2025 to 31st March 2025 to manage the BHF pipeline.
2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer to switch funding sources from other funds to the Brownfield Housing Fund in advance of 31 March 2025.
3. That it be noted that any recommendations that are approved under the delegation will be reported to the meeting of the GMCA in May 2025.

**GMCA 23/25 GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT LOANS
FUND – INVESTMENT APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION**

City Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, presented a report seeking approval to the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund loan detailed in the recommendation below.

RESOLVED /-

1. That approval be given to GM Housing Investment Loans Fund loan detailed in the table below, as detailed further in this and the accompanying Part B report;

Borrower	Scheme	District	Loan
Apsley Street Development Ltd	Apsley Street	Stockport	£5.399m

2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Chief Executive acting in conjunction with the Portfolio Lead for Housing to approve new funding and urgent variations

to existing funding from the GM Housing Investment Loans Fund in the period 8 February 2025 to 27 March 2025.

3. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer acting in conjunction with the GMCA Monitoring Officer to prepare and effect the necessary legal agreements.

GMCA 24/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

Steve Wilson, GMCA Group Treasurer, presented a report seeking the approval of two investments through GMCA' Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Investment Fund, GM Advance.

RESOLVED /-

1. That approval be given for a loan facility of up to £395,000 to Molygran & Co. Ltd.
2. That approval be given for an investment of up to £150,000 to THEIA Guidance Systems Ltd.
3. That approval be given for an update to the Neuwave Technologies Limited investment.
4. That authority be delegated to the Combined Authority Treasurer in consultation with the Combined Authority Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.
5. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TfGM and the GMCA Treasurer, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead for Investment and Resources, to approve projects for funding and agree urgent variations to the terms of funding in the period 8 February 2025 to 27 March 2025.

6. That it be noted that any recommendations that are approved under the delegation will be reported to the next available meeting of the Combined Authority

GMCA 25/25 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

GMCA 26/25 GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT LOANS FUND – INVESTMENT APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 23/25).

RESOLVED /-

That the report be noted.

GMCA 27/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 24/25).

RESOLVED /-

That the report be noted.

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**NOTICE OF DECISIONS AGREED AT THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY
HELD ON FRIDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2025**

PRESENT:

GM Mayor	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
GM Deputy Mayor	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Mike Barker
Rochdale	Stephen Rumbelow
Salford	Melissa Caslake
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Ashley Hughes
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan

Managing Director, TfGM	Steve Warrener
Director, Governance & Scrutiny, GMCA	Julie Connor
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

1. **APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Shelley Kipling (Oldham) & Harry Catherall (Tameside).

2. **CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

1. That Tom Stannard be welcomed to the meeting in his new role as Chief Executive of Manchester City Council.
2. That Melissa Caslake be welcomed to the meeting as the Interim Chief Executive of Salford City Council.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests received

4. **MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2025**

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 31 January 2025 be approved.

5. **MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2025**

That the proceedings of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 29 January 2025 be approved.

6. **MINUTES OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2025**

That the proceedings of the Bee Network Committee meeting held on 30 January 2025 be noted.

7. BUDGET REPORTS

A. GMCA Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/6 Overview

That the contents of the summary report be noted.

B. Mayoral General Budget & Precept Proposals 2025/26

1. That the Mayor's General budget for 2025/26, as set out in the report, together, with the calculation of the precepts and Council Tax rates set out in Appendix 2, be approved.
2. That the Mayoral General Precept to £128.95 (Band D) comprising of £86.20 for functions previously covered by the Fire and Rescue Authority precept and £42.75 for other Mayoral General functions be approved.
3. That the following be approved:
 - i. the overall budget for the Fire and Rescue Service for 2025/26 covered by the Mayoral precept.
 - ii. the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service.
4. That the use of reserves, as set out in section 3 of the report, and the assessment by the Treasurer that the reserves as at March 2026 are adequate be approved.
5. That it be noted that in accordance with legal requirements, the minutes will record the names of those Members voting for or against the Mayor's budget and precept proposals.
6. That the feedback received from the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

7. That the GMCA record its thanks to the Group Treasurer and his team, alongside the financial leads in each individual Local Authority for their considerable work during the budget process.

C. GMCA Transport Revenue Budget 2025/26

1. That the risks and issues which affected the 2025/26 transport budgets, as detailed in the report, be noted.
2. That the GMCA budget relating to transport functions funded through the Levy, as set out in the report, for 2025/26 be approved.
3. That a Transport Levy on the District Councils in 2025/26 of £125.657m, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2023, be approved.
4. That a Statutory Charge of £86.7m to District Councils in 2025/26, as set out in Part 4 of the Transport Order, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2023, be approved.
5. That the proposal to increase fees and charges, as noted in the report at paragraph 4.6.14, be endorsed.
6. That the use of Transport reserves in 2024/25 and 2025/26, as detailed in section 5 of the report, be approved.

D. GMCA Revenue General Budget 2025/26

1. That the budget relating to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority functions, excluding transport and waste in 2025/26, as set out in section 2 of the report, be approved.
2. That approval be given to Local Authority contributions of £7.95 million, as set out in section 5 of the report including the recurrent reduction of £650,000 to be delivered through group efficiencies in 2025/26 ahead of further reductions in future years.

3. That the use of reserves, as set out in section 6 of the report, be approved.
4. That approval be given to the establishment of a two-year fixed term group Chief Transformation Officer at a grade up to SM3 and the establishment of seven fixed-term senior programme director posts, up to grade SM3, to support the delivery of growth location programmes.

E. GM Waste Budget and Resources - Budget and Levy 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2027/28

1. That the forecast outturn for 2024/25 be noted, and a return of £10m of reserves to districts from the forecast in-year underspend be approved.
2. That the proposed 2026/27 Trade Waste rate of £141.94 to allow forward planning by Local Authorities be approved.
3. That the capital programme for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
4. That the budget and levy for 2025/26 of £179.2m (2.8% increase) be approved.
5. That the risk position set out in the Balances Strategy be noted, and approval be given to a further reduction of £20m of reserves to districts in 2025/26.
6. That the proposal of a partial return of funds to Local Authorities from the packaging Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme (EPR) be approved and authority be delegated to the Group Chief Financial Officer to finalise the amount, estimated to be £17.7m, once the final notice as assessment is received from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

F. GMCA Capital Programme -2024/25 - 2027/8

1. That the current 2024/25 forecast of £631.6m compared to the previous forecast of £581.8m be noted.
2. That the addition to the 2024/25 capital programme of £4.4m for 2024/25 local highways maintenance and £14.8m (£11.1m to be paid to local authorities and £3.7m retained by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a new incentive element) for 2025/26 local highways maintenance, as outlined in sections 2.9.8 and 2.9.9 of the report, be approved.
3. That the addition to the 2024/25 capital programme of £0.3m, funded by borrowing, for the replacement of end-user networking hardware at Tootal Buildings as per section 3.17.1 of the report, be approved.
4. That the capital programme budget for 2025/26 of £598.3m and the forward plan, as detailed in the report and in Appendix A, be approved.

A link to the full agenda and papers can be found here: [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

This decision notice was issued **11 February 2025** on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU. The deadline for call in of the attached decisions is 4.00pm on **18 February 2025**

Call-In Process

In accordance with the scrutiny procedure rules, these decisions would come into effect five days after the publication of this notice unless before that time any three members of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to call-in a decision.

Members must give notice in writing to the Chief Executive that they wish to call-in a decision, stating their reason(s) why the decision should be scrutinised. The period between the publication of this decision notice and the time a decision may be implemented is the 'call-in' period.

Decisions which have already been considered by the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and where the GMCA's decision agrees with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may not be called in.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER
AUTHORITIES EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2025**

PRESENT:

GM Mayor	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
GM Deputy Mayor	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Mike Barker
Rochdale	Stephen Rumbelow
Salford	Melissa Caslake
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Ashley Hughes
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Managing Director, TfGM	Steve Warrener
GMCA	Julie Connor

AGMA 01/25 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED /-

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Shelley Kipling (Oldham) & Harry Catherall (Tameside).

AGMA 02/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, expressed thanks and best wishes to the Director of Governance & Scrutiny Julie Connor who was taking retirement. Julie had contributed 46 years of public service to the region and had played a key role in the formation of the GMCA, playing a significant role in bringing it to the strong position in which it stood today.

RESOLVED /-

1. That thanks and and best wishes be recorded to Director of Governance Julie Connor in her retirement following 46 years of public service to the people of Greater Manchester.

AGMA 03/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were no declarations made in relation to any item on the agenda.

AGMA 04/25 MINUTES OF THE AGMA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2024

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the AGMA Executive Board meeting held on 27 September 2024 be approved.

