

Oldham Borough Council



**Council Meeting
Wednesday 17th September
2025**

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Tuesday, 9th September 2025

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, for the following purposes:

Item No

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 38)

To order that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16th July 2025 be signed as a correct record.
- 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)
There is no Youth Council business for this Council meeting to consider.
- 8 Public Questions

(time limit 15 Minutes)
- 9 Questions to Leader and Cabinet (Pages 39 - 108)

(time limit 90 minutes)
 - a. Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth – including the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held 16th June 2025; the minutes of meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held 27th June 2025; and the minutes of the meeting of the AGMA Executive Board held 27th June 2025.
 - b. Statutory Deputy Leader and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder

- c. Deputy Leader and Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability Portfolio Holder
- d. Children and Young People's Portfolio Holder
- e. Adults, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
- f. Education and Skills Portfolio Holder
- g. Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder
- h. Enterprise Portfolio Holder
- i. Transport and Highways Portfolio Holder

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Notice of Administration Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1: Recognising Palestine and the famine in Gaza

To be Moved by Councillor Mushtaq

to be Seconded by Councillor Taylor

Next month will mark two years since the horrific attack of October 7th, leaked data from the IDF's own figures indicate a civilian death rate of 83% in the Gaza war that followed those attacks, causing experts from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) to state "That proportion of civilians among those killed would be unusually high, particularly as it has been going on for such a long time." When compared to conflicts tracked by UCDP since 1989, only the Rwandan Genocide, the Russian siege of Mariupol and Srebrenica have a higher proportion of civilian casualties.

The number of civilians impacted by this war in Israel and Palestine is unpalatable to thousands of people across Oldham. The war is having a profound effect on millions of people worldwide as we witness unimaginable suffering.

This Council notes:

- The UK Government's announcement on 29 July 2025 that it will formally recognise the State of Palestine in September.
- The joint statement issued on 21 July 2025 by UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy and 28 international partners, which condemned the Israeli government's aid delivery model as "dangerous, fuelling instability and depriving Gazans of human dignity," and called for an "immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire".
- The speech delivered by UK Ambassador to the UN, Dame Barbara Woodward, on 23 July 2025, in which she described the Israeli aid system as "inhumane, ineffective, dangerous and fuelling instability," and called for Israel to end attacks on civilians, cooperate with the UN, and uphold international humanitarian law.
- The official declaration by the United Nations backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and humanitarian agencies that famine conditions now exist in Gaza, with over 640,000 people facing catastrophic food insecurity and millions more in emergency or crisis conditions.
- The IPC concluded that the decision was based on evidence of extreme food deprivation, acute malnutrition and starvation-related deaths.
- That the famine is a man-made disaster, resulting from prolonged conflict,

displacement, and severe restrictions on humanitarian access.

This Council believes:

- That recognition of the State of Palestine is a vital step toward a just and lasting peace in the region.
- That the current humanitarian crisis in Gaza demands urgent and coordinated international action to prevent further loss of life.
- That Israel should immediately allow full and unrestricted humanitarian aid agencies into Gaza to immediately address the famine.
- That the UK Government's recent statements reflect a growing international consensus on the need for accountability, humanitarian access, and a political resolution, but the time for action has never been more apparent given that a famine has been declared.
- That local authorities have a role to play in advocating for human rights, peace, and justice globally as our residents care deeply about these issues.
- That residents across Oldham have displayed their commitment to supporting aid efforts and minimising suffering in Gaza by raising awareness and fundraising for charities.

This Council resolves to:

1. Welcome and support the UK Government's commitment to recognise the State of Palestine as part of a renewed peace process. Given that the Israeli Government hasn't complied with the steps outlined by the UK Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary in July this Council reaffirms that now is the time for recognition of Palestinian statehood.
2. Endorse the joint statement of 21st July 2025 and the UK's position at the UN Security Council as expressions of moral leadership and international solidarity.
3. Urge the UK Government to accelerate and expand humanitarian assistance to Gaza, including through further diplomatic pressure for a ceasefire and unrestricted aid access.
4. Call on the international community to intensify efforts to end the famine and support long-term recovery and governance in Gaza.
5. Write to the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, and local MPs expressing this Council's support for recognition of a Palestinian state and humanitarian action.

Motion 2: Setting out our ambition to become a 'Defibrillator Friendly' Borough

To be Moved by Councillor Brownridge
to be Seconded by Councillor Rustidge

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is one of the most urgent and time-critical medical emergencies — and without swift intervention, it is almost always fatal. Community defibrillators are a vital public health asset, offering immediate, life-saving support in those critical first minutes before emergency services arrive. Thanks to the growing number of defibrillators across our borough, lives are already being saved. But we cannot afford to be complacent. The evidence is clear: rapid access to a defibrillator dramatically increases the chances of

survival. Every second counts — and every community deserves to be protected. By working in partnership with local organisations and empowering residents with the tools and knowledge they need, we can make Oldham a national leader, and potentially the first ‘Defibrillator Friendly’ borough in England.

