

**Present:** The Mayor – Councillor Moores (in the Chair)



Councillors Adams, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, M Ali, Z Ali, Arnott, Aslam, Ball, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Chauhan, 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, Malik, Marland, McLaren, 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 Councillors Azad and Bashforth.

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

Councillor Ghafoor declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 (Motion 2 – Strengthening Standards and Transparency for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)) and he left the room during the consideration and determination of this Motion.

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

The Mayor indicated that he had been advised of an Urgent item of Business to be considered at this meeting arising from the proceedings of the Standards Sub-Committee meeting that was held on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Councillor Hince MOVED and Councillor Navesey SECONDED that Council Procedure Rules (namely Council Procedure Rule 4.1 relating to the business to be transacted at the meeting) be suspended to allow this matter to be discussed by the Council. On being put to the Vote the Motion was CARRIED.

*The meeting was adjourned at 6.15pm and reconvened at 6.55pm*

The Mayor advised that he was permitting a 10-minute debate on the proceedings of the Standards Sub-Committee and the meeting was addressed by Councillors Hince, Navesey, Kenyon, Ghafoor, Harrison, Shah and Sykes thereon.

*The meeting was adjourned at 7.20pm and reconvened at 7.35pm*

The Mayor indicated that he was minded to vary the order of the agenda, insofar as item 16 (Electronic Voting) would be considered after agenda item 9 (Questions to Leader and Cabinet). Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Jabbar

SECONDED this variation to the agenda and, on being put to the Vote, the Motion was CARRIED.

In view of the amount of time lost due to the two adjournments Councillor Chauhan MOVED and Councillor Rustidge SECONDED the MOTION that the Council shall suspend Council Procedure Rules in respect of agenda item 9 (Reports of the Leader and Cabinet Members). On being put to the Vote the MOTION was CARRIED.



**RESOLVED:** That the Council suspends Council Procedure Rules in respect of not having a debate on agenda item 9 (Reports of the Leader and Cabinet Members) and requesting that Cabinet Members provide written answers to the questions submitted by non-executive members.

4

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

The Mayor reported that the timings for the Motions to be considered at item 11 (Notice of Opposition Business) be allocated as follows: Liberal Democrat Group's Motion – 10 minutes, Oldham Group's Motion - 10 minutes, the Conservative Group's Motion – 8 minutes and the Reform UK Group's Motion – 2 minutes.

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#### **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.

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#### **LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Arooj Shah, delivered her Annual Statement.

The Leader reminded the Council of her priorities, as set out in May 2023, when she first assumed office and highlighted work that had been done and which was still being done to improve Oldham, to retain a resident focused approach and to provide high quality services for local people.

As Leader of Oldham Council, it is both a privilege and a profound responsibility to serve this remarkable borough – the place I grew up and the place I am proud to call my home. Oldham is a place of resilience, ambition, and heart — shaped by its proud history and driven by the energy and creativity of its people.

It's a real privilege to stand here today, in this incredible new home for democracy; the JR Clynes Building, for our first Council meeting in these surroundings. This building isn't just a new workplace; it's a symbol of the regeneration and renewal happening right across our borough. It represents a new chapter for Oldham, one rooted in pride, ambition, and progress.

This Annual Statement marks a moment to reset our ambitions and recommit to building a better Oldham — one that is fairer, greener, and more inclusive for everyone who calls it home.

Our work is guided by three core values: Pride, Progress, and Partnership.

Pride in our borough and its people; Progress that is bold, sustainable, and rooted in opportunity; and Partnership — because we know that real change only happens when we work together, across communities, sectors, and boundaries.

With these values at our heart, we move forward with purpose and determination. Oldham's best days are ahead, and together, we will make them happen.

This year, Oldham Council was named 'Most Improved Council' at the prestigious LGC Awards — a recognition that speaks volumes about the journey we've been on and the people and partnerships we have. It's a moment of pride, but not one of complacency. This is not a celebration of perfection, but of progress. It reflects the hard work, honest self-assessment, and difficult decisions we've made together. It's a testament to the power of collaboration — across political lines, with our partners, and most importantly, with our residents.

Behind this recognition lies a deeper transformation. Over the past year, we've seen a cultural shift within the Council, led by our new Chief Executive, focused on reshaping who we are, and how we work.

We are becoming more open and transparent, sharing our challenges as well as our successes.

We are more responsive to residents, listening actively and acting with urgency.

We are more focused on the everyday realities people face — from housing and health to jobs and community safety.

This last twelve months marks a turning point in our relationship with national government.

The Labour government's clear commitment to reforming local government is a long-overdue recognition that councils like Oldham are not just service providers, but strategic partners in delivering national renewal locally in communities.

We now have a partner that recognises the role of local government, one that treats us as equals.

It's a marked contrast to my previous experience in ten years of local government, we now have a direct line to decision-makers who understand our communities, our challenges, and our potential.