AGMA 05/25 GM APPOINTMENTS

RESOLVED /-

1. That the appointment of Councillor Leanne Feely (Tameside), as the member, and Councillor Hugh Roderick (Tameside) as the substitute member on the Statutory Functions Committee be approved.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Andrew McClaren (Tameside) to the Planning & Housing Commission be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Laura Boyle (Tameside) as the member, and Councillor Jacqueline Owen (Tameside) as the substitute member on the Region Flood & Coastal Committee be approved.
4. That the appointment of Councillor Charlotte Martin (Tameside) as the member, and Councillor Shibley Alam (Tameside) as the substitute member on the Greater Manchester Health Scrutiny Committee be noted.

AGMA 06/25 AGMA BUDGET UPDATE 2024/25 AND BUDGET 2025/26

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources and Investment, and GMCA Treasurer Steve Wilson presented a report setting out the revenue budget for the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) 2025/26. It also included the forecast outturn position for 2024/25.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the report and the current AGMA revenue outturn forecast for 2025/26 shows an overspend of £18k due to increases Sharepoint costs which will

be funded from reserves to show a breakeven position as set out in section 1 of the report..

2. That a budget of £2,106k relating to current AGMA functions in 2025/26, as set out in section 2 of the report, be approved.
3. That the forecast position on the AGMA reserve, as detailed in section 3 of the report, be noted.
4. That the charges to the Greater Manchester Local Authorities in support of the AGMA functions for 2024/25 of £1.532m, as set out in section 5 and Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Decent Homes

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Housing Needs: While the number of households needing temporary accommodation remains high, we have seen a recent reduction in TA placements, resulting in a 10% decrease in numbers currently housed in this accommodation. The previous quarter saw the first net positive numbers moving out of TA since June 2021. This is because of the previously reported changes in operating practices and mitigations starting to have an impact. The aim is to accelerate this work, building and enhancing our preventative approach, and working more closely with partners such as Get Oldham Working and the Social Prescribing service, to ensure that residents have more direct access to the support that may help them stay out of, or reduce their time in, TA.

We are also working with colleagues from Action Together, who are facilitating an opportunity for residents with lived experience of TA, to have their voice heard on the impact on being in TA, and how we could further improve our approaches, to lessen this impact and to get help to people at an earlier point in their journey.

Housing Standards: Demand in the housing team remains high with residents continuing to report disrepair. The team continue to undertake inspections and secure compliance by working with landlords. However, where landlords fail to take corrective action, officers use a range of enforcement options, including notices, prohibition orders and civil penalties.

As a result of this reactive approach, and the use of a range of enforcement options, in 2025 the team have served 17 legal notices for repairs to be carried out by the landlord and a prohibition notice to prevent the use of a rented property due to serious concerns witnessed by the officer. In addition to this formal action, 6 civil penalties have been issued totalling £150,500 for varying Housing Act offences.

Delivery of the Selective Licensing scheme (Phase 1) continues with 678 licensed rented properties and another 202 applications to be determined. Of the licensed properties, 463 audits have been completed.

There are currently 71 Licensed HMOs (5 or more person sharing amenities) with another 44 applications for licenses yet to be determined. Officers are also proactively inspecting premises that may be HMOs to ensure that they comply with legal requirements around licensing and standards.

Housing Delivery: Good progress has been made on several key housing sites across the borough over the past few months, including:

- the completion of 88 new social homes by FCHO at Westvale;
- Jigsaw Homes are delivering 14 homes to support young people at risk of homelessness at their Foundry Street scheme;
- Great Places are nearing completion on 98 affordable homes at Maple Mill; and
- Hive Homes are constructing 132 homes on vacant brownfield land in Derker

All of these schemes benefitted from Brownfield Housing funding that the Council helped secure.

Alongside this, Vistry are building 365 homes in Fitton Hill, including 64 social homes and 58 other affordable homes.

At the end of March, we received planning applications from Muse for four residential-led town centre sites, totalling approximately 1,500 homes, and we expect to receive planning applications in the next couple of months from Vistry and Rowland Homes for our Southlink and Former South Chadderton School sites.

Planning: The Government's new Planning & Infrastructure Bill received its first reading in Parliament in March. It includes more detail on planned reforms to how Council Planning Committees should function, new powers for the Secretary of State to allow councils to set their own planning application fees and so allow council's development management services to be fully resourced, and more detail on the new sub-regional plans known as Strategic Development Strategies.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Value for Money and Sustainability

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Financial Position

As I have highlighted in previous reports, the Council continues to operate in an extremely challenging financial position, driven primarily by increasing demand for services such as social care and temporary accommodation. At month 10 the impact of these demands was translating through into an overspend against the approved budget of £14.5m. A huge amount of work has been undertaken to address the overspend which Members will recall as projected to reach £26m at quarter one. Work will continue throughout the rest of the year to seek further mitigations to reduce the in year position.

We are eagerly awaiting the Spring Statement and the outcome of the Fair Funding review which has indicated there is to be a reform of the way funding is allocated across the local government sector and a return to multi-year settlement from 2026-27. This can only benefit Councils such as Oldham that have a low tax base but high needs compared to most other local authorities. Nevertheless, the task to set a balanced budget for 2026/27 remains an enormous challenge, whilst also delivering a balanced position for 2025/26 given the continued demand on essential services the Council delivers, alongside delivery of the approved Budget savings programme.

Revenues & Benefits

Work continues to expand the number of online forms available via GovTech, creating more efficiencies in back-office processing and improving the customer journey. Council Tax in-year collection remains on target, with performance ahead of our closest GM neighbours at the end of February 2025. It is anticipated we will achieve a year collection rate of 94%. The Business rates in-year collection at the end of February 2025 is 0.74% ahead of the same period for 2024/25 and it is forecast that we will achieve collection rate of 95% by year end.

I am pleased to report that Annual Billing was completed without incident last week following the Approval of the Council Budget for 2025/26.

Human Resources & Organisational Development:

Key Updates:

- Voluntary Redundancy Process - HR & OD successfully managed the VR process, ensuring accurate pay and pension processing. The team adapted to maintain service delivery despite internal staff reductions.
- Budget Collaboration & Workforce Engagement - Led sessions with the Chief Executive, engaging staff in generating savings ideas. Feedback was positive, with ideas now feeding into change boards to drive efficiencies.
- Payroll & Transactional Services Audit - Following an audit an action plan has been implemented. Recruitment is underway for key payroll and pension roles to enhance accuracy, efficiency, and compliance
- Peer Support & Employee Engagement - Launched peer support groups to enhance employee engagement, collaboration, and inclusivity. These groups foster staff well-being, retention, and cross-organisational connections.
- Learning & Development Initiatives - Completed a Learning Needs Analysis to tailor training programmes. Targeted initiatives launching in April will address skills gaps and align with strategic goals.
- Relunched Change Champions to ensure employee input in projects, fostering collaboration and early identification of opportunities and challenges.

-
- Neurodiversity Training Rollout - Following a workplace neuro-inclusion survey, new training for managers and staff is available.

IT & Digital:

The IT & Digital department has faced challenges but is now focused on strategic transformation to improve leadership, service delivery, and team collaboration following the appointment of an interim leader in this space. A structured plan is in place to enhance security, compliance, and governance, with clear priorities:

1. Strategic Direction & Transformation: A commitment to improving core IT functions as a foundation for future innovation. ICT Business Plan 2025-27 – A roadmap addressing key priorities and challenge and a 2-year plan focused on quick wins, service enhancements, and essential frameworks
2. Key Initiatives & Progress
 - a. Establishing a strategic IT framework to guide technology investments.
 - b. Streamlining applications, prioritising Microsoft solutions for efficiency and data consolidation.
 - c. Implementing an ITAM system within SYSAID to improve asset tracking and risk management.
 - d. Addressing rollout delays with a revised approach, prioritising critical business needs and stakeholder involvement.
3. Service Delivery & Support: Improving IT support for a more intuitive, proactive, and automated service experience, as well as strengthening security, compliance, and preventative measures.
4. Challenges & Mitigation: Tackling resource constraints and backlogs through prioritisation, automation, and resource optimisation.

Digital Inclusion:

The Oldham Partnership Board held its first themed session on 29 January, the Defeating Digital Exclusion roundtable. The session was co-facilitated by Oldham Council and Inclusive Bytes with a keynote speech from myself. Partners from across the borough came together with a shared commitment to:

- Encourage residents and business to donate any unused or unwanted devices.
- Increase the number of digital champions across organisations.
- Spread awareness of HOOT Hubs and encourage organisations to sign up to be one.
- Promote and increase the number of organisations signing up to be a data bank.
- Promote awareness of social tariffs
- Continue to work collaboratively with partners and demonstrate our successes.