This Council notes:

- Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is one of the leading causes of sudden death in the UK.
- Around 55 incidents occur per 100,000 people every year, and tragically, eight out of ten of these cardiac arrests happen at home.
- Survival rates remain desperately low, with only around 9% of patients surviving to hospital discharge.
- In these moments, every second counts, early CPR and access to a defibrillator can be the difference between life and death.

This Council further notes:

- Here in Oldham, we face a stark reality: 64 of our community defibrillators are currently offline.
- The local registered charity, Defibrillators Save Lives, has already proven its capability in supporting communities across Oldham, they have installed, maintained, and checked dozens of defibrillators.
- They work directly with the North West Ambulance Service to ensure these devices are correctly registered on The Circuit and activated in an emergency.

This Council resolves to work in collaboration with Defibrillators Save Lives to:

- Map and monitor all public-access defibrillators across the borough,
- Ensure offline devices are repaired, restored or replaced and brought back into service,
- Establish a routine checking and reporting system using The Circuit,
- Provide education and awareness so that residents not only know where defibrillators are but also how to use them with confidence, similar to the hugely success Defib Day they ran in The Spindles 9th August.

This Council further resolves:

- To firmly state our ambition for Oldham to become the first ‘Defibrillator Friendly’ Borough in the England.

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Notice of Opposition Business

(time limit 30 minutes)

Motion 1: Provision of Free School Travel for all Children in Temporary Accommodation

To be Moved by Councillor Akhtar

To be Seconded by Councillor Chowhan

1. Reason for Motion

To ensure that children living in temporary accommodation (TA) in Oldham are not disadvantaged by their housing situation and can maintain stability in education.

“No child should be punished for their family’s housing situation”.

2. Background (Latest Facts)

Oldham picture

- At 31 March 2025, there were 562 households in temporary accommodation in Oldham (Table TA4).
- In Q1 2025 (Jan–Mar) there were 310 households with children (748 Children between 0-18) in TA (most recently published government data).
- TA is intended to be short-term (around six weeks), but Oldham data show many households remain beyond 6 months across B&B and nightly-paid placements.
- Composition (Oldham, 31 Mar 2025):
 - o B&B: 173 households (incl. cases over 6 months).
 - o Nightly paid, self-contained: 259 households (many 6–12 months and 1–2 years).
 - o Hostels: 5 | Private sector leased: 87 | LA/HA stock: 38.

National/GM context

- England total: 131,140 households in TA (31 Mar 2025).
- Law already provides free school travel if:
 - a. >2 miles (under 8) or >3 miles (8+), or
 - b. no safe walking route, or
 - c. child cannot walk due to SEND/disability/mobility needs.
- Locally, children with an EHC Plan are supported from a SEN perspective and continue to receive travel assistance where already in place.
- GM operating practice: when a family is in paid nightly TA in another GM borough, they can apply for bus passes from the host borough, but only if they meet standard distance criteria—leaving a gap for many placed nearer than the mileage thresholds yet far from their original school.

Political momentum: The Manchester Evening News campaign calls for free bus passes for children in TA living >30 minutes' walk from school. As of 25 Aug 2025, six GM MPs publicly back the campaign. No GM local authority has yet adopted a borough-wide concession.

Why discretionary action is needed

Children rehoused (often suddenly) can face long, complex, and costly journeys to their existing school—leading to lateness, absence, and stress. The statutory mileage rules do not cover many TA cases; discretionary support is therefore required to protect educational continuity.

3. Current Position in Oldham

Oldham complies with national transport duties and supports pupils eligible under distance/safety/SEND criteria. Children in TA who fall short of mileage thresholds (or are rehoused across GM) face a policy gap. Acting now would make Oldham the first GM authority to introduce a dedicated concession for children in TA.

4. Proposal

This Council resolves:

1. To extend free school travel (bus pass or taxi, as appropriate) to all school-aged children living in TA in Oldham, irrespective of statutory mileage thresholds.
2. To instruct officers in Children's Services, Education and Transport to:
 - a. Define eligibility based on verified TA status (including placements within and across GM).
 - b. Develop delivery models (bus passes, pre-approved taxi contracts, or hybrid models), with clear safeguarding standards.
 - c. Assess financial implications and identify funding sources (e.g. Homelessness Prevention funding; partnership with TfGM and operators; targeted charitable/hardship support).
3. To report back to Cabinet within 12 weeks with:
 - a. A recommended delivery model.
 - b. Estimated budget and funding options.
 - c. An implementation timetable aiming to begin before the next academic term.
4. To ensure the scheme embeds safeguarding, equality and inclusion, and aligns with existing SEND/EHC travel assistance so support is continuous where already in place.
5. **Additional resolution** – The Council further resolves to:
 - a. Call on Oldham's two Members of Parliament to publicly support the campaign for free school travel for children in TA across Greater Manchester.
 - b. Urge the Mayor of Greater Manchester to introduce a region-wide scheme that guarantees free transport for children in TA, ensuring no child is penalised for their families housing situation.

