

Present: Councillor J. Hussain (in the Chair)
Councillors Ghafoor, Kouser, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Quigg
(Substitute for Councillor Sharp), Shuttleworth, Wilkinson and
Williamson

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Taylor	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes
Councillor Kenyon	Calling-in Member
Neil Consterdine	Director of Communities
Steve Hughes	Assistant Director (Strategy & Performance)
Alex Bougatef	Interim Borough Solicitor
Simon Shuttleworth	Service Manager – Districts
Victoria Wood	Head of Housing Needs
Peter Thompson	Constitutional Services

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Malik and Sharp (Councillor Quigg was attending as substitute for Councillor Sharp).

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 Scrutiny Board to consider.

5 **CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

Resolved:
That the Call-in Procedure be noted.

6 **OLDHAM MBC – TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FAIR SHARE POLICY**

The Chair reported that this special meeting of the Scrutiny Board had been considered to consider an item of Called-in business, from the Cabinet's meeting held on 16th December 2024. Councillors Kenyon and Al-Hamdani, in accordance with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules had called-in Minute 12 taken from the proceedings of the Cabinet's meeting held on 1st December 2024 (Oldham MBC – Temporary Accommodation Fair Share Policy).

The grounds for the call-in, which Councillor Kenyon outlined to the Scrutiny Board meeting were that there not enough

information in the report for cabinet to take the decision that they did. There were, he reported, missing costs which affected an assessment of the likely success of the implementation of the policy. There was also no forecasted timescale for the implementation of the policy.



In addition, Councillor Kenyon added that, the report described a new policy, outlining an up-front investment by the Council and measured these costs against the value of a range of resultant returns. The report sought approval for these implementation costs.

The higher the actual cost of these unknown costs then there is an increasing requirement for a higher collection rate in order for the implementation of the policy to not only cover its own costs but also provide a surplus.

Councillor Kenyon requested that the report be rewritten to attach a value to all unknown costs along with a timeline, for the Cabinet to reconsider at a future meeting.

On 16th December 2024, the Cabinet had approved a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that had 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.

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.

In accordance with the protocol for dealing with Called-in business and in consideration of the Call-in, Members of the Scrutiny Board asked questions of the Cabinet Member for Decent Homes, Councillor Taylor and of the Director of Communities who both explained the reasons for the decisions made by the Cabinet, on 16th December 2024 and the reasons for the recommendations that were contained in the submitted report.

Members of the Scrutiny Board also asked questions of the Calling-in member who was present, Councillor Kenyon, asking him for a fuller explanation of the reasons for the Call-in and whether he had asked the report author for answers to some of the questions that he posed, prior to the meeting?

The Scrutiny Board proceeded to consider the report in detail and afterwards the cabinet member, the Director and the calling-in Member were all given the opportunity to respond to the debate.



Resolved:

That the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board upholds the decision of the Cabinet made on 16th December in respect of the item: Oldham MBC – Temporary Accommodation Fair Share Policy (minute 12 refers), meaning that the decision of the Cabinet takes immediate effect.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.15pm