Inclusive Bytes CIC are establishing a Digital Inclusion Network with the support of Action Together to help advance our commitments.

Governance:

Our new Assistant Director of Governance joined the Council on 2nd April and will work to bring forward a refreshed approach to internal governance, working with leadership colleagues and Councillors across the council.

No local elections are held this May. Focus from the elections team is on the submission of the elections cost claim for the Mayoral election and the General Election.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Shaid Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to Portfolio activities.

Children's Social Care and Early Help are providing support to 3,440 Children and Young People plans, 1,009 early help, 1,291 children in need, 440 child protection, 592 children looked after and 456 care leavers (3 March 2025).

Children's Social Care

Firstly, I'm pleased to see Gemini House maintain its 'Good' grading with Ofsted following the annual inspection, and Rivendell receiving positive feedback from a monitoring visit from Ofsted, with a full, graded inspection expected later in the year. Well done to all involved for ensuring we have good services for our children and young people in Oldham.

On 7th February we held the Children's Service Staff Awards Celebration. The event was a success, with 350 attendees, 294 nominations, and 28 staff/teams receiving an award of appreciation. Following the event, the workforce fed back feeling valued, appreciated, and recognised for the work they do for our residents, as we continue to maintain a significant focus on workforce retention.

On 18th March we celebrated World Social Work Day, jointly with Adult's Social Care. The theme this year was intergenerational Solidarity for enduring wellbeing. Emphasising the importance of caring and respecting across generations to build strong societies and share wisdom for a better future, through the approach of 'Think Child, Think Family, Think Child again.'

We have successfully recruited social workers to targeted service areas via the use of bespoke adverts and conversion of agency workers to permanent, resulting in the Children Looked After service being on a trajectory to be 100% permanently staffed in the new financial year.

In the Duty and Advice service, we continue to handle an average of 500 contacts each week, with improved timeliness of triage. The Complex Safeguarding Hub will be supporting GMP within Operation Vulcan, to assist in disrupting exploitation being experienced by young people in Oldham. It is in response to a recent increase in incidents relating to organised crime groups and firearms. This is a Police Force led operation with its entire focus being to prevent and disrupt contextual safeguarding within the Derker area.

The Assessment and Intervention service is supporting 909 plans, maintaining a positive step down of cases into lower-level services over recent months. 878 children and young people are supported or assessed as children in need, 23 are under child protection planning or pre-proceedings, and 8 have recently become looked after. We've focused on strengthening assessment completion timeliness and this has increased to 88%. From end of March 69% of social workers in this service area are now permanent.

The Safeguarding and Care Planning service is supporting 876 plans. Six weekly reviews ensure those children subject to pre-proceedings do not experience delay. We support 173 children looked after with our key focus on supporting children in Kinship Care arrangements where safe to do so. Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership partners attended a Northwest RIPP event "Evidencing impact in safeguarding partnership arrangements". The session led to the partnership considering how to strengthen the collation of evidence in terms of impact on children, families, professionals and the effectiveness of the partnership. The partnership is in the process of evaluating impact through independent scrutiny and quantitative and qualitative data. Neglect remains an important priority for the partnership through the delivery of the action plan driven by the neglect sub-group.

For children in care and care leavers, we have continued to provide safe, stable placements and support as they transition into adulthood. Of the 592 children in our care, 309 are placed in internal foster care, maintaining strong internal provision. The service has seen a good response to the 'Step Forward to Fostering' campaign, which encourages foster carers to provide a placement to children and young people from residential care. There have been ten expressions of interest to date.

Care Leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) remains a key priority for us as corporate parents. The Care Leaver NEET Action Plan has been drafted, which includes a number of key initiatives to enable care leavers into EET, which include seven work placements in Get Oldham Working, ten young people enrolled in the GM Multiply scheme and an updated joint working protocol with the DWP. Oldham is fully part of the GM Care Leaver Offer which has announced an extension to the free bus travel scheme for care leavers in the region. An extraordinary Corporate Parenting Panel will be scheduled with a sole focus on the education outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

The children's commissioning team have re-tendered and implemented three statutory commissioned services in Youth Justice, SEND IASS and Targeted Specialist Support Services (which includes careers guidance, young carers and missing return home interviews). The new commissioned SEND Local Offer is being developed in partnership with POINT, ICB, children, young people and families ready to be launched in April 2025. Senior leaders have attended multiple regional and national engagement events to explore learning from pathfinders to inform our transformation approach to delivering the national Children's Social Care reforms under the Children's Wellbeing and School Bill.

Early Help and Family Hubs

Early Help teams continue to play a vital role in working with families before issues escalate. 920 children and young people are receiving targeted early help support, with consistent practice that reflects the strength of our early intervention work. Re-referral rates for early help have reduced to approximately 9% from 15% in December 2024 of cases within six months of closure, building on a significant improvement during 2024.

On 14 March the Early Help and Integrated Children and Families Service (Family Hubs) came together as a combined service under the management of the Assistant Director Early Help. This will support the wider work to improve the early support available to children and families. There has been an increase in the number of families accessing evidence base parenting interventions delivered by the parenting team. Parents who have accessed parenting intervention or support through Family Hubs report an improvement in their children's behaviour and mental wellbeing and their ability to care for their children.

Early Years

The Wraparound programme continues to increase before and after school club provision and places within the borough to support those families that need to use the service. To date there has been just under 600 wraparound childcare places have been created in the school and private sector.

Youth Service

The Youth Service has secured funding from the community safety partnership and GM VRU of £100,000 to enhance the youth work offer for a further 12 months, this will enable the team to deliver targeted early intervention and prevention work tackling youth violence, ASB and safeguarding young people from the risks of criminality.

Finally, I would like to congratulate two of our members of youth parliament for Oldham, who attended the annual house of commons sitting on 28th February, alongside 300 elected members of the Youth Parliament. The young people were able to talk to debate areas outlined in the UK Youth Parliament Manifesto for 2024-2026 'Shaping Our Future, Today Not Tomorrow', representing all Oldham's young people in this high-profile annual event.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

On 7th February we held the Children's Service Staff Awards Celebration. The event was a success, with 350 attendees, 294 nominations, and 28 staff/teams receiving an award of appreciation. Following the event, the workforce fed back feeling valued, appreciated, and recognised for the work they do for our residents, as we continue to maintain a significant focus on workforce retention.

SEND and Inclusion

The positive improvements to services for children and young people with SEND continues at pace, driven through the SEND Local Inclusion Partnership Executive Board chaired by Dame Christine Lenehan. Demand for EHCPs has increased by 11% in 2024, a reduction compared to a previous 15% year on year increase. The timeliness of EHC needs assessments and annual reviews are tracking higher than the national average and monthly audits of the quality of EHCPs providing assurance on the quality of plans for children and young people.

Officers are supporting Dame Christine to develop a national Quality Assurance Framework and Performance Dashboard for SEND (with case studies from Oldham being published as best practice around Alternative Provision and decision-making panels).

The Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) is live for secondary mainstream and the first moderation panel has taken place. The Secondary Outreach Service has also been implemented and will begin supporting secondary mainstream pupils at risk of exclusion (based on the primary model).

Research and planning has started in readiness for delivering the national reforms outlined in the Children's Wellbeing and School's Bill, particularly in relation to school attendance and Elective Home Education.

Education

The quality of school provision in Oldham continues to improve, with Waterhead Academy Ofsted judgement improved from Inadequate with Special Measures to Requires Improvement and St Agnes CE School, Whitegate End and Lyndhurst primary schools remaining Good.

Secondary school offer day was 3rd March 2025. The admissions team worked incredibly hard to ensure all parents were informed by 10 am. There were 3,242 applications received. Oldham preference figures for 2025 are 76.3% first preference, an increase of 2.2% from 2024 and first to third preference 93.6%, an increase of 1.1% from 2024.

Oldham Virtual School have delivered two programmes that had been identified through the aspirations and interests recorded in children's Personal Education Plans:

- ACE Construction Workshop and Taster Day: During the day, our young people had the opportunity to experience 'hands on' activities in brickwork, painting and decorating, motor vehicle mechanics and plastering. The feedback from the young people was so positive with requests for more taster sessions, the Virtual School are exploring further options for Easter and May half term.
- Bolton University Special Effects and Tour: Following the Success 4 Life programme several students expressed further interest in the special effects department with regards to

university and careers. Our young people had a supported tour of the facilities from current students and an interactive session with one of the university lecturers, exploring the programmes available and getting 'hands on' with the equipment and resources.

Music Service

The Youth Choir joined other young musicians and singers from the Greater Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub to present a special concert performance of Neil Brand's evocative 'Wind in the Willows,' and Malcolm Arnold's 'Peterloo Overture' at the Bridgewater Hall. The musicians were joined by actor David Threlfall as Badger, Musical Director Stephen Threlfall, and actors from Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts.