6. Expected Outcomes

- a. Improved attendance and punctuality for children in TA.
- b. Educational continuity and wellbeing during periods of acute housing instability.
- c. Oldham leadership in closing a known policy gap ahead of GM peers.

7. Recommendation

That Oldham Council supports this motion, becoming the first authority in Greater Manchester to guarantee free school travel for children in temporary accommodation, setting a clear and compassionate standard for others to follow.

Motion 2: Oldham Borough deserves a state-of-the-art police station which must include a custody suite

To be Moved by Councillor Al-Hamdani

To be Seconded by Councillor Marland

The Council notes that:

- With the closure of custody suites at both Oldham and Chadderton, Oldham Borough currently has no dedicated facilities open to process detainees.
- Additional services lost include the Magistrates Court, County Court, and police stations in Failsworth, Chadderton and Royton, with other facilities having no face-to-face service, and access to other sites removed, such as in Shaw.
- Current processes mean that officers are required to process detainees at Tameside, which means additional travel time of over an hour for each arrest.
- The current police station in Oldham has been beyond its service life for a number of years, with the current chief constable in 2021 describing the building as comparing the building to those in the old East Germany.
- The Chief Constable also noted that: “custody facilities being tethered to the right operating base is really important”.

The Council further notes the most recent report of His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on custody provision in Manchester, including that:

- Leadership for custody provision isn’t strong enough to make sure the service is provided well and achieves appropriate outcomes for detainees. There is limited prioritisation of custody by senior officers or engagement in how custody is provided. There hasn’t been enough improvement since our previous inspection. Significant concerns remain.
- The position is exacerbated by a large increase in the number of detainees entering custody. This makes it difficult for staff to fulfil all their duties and meet detainees’ needs.
- The force should deal with detainees promptly and minimise the time they spend in custody by - booking detainees into custody promptly and prioritising them appropriately, especially children and those who are vulnerable; ...

And finally, the Council notes that:

- Oldham Council has been in discussions with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Police for a number of years over a new site for a police station, with no location having currently been identified.
- Police and Crime Commissioner Kate Green has acknowledged in a written response to enquiries from the Liberal Democrats that: “there is no immediate intention to locate a custody suite in Oldham, but it may be sensible to future-proof the design of the site to enable this in future if needed”.

Therefore, the Council resolves:

1. To formally note its position that a new Police Station in Oldham should include appropriate custody provision.

2. Set a target to agree a location for a new police station in Oldham within the next six months. If a location is not agreed within that timescale, to provide a report to the appropriate scrutiny committee detailing:
 - a. The requirements for any location for a new police station.
 - b. Any sites which have been discussed and the reasons why they have not been deemed suitable.
 - c. How the Council proposes to identify and bring forward future sites that meet the requirements for a police station in Oldham.

Motion 3: The Old Library: An Anti-Democratic Debacle

To be Moved by Councillor Woodvine

To be Seconded by Councillor Byrne

On 16th August 2025 the Leader of Oldham Council, Councillor Arooj Shah, announced she had unilaterally decided to rename the Old Library on Union Street the 'J. R. Clynes Building' to the bemusement of many residents of Oldham Borough.

This follows a £30+ million renovation project, yet the Council Tax paying public of Oldham were not given an opportunity to express their preference on the title that this public building would take.

The Conservative Group on Oldham Council believe this is not only anti-democratic but also shameful.

Therefore, this Council notes:

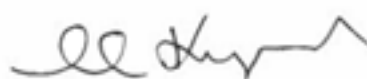
- That no public consultation took place in the naming process of the Old Library building.
- That the Leader of the Council shamefully and willfully excluded democratically elected Councillors and the taxpaying public from the naming process.
- That the first decision to come out of the Borough's new Council Chambers is an anti-democratic diktat by Councillor Arooj Shah, which has no popular consent from the public.

This Council resolves:

1. To reveal all information, including associated costs, in relation to the naming process of the Old Library.
2. To review the naming process and suitability of 'J. R. Clynes' as the title of the building.
3. To consult the wider body of democratically elected Members of Oldham Council from across the Borough.
4. To present a suitable short list of names to the public of Oldham to give them a voice in the naming process of a building which should be the Borough's beating heart of democracy.

- 13 Treasury Management Outturn Report 2024/25 (Pages 135 - 152)
- 14 Introduction of Article 4 Direction for Houses of Multiple Occupation (Pages 153 - 196)
- 15 Oldham Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2025-26 (Pages 197 - 228)
- 16 Appointment of Vice Chair of Audit Committee - 2025/26 (Pages 229 - 232)
Appointment of the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee 2025/26
- 17 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Pages 233 - 266)

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