The Oldham Music Centre Youth Brass Band played a concert to a packed Royton Band Club, Band members and locals were delighted to have concerts in their area. The band debuted some of their repertoire for the upcoming National Youth Brass Band Championships. The Youth Brass Band will once again be representing Oldham at the prestigious National Youth Brass Band Championships of Great Britain competition. Wishing the best of luck to the band, who last year won a silver medal!

On 26th March between 400 and 500 young musicians, who have been learning in schools for 6 to 18 months, congregated at the Music Centre and the Queen Elizabeth Hall for a day training with all the teachers in the Music Service, with a short concert to join as one ensemble to become 'Oldham's Biggest Band 2025'. On 29th March over 50 electric guitarists performed at their 'Easter EGGtravaganza' concert at Royton Brass Band Club.

Post-16 and Skills

16-18 young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) rate is at 3.93% which is a positive reduction from 4.72% 12 months ago following significant partnership targeted support for young people.

New post-16 provision (YMCA) previously located in the Hive will now be moving over to Positive Steps Oldham in the next couple of months to provide training opportunities for young people.

The Employment and Skills Partnership Board has focused on the Economic Inactivity Trailblazer, bringing Employment and Skills partners up to date with the initial plans and including them in the design and shaping of the future potential model.

The Lifelong Learning Service continues to be ahead of target in terms of adult skills provision. Collaboration continues with partners to plan future provision. The service held a successful Self-Assessment Validation with Members, partners and funders to check and challenge the service.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Fida Hussain, Cabinet Member for Enterprise

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Employment:

Cygnat Health Care are a key provider of health and social care services to young people and adults with mental health needs. Cygnat health care chose Oldham to open their second site in Greater Manchester which will provide support for 44 patients and will seek to create over 135 jobs once fully operational. The Get Oldham Working team has helped them to recruit to these jobs.

Cygnat Health Care operations director, Victor Takadiwa, said: "Opening Kenney House created a number of job opportunities within the Oldham area, and we were keen to work with the local community, to provide employment for local people. We want staff at the service to be highly skilled and whose priority is to provide compassionate, safe care. It has been a pleasure to employ staff with the right skills and attitude through the Get Oldham Working service."

The hospital has prioritised recruiting from the Oldham area, with support from Get Oldham Working, helping people secure jobs as ward clerks, receptionists, healthcare assistants, activity coordinators, chefs, maintenance, kitchen staff, and housekeepers.

Business Support & Engagement:

The Oldham Trading Platform launched last month with the Leader and Deputy Leader – Cllr Jabbar – both attended the launch event at The Hive to hear how this will really change the way we do business with one another in Oldham.

The Hive, the home of the Oldham Trading Platform, is operating well. As Chair of the Management Board for the Hive, I am also pleased to confirm that the Hive has been selected as a case study by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Through the UK Shared Prosperity Funds that we have received in the last three years, we have been giving grant support to businesses in the borough. As a result of this, over 90 jobs have been created, five businesses have been supported to adopt new processes, and 40 new businesses have been established.

Mansell Building Solutions has announced they will be moving to Broadway Business Park in Chadderton, the business complex that was developed in partnership with Oldham Council. This move will see an increase in jobs and opportunities in the borough, with dedicated areas in their new 45,000 sq ft, site for training staff, including apprenticeships. Mansell chose Oldham because of our commitment to investing in growth and employment opportunities for the benefit of our residents.

Markets:

I had the opportunity to visit the market site this month to see the progress being made inside. The market stalls are now all fully constructed, and lighting and wiring is being installed to each stall, it is really taking shape quickly now.

It is also possible to see the into the new market from inside the Spindles Town Square shopping centre if people want to take a look through the internal hoarding.

Stallholders are also regularly visiting the new site, and all feedback I have received is really positive, with stallholders excited for the move in the summer. Some of the stallholders have taken the decision not to relocate into the new market, some are retiring, others have opted to do something completely different, and a number are moving into alternative premises in the town.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Public Health:

The NHS Health Check is a routine check-up for people aged between the age of 40 and 74 and who aren't already diagnosed with a long-term condition. This is an important way to identify those at risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and support them to reduce that risk.

We have been working closely with Oldham GPs to improve the number and quality of NHS health checks delivered. There has been an increase in the quantity of health checks delivered but the quality of health checks in Oldham is continuing to improve following the implementation of a quality-based payment system. The number of diagnoses made, referrals to other services, and health advice given has shown significant improvements since the implementation of the new contract.

In October – December 2024, GPs in Oldham delivered 2,847 NHS Health Checks. This is 1,300 more than the same period last year. These checks ensured that our residents got the right support to lose weight, stop smoking, prevent the onset of diabetes, and prevent CVD. The focus over the coming twelve months will be to increase uptake further with a focus on those experiencing the greatest health inequalities in relation to CVD.

Adult Social Care:

Oldham's Adult Social Care (ASC) service is experiencing considerable increased demand along with increasing levels of acuity and a growing level of high-cost placements. The demand for specialist accommodation and support outweighs the availability in borough. Through ongoing monitoring and analysis of capacity and demand, as well as assessing ongoing needs as part of the borough's population projections, additional capacity is required in Oldham.

Positively, ASC has been allocated additional £10m capital resource over the next three years to develop our in-borough services, and work to develop the delivery plans has commenced. Initially, the focus is to refurb existing council assets, and the objective is to create more in-borough provision, which is highly likely to result in positive outcomes for vulnerable residents, cost avoidance as well as savings in current expenditure.

A review of the current Market Position Statement has been undertaken, whereby current capacity and demand pressures and demographic population changes and growth have been collated for publication. The purpose of Market Position Statements is that they are the foundation for where a local area needs their commissioned provider market to be and signals the development areas that will be a priority. The Market Position Statement is a duty within the Care Act and will be published alongside other associated documents in the Spring of the new financial year.

On the 18th March the directorate celebrated World Social Work day, jointly with Children's Social Care (CSC). The theme this year was intergenerational Solidarity for enduring wellbeing. This emphasizes the importance of caring and respecting across generations to build strong societies and share wisdom for a better future.

ASC has achieved the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES). ASC has been awarded with the SC WRES logo which is a symbol of our transformative change journey towards race equity. It illustrates the directorate is serious, brave and authentic about dismantling systemic

racism. MioCare are continuing to successfully change the current helpline provision as part of the digital switchover, this work is expected to be completed by the end of May 2025.

Integrated Care Partnership:

What	Summary Description	Amt £000s
Green social prescribing	Continue the Northern Roots programme but with a new focus and target cohort to improve outcomes matched better to the Live Well model we are progressing	95
Targeted CVD and Diabetes	Embedded community work to improve uptake rates for south Asian community	50
Digitisation adult social care	Programme support to ensure greater digitisation of the ASC model	125
Targeted community mental health support	Embedded community work to improve uptake rates for south Asian community	50
Community services transformation	Final year continuation of existing programme	150
Safeguarding capacity	Support the development of CYP safeguarding co-ordination	100
		470

Oldham Health and Care Developments: At our March ICP Board we have now confirmed a number of proposals that have been developed for investment over the coming year:

National Changes: On 13 March the Government formally announced the dissolution of NHS England with all functions, duties and activities being absorbed into a new-look Department of Health and Social Care which would then also require a 50% cut in costs to be delivered in the process. That will require redundancies. The Secretary of State also announced a number of other changes as follows: A 50% reduction in costs for Integrated Care Boards. This will have a significant impact on our working arrangements in Greater Manchester, although it is not anticipated this will require a merger of the GM ICB with other ICBs, unlike other parts of the country where that is a much more likely proposition.

Hospitals and other Trusts (Mental Health and Community) have been told to cut corporate staffing costs to levels pre-pandemic levels. Plans also include “resetting” block contracts, whereby some trusts are being paid well above tariff rates for non-elective care, based on deals agreed during covid, while some receive much less, and publishing data on tackling huge levels of variation on Continuing Healthcare spending area-by-area. The plans will also involve removing or redistributing the “deficit support” which sees some systems receive several tens of millions.

Change NHS: a health service fit for the future: NHS staff continue to work harder than ever to get services back on track, to get waiting lists down and consistently deliver the best care. Change is needed and many of the solutions we need are already here, working somewhere in the NHS today. Since the launch of Change NHS to have the biggest conversation on the future of the NHS, over 100,000 contributions have been made and over 1.5 million visits to.

To help finalise the plan, we need to get views on the emerging ideas from the engagement so far. Please visit [priorities for change](#) to have your say by **Monday 14 April**. Whether you have a little to say or a lot, your views, experiences, and ideas will shape immediate steps and long-term changes: a new 10-Year Health Plan for the NHS.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Don't Trash Oldham

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Waste: Since the previous update, the waste service has successfully implemented Trade Waste into the new system (Bartec – Collective) in December 2024. This enables the use of in-cab technology, live updates on Trade Collections as well as billing. The service is in the process of preparing all Trade invoices for the coming financial year 2025/26.

In addition, new Waste Legislation will require businesses with 10 or more FTE to separate their recyclable materials from their general waste from 31 March 2025 (Simpler Recycling). Smaller businesses with fewer than 10 FTE will have until March 2027 to comply. The service is in the process of procuring a new bin supplier with more variety of sizes to meet customer's needs.

The additional refuse collection vehicle sought to cope with additional service demand from new build properties is expected to join the fleet this month. It is the first of a different type of vehicle for the service, which although slightly wider will be more maneuverable.

Fleet Management: The service continues to assist Council departments with the specification and purchase of vehicles as part of the fleet replacement programme – this ensures that the vehicles meet Service needs and provide value for money.

The service area also maintains, repairs and provides ongoing support for all council owned vehicles – this ensures that the council continues to meet legal obligations and is able to continue to operate goods vehicles and complies with the Operator's License meaning that the Council can deliver waste collection and other highways maintenance operations using large plant, machinery and vehicles.

The Service also provides MOT and compliance testing for all Council Licensed vehicles (Taxis & Private Hire). The new MOT testing bay and facilities has been completed to assist with current and future demand. The additional new Tester has joined the team along with an apprentice mechanic, both appear to be developing well.

Parks: Parks play a vital role in promoting healthy lifestyles by providing well-maintained spaces and encouraging community engagement. Staff trained in horticulture collaborate with apprenticeships, schools, and volunteers to deliver recreational and educational activities. Parks continuously improve through investment in outdoor gyms, footpaths, cycleways, and biodiversity projects, supporting sustainable transport and healthy living.

Sports facilities, playgrounds, and pitches are regularly maintained and inspected, enhancing local employment opportunities and community connections through initiatives like Growing Hubs and Fruit Routes.

Recent projects include improvements to play spaces, gyms, parks, and paths such as Shadowbrook, Wendlebury Green, Churchill Playing Field, and Foxdenton Hall Park, among others. Upcoming and future initiatives include Dobcross Playspace, Arundel Street MUGA, Royton Park multi-site improvements, and accessible routes.

Greenspace: Ash dieback inspections start again in spring with a record number of diseased trees anticipated as the numbers and cost continues to rise year on year. (discussion required regarding additional funding). Diseased trees will be removed over the summer and replaced over winter. Tree planting programme for this year is now coming to a close with about 30 more trees and about 500 transplants to go in.

Species Survival project at Lees Brook is ongoing, with the woodland work almost completed. A big community clear up planned for 27th March and a Spring Fair on 10th April. Other works such as tree planting, in channel river works, invasive species control, and footpath restoration works are all scheduled over the coming months.

Three more large leaky dams installed on Old Brook at Crompton Moor and another 4 smaller leaky dams are to be installed by volunteers and corporate groups in the coming weeks – Defra funded. MMU monitoring flow rates for Natural Flood Management and water quality are already reporting water quality improvements.

Future Roots project is a collaboration between Oldham Council and Pearsons Solicitors. Every time the conveyancing team complete on a property they supply a tree (either small medium or large) to plant in the garden of their customers' new property. Oldham Council supply, store and look after the trees for the project through the growing hub in Alexandra Park. Where trees are not required on completion, for example if a customer moves outside Oldham or buys an apartment with no garden we plant these trees across Oldham. On the latest occasion there were 22 trees which Pearsons planted along with Oldham council to restore a small section of woodland at Churchill playing fields which was negatively impacted by ash dieback disease.

Street Lighting – We are nearing completion of our second year of the Street Lighting Annual Investment Programme (AIP) where we are replacing the final 20% of lighting stock as they become life expired. The programme has been focused on replacement works in North Chadderton with 735 streetlights replaced within PFI programme timescales. Work remains ongoing. At the same time, the service has introduced a new, interactive website which allows for quicker reporting of problems with lighting columns, and in turn, allowing the team to pick up repairs much sooner.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities and Culture

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to the portfolio responsibilities.

Heritage, Libraries and Arts: Oldham Library has been named one of the top three highly commended libraries at the British Book Awards in the Library of the Year category. This recognition celebrates the hard work, dedication, and passion of our library team in making Oldham Library a welcoming, engaging, and inspiring place for everyone.

Oldham Theatre Workshop, in partnership with Oldham Coliseum toured their Christmas show to 10 local schools in January, receiving positive feedback from all schools. Gallery Oldham is hosting 'The Lights' exhibition featuring Blackpool's Illuminated artworks, loaned from The Grundy Gallery, as part of the Illuminate Festival.

A new exhibition opened on 15th March to celebrate the reopening of Oldham's much-loved Old Library later in 2025. This exhibition gives an insight into the work that has been carried out to restore the building to its former glory. Digital Festival, in partnership with Peshkar took place at Oldham Library on Saturday 22nd March 2025.

Districts: We are seeing an increase in usage from wider partners at Royton town hall – with a fantastic international women's event being held there, led by the community organisation Spark, alongside a range of partnership meetings and workshops utilising the space. Facilities management support for the District Community Hubs is due to progress in April with the recruitment of facilities management roles for the community hubs. This should support further community usage of these assets.

The Quarter 4 community council meetings concluded this month. Each district reviewed the district priority plans and received a presentation and consultation regarding the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The Live Well accelerator programme in East districts continues to progress well with 108 resident engagements undertaken, a further community engagement event is planned for next month to explore further how residents can directly contribute to the programme and shape the continued resident engagement in the accelerator programme. Members of the district team alongside the accelerator working group – presented the Oldham work done to date as a GM live well event this month.

Community Safety and Cohesion: Oldham has been successful in securing Operation Vulcan resources. Vulcan Derker, which will run for at least 6 months and brings significant additional GMP resources. It is a targeted problem-solving piece of work to reduce crime and disorder and build community resilience and confidence in the area. A formal partnership launch was held on the 14th of March and involved a wide range of statutory and VCF agencies coming together to learn about the Vulcan methodology and discuss how the partnership will work together for the benefit of residents in the area. A community launch also took place on the 20th of March at Mayfield Primary School and enabled residents to engage with Vulcan partners in a marketplace activity. Regular communications about the Vulcan Derker work will be provided over forthcoming months.

The MHCLG has funded a cohesion project - Boxing United – which is now in its 4th week. The project which is a partnership between a number of boxing clubs, the Youth Service and Action Together, brings together young males aged 11-18 from the boxing clubs to take part in workshops and sessions promoting conversation and developing skills, knowledge and abilities in areas such as leadership, understanding hate, media literacy, challenging extremist narratives and ideologies, fostering cohesion and understanding self and others.

Following delivery of the programme, which includes a residential at the Castleshaw Centre for Outdoor Education, the groups will plan their own community-based activities to implement their learning and enhance cohesion within their communities and across Oldham.

Sports & Leisure: The successful appointment of a new Activation Officer. The role is jointly funded through externally secured funding from Strategic Transport (Mayor's Challenge Fund) and Sports Development (Place Partnership Funding). The postholder will be responsible for project managing a programme of activation, working closely with Public Health to drive engagement and behaviour change in support of various walking and cycling schemes, ensuring alignment with funder requirements. This initiative aligns with several key strategies, including Oldham's Transport Strategy and the Oldham Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Oldham Active (Oldham Community Leisure) has recently opened a new women's-only gym at Chadderton Wellbeing Centre, following the success of Women-Only Wednesdays and valuable user feedback. This welcoming and inclusive workout space features a range of cardio and strength training equipment and is staffed exclusively by female team members.

Oldham recently welcomed colleagues from across Greater Manchester involved in the Place Partnership initiative, aimed at supporting communities to Move More. 30 GM colleagues visited Oldham to learn about our Local Pilot / Place Partnership journey and key insights gained so far. We were also joined by local community groups and members who shared how various local initiatives in Oldham have positively impacted on improving their health and wellbeing.

Customer Services: The Contact Centre exceeded the calls answered KPI (89%) in both December (90.54%) and February (89.32%). During 2024/25 to date, calls answered performance is at 87.70% - this is 5.84% higher than 2023/24. The Contact Centre are continuing to work with services to identify improvements to the customer experience with the aim of establishing a clear plan of delivery for 2025/26 working towards achieving all KPIs performance with a greater focus on embedding the voice and experience of residents into service design and delivery.

Quarter 3 (September – December) saw a significant improvement in Complaints performance compared with Quarter 2. Adults' responses rose from 29% to 69%, Children's from 50% to 57%, Resources from 64% to 83%, and overall, from 50% to 64% (target 75%). These gains reflect considerable focus and efforts in this period including implementing improved processes and procedures, delivering training, cleansing historic cases and introducing regular complaint forums in both Children's and Adults' services. The team are finalising self-serve dashboards for Adults, Children's, Resources and Place which will provide real-time performance data to further drive transparency and improvement as we work towards achieving the 75% target.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.



Report to COUNCIL

Update on Actions from Council

Portfolio Holder: Various

Officer Contact: Director of Legal Services

Report Author: Peter Thompson, Constitutional Services
Ext. 4716

9th April 2025

Reason for Decision

The decision is for Members to note the updates on actions from the Council meeting held on 18th December 2024 (Reconvened 20th January 2025) and Extraordinary Meetings held on 12th February 2025 and any updated responses from meetings earlier in this municipal year.

Executive Summary

This report provides information to the Council on actions taken at the most recent Council meetings.

Recommendations

Council is asked to:

1. Note the report.

Update on Actions from Council

1 Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the actions that officers have taken on motions approved at the Council meeting on 18th December 2024 (reconvened 20th January 2025) and Extraordinary Meetings held on 12th February 2025 and informs Members on any updated responses to motions approved at previous meetings in this municipal year.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The current position on actions is set out in the table at Appendix 1.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 N/A

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 N/A

5 Consultation

- 5.1 N/A

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 N/A

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 N/A

8 Equality Impact, including Implications for Children and Young People

- 8.1 N/A

9 Key Decision

- 9.1 No

10 Key Decision Reference

- 10.1 N/A

11 Background Papers

11.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

- The agenda and minutes of the Council meetings are available online at: <http://committees.oldham.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails>

12 **Appendices**

12.1 Appendix 1 – Current Position

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Appendix 2a



The Rt. Hon. Yvette Cooper MP
Home Secretary
The Home Office,
2 Marsham Street,
London, SW1P 4DF

Acting Chief Executive
Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street, Oldham OL1 1UG
Tel: 0161 770 4190
14th February 2025

Dear Home Secretary,

Re: Oldham Council Resolution – Request for a National Public Inquiry that Investigates the Scourge of Child Sexual Exploitation

The full Council at its extraordinary meeting on 12th February 2025 unanimously approved the following motion:

‘We humbly request that this Council call upon His Majesty’s Government to ensure a statutory public inquiry that investigates the scourge of both historic and current child sexual exploitation in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham. Any national investigations into the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must not relegate an examination of Oldham into a paragraph in another report.

We request that a full statutory public inquiry is held urgently, as villages, towns and cities up and down the spine of the country have been affected by child sexual exploitation and abuse which was carried out by evil criminal gangs on an unprecedented scale, and the even more widespread levels of sexual and sexually motivated violence that are endemic in British society, across people of all colours and creeds.

This Council further notes:

1. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the gang that sexually abused so many girls in Rochdale which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: “Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years’ imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years. Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A.”
2. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it was agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.

3. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.

4. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked across other towns, ... Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a “widespread perception” that they should “‘downplay’ the ethnic dimensions” for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: “It is never an excuse to use race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”— [Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.]”

5. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims.

6. That no individual or political group should ever seek to exploit the tragedies of sexual violence that have been committed, Everyone must at all times ensure that they listen to what survivors want, to ensure their voices are at the heart of all proposals, and to ensure that they are heard, supported and empowered,

7. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed statutory inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.

8. That following repeated calls for a local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham, the Council voted in July 2024 to establish a non-statutory local inquiry. This decision came after years of resistance, despite multiple reports highlighting institutional failures. However, concerns remain that without statutory powers, this inquiry will lack the ability to compel key witnesses, access crucial documents, or hold individuals and organisations fully accountable.

9. That survivors, campaigners, and members of this Council have consistently argued that only a statutory inquiry can deliver full transparency and justice. A statutory inquiry would ensure that all survivors and individuals who have given testimony are legally compelled to provide evidence, while also creating a safe and supportive process for new witnesses and survivors to come forward.

10. That the credibility and effectiveness of the local inquiry depend on an independent panel determining the terms of reference, ensuring that the investigation is free from political influence and fully focused on uncovering the truth.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2. Write to the Home Office to request that His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account.

3. Request that an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust.

4.. Seek confirmation from the inquiry leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward.'

Therefore, further to the resolutions, above, that were approved by Council unanimously, I am writing to request the following:

1. That His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
2. That His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account.
3. That an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust.
4. Seek confirmation from the inquiry's leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward.

I look forward to being able to report back to Council with your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Shelley Kipling

Acting Chief Executive

Email: shelley.kipling@oldham.gov.uk



Home Office

Home Secretary

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

By email only

12 March 2025

Dear Ms. Kipling,

Thank you for writing to me on 14 February regarding next steps for Oldham's inquiry following the resolutions approved by your council on 13 February. This Government is committed to doing everything it can to tackle the horrific crimes of child sexual abuse and exploitation. This includes working closely with local areas to confront these terrible crimes, ensure perpetrators face the full force of the law, and provide vital support to victims and survivors.

As you will know, the Safeguarding Minister recently met with victims and survivors in Oldham to hear firsthand about their devastating experiences and their demands for justice and for change.

In that context, Oldham's decision to lead an independent local inquiry is commendable, and the Home Office stands ready to support the Council with this work as it progresses.

As we have seen in examples including Telford and Rotherham, effective local inquiries can provide detailed, context-specific insights and recommendations, driving real change at the local level. That is why the Government is developing a new framework for victim-centred, locally-led inquiries, informed by established best practice, tailored to meet the specific needs of communities. To support local areas in confronting this challenge, I have announced a dedicated fund to help strengthen local responses to child sexual exploitation - because at every level, getting justice for victims and protecting children is a responsibility we all share.

In recognition of your commitment and the local work and engagement already underway, the Home Office will make a direct award to Oldham Council to support this inquiry, contingent upon your support in identifying and adopting the best practice principles outlined in our developing framework. As with Telford and Rotherham, it would be up to your council to appoint an independent chair and panel to lead this inquiry, including development of its terms of reference. This will be important in sending a clear signal to victims and survivors, and their families, that Oldham is fully committed to a transparent and victim-centred local inquiry.

Simultaneously, the Government is drawing up a Duty of Candour as part of the long-awaited Hillsborough Law. We are committed to strengthening the accountability mechanisms that can support and follow up local inquiries, to ensure that those who are

complicit in cover-ups or who try to resist scrutiny are always robustly held to account, and that truth and justice are never denied. My officials would be happy to work with you – and policing and justice leads locally – to ensure shared understanding of our expectations around candour in advance of the inquiry getting started to ensure that you can get the answers you need. We look forward to setting out more detail on the duty in the coming weeks.

More broadly, since my statement on 16 January, the Home Office has been engaging closely with local authorities and relevant stakeholders on the design and delivery of the national fund to support locally-led work in this vital area. We have heard clearly that local authorities would benefit from support for a wider range of work to tackle group-based CSEA, including addressing historic issues, beyond establishing a full independent local inquiry. We are therefore developing a programme which can support both local authorities, like Oldham, who want to launch those types of inquiry and those who want to take on more bespoke work, including in areas where inquiries have already taken place, for example through the establishment of local victims' panels or conducting locally-led audits into the handling of historic cases. This will enable more areas to conduct meaningful work to deliver the truth, justice and accountability that victims and survivors deserve.

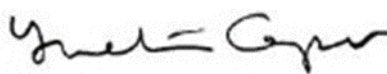
Finally, it is imperative that local leaders ensure that victims are fully aware of and can utilise the expanded right to review which will now cover all cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation no matter when they took place. Where investigations into allegations of child sexual offences have been closed with no further action, victims will be able to refer their cases to the independent Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel through a dedicated email at nationalpanel@npcc.police.uk, or bring their previous complaint back to the police forces or Crown Prosecutive Service. This initiative aims to ensure that all victims have the opportunity for their cases to be thoroughly reviewed so that the truth can be pursued and justice can be served.

As you will know, I have also appointed Baroness Louise Casey to lead a national audit of existing evidence on group-based CSE offending in order to gain a comprehensive national understanding of the scale, nature and characteristics of these crimes. That work is well underway and will report back in due course. The Terms of Reference have been published and a copy is attached.

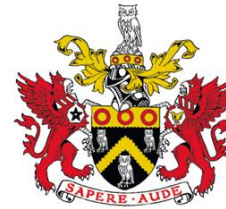
Local leadership is crucial in driving meaningful change, and I would like to express my sincere thanks for your ongoing dedication to addressing these devastating crimes.

We look forward to working with you and setting out more detail in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Home Secretary



The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
Westminster
London
SW1P 4DF

Cllr Arooj Shah
Leader of Oldham Council
Room 347, Civic Centre,
West Street, Oldham,
OL1 1UL

Tel: 0161 770 5738

Dear Deputy Prime Minister,

At an extraordinary meeting of Oldham Council on 12th February 2025, Council instructed us to write to you to request that you revoke the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan as it applies to the Borough of Oldham, under the powers given to you by Section 25 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arooj'.

Cllr Arooj Shah
Leader of Oldham Council

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Shelley Kipling
Acting Chief Executive

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**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

Jim McMahon OBE MP

*Minister of State for Local Government and
English Devolution*
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2025/06119

Shelley Kipling

Via email

17 March 2025

Dear Shelley,

Thank you for your email of 27 January regarding the council motion of 20 January 2025, social care funding crisis and NI contributions.

With regards to overall funding, taken together, the additional funding announced by the Chancellor at the Autumn Budget and through the 2025-26 Local Government Finance Settlement will provide over £5 billion of new funding for local services over and above local council tax. This includes an additional £2 billion of grant through the Settlement in addition to a guarantee that local authorities in England will receive at least £1.1 billion in total in 2025-26 from the new Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR) scheme, and a further £233 million of additional funding for homelessness services.

We have delivered a Settlement that begins to fix the foundations of local government by providing significant investment redirecting funding towards the services and places that need it most. The Settlement for 2025-26 makes available over £69 billion for local government, which is a 6.8% cash terms increase in councils' Core Spending Power on 2024-25.

In relation to Adult Social Care, we will make available up to £3.7 billion of additional funding for social care authorities in the Settlement in 2025-26.

The Government recognises the important role councils have in commissioning and delivering adult and children's social care services. To support social care authorities to deliver these key services in light of pressures, the Social Care Grant will increase by £880 million 2025-26 to 5.9 billion.

Concerning NICs, we recognise the challenges that local authorities are facing as demand increases for critical services. That is why the government is providing an additional £2 billion of grant funding through the Settlement, which includes £502 million of additional grant funding to manage the impact of employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs) changes on council budgets.

Payments will be unringfenced to allow funding to be used to mitigate the additional costs of employer National Insurance Contributions within direct, commissioned, and externally provided local services.

Additional funding for employer NICs has been determined based on a national assessment of the costs for directly employed staff and the grant distribution methodology has been published in an explanatory note on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/updated-explanatory-note-on-the-employer-national-insurance-contribution-grant-2025-to-2026>.

We are delivering a Settlement that begins to fix the foundations of local government by providing significant investment redirecting funding towards the services and places that need it most. The final Settlement for 2025-26 makes available over £69 billion for local government, which is a 6.8% cash-terms increase in councils' Core Spending Power on 2024-25. □

The Government is under no illusions about the scale of financial issues facing councils, and the potential for continued instability. That is why we have a framework in place to support councils in the most difficult positions, and why we will work on a collaborative basis to help councils manage financial challenges.

Thank you again for writing to me on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim McMahon".

JIM MCMAHON OBE MP

Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution



Department for Work & Pensions

Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON
SW1H 9DA

ministers@dwp.gov.uk

Ms Shelley Kipling
Acting Chief Executive
shelley.kipling@oldham.gov.uk



HM Treasury

HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Our ref: MC2025/01261

20 February 2025

Dear Ms Kipling ,

Thank you for your email of 14 November 2024 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the decision to restrict Winter Fuel Payment eligibility. I am replying as the Minister for Pensions and I apologise for the delay.

In face of the substantial pressures faced by the public finances, the Government has had to make hard choices, including targeting the Winter Fuel Payment on low income pensioners who need it most.

Despite this very difficult decision, we are determined to protect the poorest pensioners. Winter Fuel Payments will continue to be paid to pensioner households with someone receiving Pension Credit or certain other income-related benefits. They will continue to be worth £200 for eligible households, or £300 for eligible households with someone aged over 80.

I would like to thank you for sharing Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council's suggestions regarding alternative methods of determining eligibility for the Winter Fuel Payment. Linking entitlement to Pension Credit and the other qualifying income-related benefits payable to pensioners ensures that we can pay almost all eligible pensioners automatically, without the need to claim the Winter Fuel Payment.

The Government wants those eligible for Pension Credit but not currently claiming it to receive the benefits they are entitled to, including the Winter Fuel Payment. As part of this, we have started a new drive to increase take-up of Pension Credit, which is currently far too low - with a third of eligible pensioners not claiming. We know there are low-income pensioners who are not claiming Pension Credit, and we really urge those people to apply.

In November 2024 we wrote to approximately 120,000 pensioners in receipt of Housing Benefit who could also be entitled to Pension Credit and inviting them to make a claim. To support Pension Credit take-up, we will bring together the administration of Pension Credit and Housing Benefit as soon as operationally possible, so that pensioner households currently receiving Housing Benefit also receive any Pension Credit that they are entitled to. Ahead of this, we will also work with older people's charities and local authorities to raise awareness of Pension Credit, and help identify households not claiming it.

Claims for Pension Credit can be made online at: www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim. The service is available to use 24/7, and provides those who may struggle to make their claim alone, the flexibility to have a friend or family to support them when making their claim, at a time that is most convenient to them. Pension Credit claims can also be made through the Freephone telephone number 0800 99 1234, and there is an option to complete a paper application form.

The Government is absolutely committed to supporting pensioners and giving them the dignity and security they deserve in retirement. Our commitment to protect the Triple Lock throughout this Parliament will see over 12 million pensioners benefit. Over the course of this Parliament, the yearly amount of the basic State Pension is forecast to increase by around £1,500. Protecting the Triple Lock even in the current economic climate shows our steadfast commitment to pensioners.

The Warm Home Discount scheme provides eligible low-income households across Great Britain with a £150 rebate on their electricity bill. This winter, we expect over three million households, including over one million pensioners, to benefit under the scheme.

At the Autumn Budget 2024, the Chancellor announced that £1 billion, including consequential funding for the devolved administrations, will be invested to extend the Household Support Fund in England by a full year until 31 March 2026, and to maintain Discretionary Housing Payments in England and Wales. This will help struggling households facing the greatest financial hardship.

We are supporting consumers, including pensioners, through the Government's ambitious Warm Homes Plan which will transform homes across the country by making them cleaner and cheaper to run from installing new insulation to rolling out solar and heat pumps. We have committed £3.4 billion over the next 3 years towards heat decarbonisation and household energy efficiency. This includes £1.8 billion to support fuel poverty schemes, helping over 225,000 households reduce their energy bills by over £200.

The unacceptable state of the NHS is the biggest betrayal of older generations today. We are determined to change that. As part of the Autumn Budget 2024, the Government announced a £22.6 billion increase in day-to-day health

spending and a £3.1 billion increase in the capital budget over this year and next. We are prioritising cutting waiting times in the NHS which will help many pensioners currently waiting in pain and discomfort for treatment.

Thank you for taking the time to write regarding Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council's concerns.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Torsten Bell', with a stylized, cursive script.

Torsten Bell MP

Minister for Pensions

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Mr Harry Catherall
Chief Executive, Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UG

DECS Reference: MIN/1229257/24

16 December 2024

Dear Mr Catherall,

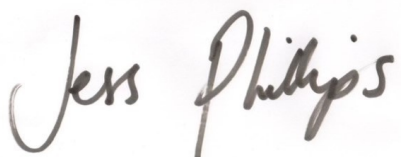
Thank you for your letter of 15 October to the Home Secretary requesting a meeting to discuss how Oldham Council and its partners can restore public confidence in its safeguarding services, in the light of past failures to protect children from child sexual exploitation. I am replying as the Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, and I apologise for the delay in responding.

As mentioned in my previous response to you of 29 October (our ref: MIN/1205645/24), I understand your concerns regarding the limitations of Newsam and Ridgway's review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, particularly with regards to how victims and survivors were engaged. I have every sympathy for the victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation in Oldham who understandably feel let down by those who were meant to protect them, compounding the horrific abuse they experienced. And as you rightly state, it is important that we provide support and care to victims and survivors and aim to restore their confidence.

I fully support your endeavours to shape more effective safeguarding practices today, but unfortunately neither the Home Secretary nor I will be able to meet you at this juncture, due to the demands on our time. In any event, I would suggest that engagement with other areas that have commissioned successful local inquiries would be more helpful for you at this stage. They will be able to provide greater insight into the process than central government, which is necessarily at a greater remove. I would therefore encourage you to engage with Telford and Wrekin Council, for example, which commissioned the Telford Inquiry, delivered with victims and survivors at the forefront, to understand and learn from its experiences.

Thank you again for taking time to write to us on this important matter. I wish you every success in your pursuit of restoring public confidence in the services that Oldham Council is providing to safeguard and protect children.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jess Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The name "Jess" is on the left and "Phillips" is on the right, connected by a fluid stroke.

Jess Phillips MP
Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls



Report to COUNCIL

Review of Political Balance on Committees

Officer Contact: Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy and Performance

Report Author: Peter Thompson, Interim Head of Democratic Services

Ext. 4716

9th April 2025

Reason for Decision

Since the last ordinary meeting of the Council, on 18th December (adjourned until 20th January 2025), the Chief Executive has received notification that Councillors Adams, Arnott and Sheldon have resigned from the Conservative Group. Councillors Adams and Arnott will henceforth sit as Independent Members, whilst Councillor Sheldon joined the Oldham Group on 27th March, having sat as an Independent Member since his resignation from the Conservative Group in January 2025.

Considering this, the Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and under Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year. The effect, in terms of committee places is that the Conservatives will cede seats on the Planning Committee, Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board, Employment Committee and the Highway Regulation Committee to the four Independent Members (Councillors Adams, Arnott, Ball and Wilkinson) and their seat on the Commons Registration Committee to the Oldham Group. The Independent Members will cede their seat on the Audit Committee to the Oldham Group.

Recommendations

- (a) That the revised composition of the political groups as shown in paragraph 1.1 be noted.

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- (b) The number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2024/25 Municipal Year be as detailed in paragraph 1.5.
 - (c) Any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.
 - (d) That nominations for one seat on each of the Planning Committee, Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board, Employment Committee and the Highway Regulation Committee be sought from the four Independent Members who are not aligned to a political group and nominations for seats on the Commons Registration Committee and the Audit Committee be sought from the Oldham Group.

Appointment of Committees and Composition of Political Groups

1 Background

The Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. On 31st December 2024, Councillors Adams, Arnott and Sheldon have resigned from the Conservative Group. Councillors Adams and Arnott will sit as Independent Members and Councillor Sheldon has joined the Oldham Group Therefore, the Conservative Group has been reduced from eight to five members. The new leader of the Conservative Group is Councillor Woodvine.

1.1 Political Groups

Council is asked to note that the composition of the political groups, as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, is: -

(i)	The Labour Group	27	Members
(ii)	The Liberal Democrat Group	9	Members
(iii)	The Oldham Group	9	Members
(iv)	Conservative Group	5	Members
(v)	Failsworth Independent Party	2	Members
(vi)	Royton Independents	2	Members
(vii)	The Independent Group	2	Members

There are 4 Independent Members not aligned to a political group.

- The Labour Group comprises: Councillors Shah (Leader), Taylor, Mohon Ali, Aslam, Bashforth, Brownridge, Charters, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Goodwin, Harrison, A. Hussain, F. Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Rustidge and Shuttleworth.
- The Liberal Democrat Group comprises: Councillors Sykes (Leader), Al-Hamdani, Bishop, Hamblett, Harkness, Kenyon, Marland, Murphy and Williamson.
- The Oldham Group comprises: Councillors Ghafoor (Leader), Akhtar, Zaheer Ali, Azad, Chowhan, Ibrahim, Kouser, Sheldon and Wahid
- The Conservative Group comprises: Councillors Woodvine (Leader), Byrne, Lancaster, Quigg and Sharp.
- The Failsworth Independent Party comprises: Councillors Hobin (Leader) and Hindle.
- The Royton Independents comprises; Councillors Hurley (Leader) and Hughes.
- The Independent Group comprises Councillors Hince (Leader) and Navesey
- Councillors Adams, Arnott, Ball and Wilkinson are independent members not aligned to a political group.

1.2 Political Balance

There are four statutory principles of political balance which have to be applied in filling appointments to Committees. These are contained in S15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The principles have to be applied in priority order as follows:-

- (i) That not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group.
- (ii) That the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the Authority's membership.
- (iii) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority; and,
- (iv) Subject to paragraphs (i) to (iii) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the same number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.

The political group sizes as a percentage of the total membership of the Council are:-

Labour Group	$27/60 \times 100 = 45\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 45\% = 56.25$	56 seats
Liberal Democrat Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Oldham Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Conservative Group	$5/60 \times 100 = 8.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 8.33\% = 10.41$	10 seats
Failsworth Independent Party	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 Seats
The Independent Group	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats
Royton Independents	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats

There are 4 Independent Members not within a Group. Unallocated seats will be offered to them.

1.3 The application of these percentages to the number of seats on individual Committees gives the following allocation of seats: -

COMMITTEE SIZE	Labour (L)	Liberal Democrat (LD)	Oldham Group (OG)	Conservatives (C)	Failsworth Independents (FIP)	The Independent Group (TIG)	Royton Independents (RI)
16	7.20	2.40	2.40	1.33	0.53	0.53	0.53
15	6.75	2.25	2.25	1.24	0.50	0.50	0.50
14	6.30	2.10	2.10	1.16	0.46	0.46	0.46
13	5.85	1.95	1.95	1.08	0.43	0.43	0.43
12	5.40	1.80	1.80	0.99	0.39	0.39	0.39

11	4.95	1.65	1.65	0.91	0.36	0.36	0.36
10	4.50	1.50	1.50	0.83	0.33	0.33	0.33
9	4.05	1.35	1.35	0.74	0.29	0.29	0.29
8	3.60	1.20	1.20	0.66	0.26	0.26	0.26
7	3.15	1.05	1.05	0.58	0.23	0.23	0.23
6	2.70	0.90	0.90	0.49	0.19	0.19	0.19
5	2.25	0.75	0.75	0.41	0.16	0.16	0.16
4	1.80	0.60	0.60	0.33	0.13	0.13	0.13
3	1.35	0.45	0.45	0.24	0.10	0.10	0.10

- 1.4 Under the political balance rules after these percentages have been applied to the total number of seats on Committees of the Council any remaining seats must be allocated to members who are not Members of any political group. Applying political balance as detailed above, the allocation of seats, to the current committee structure, would be as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	FIP	TIG	RI	Ind
Planning	16	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	0
Licensing	15	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	0
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Audit Committee	9	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Charitable Trust Committee	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Highway Regulation Committee	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

(formerly TRO Panel)									
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	125	56	20	20	10	2	2	2	0

The above calculation leaves 13 committee places to be allocated.

1.5 Adjustment of Seats

In accordance with the rules of political balance, so far as practicable, the number of seats must be allocated to accord with the rules above. It is therefore proposed that the number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2024/25 Municipal Year be fixed as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	FI P	TI G	RI	Ind
Planning	16	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Licensing	15	7	2	2	1	1	1	0	1
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	1	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	2	1	0	0	1	1
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Audit	9	4	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	
Charitable Trustee Committee	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	
Highways Regulation Committee (formerly TRO)	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	
Total	125	56	19	19	11	4	4	4	8

- The Health and Well Being Board is not included in the calculation above. Although the Committee is appointed by Council, the Local Authority (Public Health and Well Being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide for the disapplication of Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- Annual Council on 22nd May 2024 appointed a District Lead for each District Area and 2 Deputy District Leads for North and East District.

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- c. It was previously agreed that the standards sub-committee, dealing with assessments or hearings will consist of 5 members with 2 Members from the Labour Group and one each from the Liberal Democrat Group, Conservative Group and the Oldham Group who have seats on the Standards Committee.
- 1.6 Substitutes are to be appointed by the political groups in accordance with the Substitute Scheme contained in the Constitution. Substitutes for Overview and Scrutiny Boards may be nominated up to a maximum of the number of Members of that Group serving on the Board. Substitutes are not permitted for Licensing. For the Planning Committee, up to 16 substitutes are to be nominated in accordance with the political balance of each Committee. Council is also asked to appoint substitutes to the Highways Regulation Committee, the Audit Committee and to the four Overview and Scrutiny Boards.
- 1.7 Council is asked to note the revised political composition of the Committees; to determine the allocation of seats to political groups; and to make the appointments to fill the seats in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations.
- 2 **Options/Alternatives**
- 2.1 To approve the report.
Not to approve the report
- 3 **Preferred Option**
- 3.1 To approve the report.
- 4 **Consultation**
- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant officers and Councillors.
- 5 **Financial Implications**
- 5.1 n/a
- 6 **Legal Implications**
- 6.1 There are no legal comments.
- 7 **Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young Persons**
- 7.1 N/a
- 8 **Key Decision**
- 8.1 No
- 9 **Key Decision Reference**
- 9.1 n/a
- 10 **Background Papers**

The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

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11. **Appendices**
None