We're consulted. We're engaged. And we're listened to.

But we must also be honest about the scale of the challenge, we cannot expect to reverse 14 years of underfunding of services overnight.

Local government faces a £6 billion national funding gap — a crisis that cannot be ignored. For high-need, low-revenue areas like Oldham, fair funding is not just a matter of equity; it's a matter of survival. We need to continue to make the case for investment that reflects the realities we face and the ambitions we hold — and we will.

The Oldham Plan has now been adopted for a year, it is a blueprint for our borough's future, developed hand-in-hand with our partners and residents. It sets out three bold missions. Our first mission to deliver Healthier, Happier Lives, this means tackling health inequalities and supporting wellbeing across

every stage of life. Our second A Great Place to Live which means delivering safe, vibrant neighbourhoods with quality housing, schools, and public spaces. Our third mission A Green and Growing Borough this is to drive inclusive economic growth while leading the way on climate action.

In early November 2025 we hosted our second annual careers event, connecting young people with employers, training providers, and mentors. And we launched our employment and skills strategy at our Get Oldham Working roundtable – building on a motion brought to this very chamber.

Our students continue to achieve, with strong GCSE and A-Level results across the borough. Through major projects like SportsTown and Northern Roots, we're connecting education, health, and sustainability, creating places where learning, wellbeing, and opportunity grow together.

We're also backing this up with real investment in employment and enterprise, through Get Oldham Working, we've supported over 15,000 residents into work and we've launched The Hive in Spindles, a space for startups and social enterprises to grow, collaborate, and thrive.

Together, these efforts reflect a borough that is ambitious for its young people and determined to build a future where every child can thrive.

At the heart of public service is the everyday work that keeps our borough running — the services that residents rely on, and the spaces that shape our daily lives. In Oldham, we are committed to getting the basics right and raising the standard across the board.

Our waste and recycling services to serve almost 100,000 residential properties and up to 1,800 businesses. Each month, we collect around 3,000 tonnes of general waste and an average of 2,800 tonnes of recycling, a vital operation that keeps our streets clean and our environment protected.

We've expanded our environmental enforcement teams, with more boots on the ground tackling fly-tipping and littering.

We're also investing in the places that bring joy, connection, and wellbeing to our communities. We've delivered upgrades to parks and play areas; creating safe, vibrant spaces for families and young people.

Our commitment to the environment is growing — literally. This autumn and winter, we're planting 650 new trees, and planting new woodland to create greener neighbourhoods. Through it all, we remain focused on the fundamentals, reliable bin collections, timely pothole repairs and clean streets and safe public spaces.

These are the services that shape everyday life — and we will continue to deliver them with pride, precision, and accountability. Oldham's identity isn't shaped by Council services and the infrastructure we create, but by its spirit, the culture we celebrate, the communities we nurture, and the pride we take in our sporting achievements.

We know that when Oldham pulls together, we are capable of extraordinary things. It is only by sticking together, as neighbours, as partners, as one borough, that we will realise Oldham's full potential.

So let this be a call to action.

Champion Oldham in every forum — don't talk down our Borough, speak up for us and our people. Support our businesses and employers — they are the backbone of our local economy. Collaborate, cooperate, and face challenges together — because unity is our greatest strength. Together, we can build a borough that is fairer, greener, and more ambitious for everyone. Let's move forward with confidence, compassion, and pride, and let's do it together. Oldham's future is ours to shape and I believe it's a future full of promise.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Leader of the Council's Annual Statement be noted.

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**YOUTH COUNCIL**

There was no Youth Council business for this meeting of the Council to consider.

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**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

1. Question from Hannah Roberts

Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care confirm NHS advice on taking paracetamol during pregnancy and why it is important that parents and carers follow NHS guidance on childhood vaccinations? Can she also outline what action the Council is taking to promote childhood vaccinations and whether there are any plans for Family Hubs to support parents and carers in making sure children get protection from dangerous diseases such as measles, rubella, polio, diphtheria, hepatitis B, tetanus and whooping cough?

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing replied that paracetamol remains the recommended pain relief option for pregnant women when used as directed.

Oldham GPs continue to prescribe it to our Oldham mothers and encourage its use amongst family members safe in the knowledge this advice is based on the best evidence we have.

Fever and untreated pain are much more serious risks to mothers and unborn children

Vaccinations are a safe and effective way of protecting children from serious diseases, which if contracted can lead to long term health problems and in some cases, loss of life. Vaccinations protect the individuals receiving them, as well as other people in the community who have not reached the minimum age to be vaccinated or may not be able to have vaccinations due to severe allergies, or weakened immune systems.

Oldham Council have funded voluntary sector Community Health Champions who have taken part in VaxChat training.

They have been using this learning to share vaccination messages with the communities they support. Oldham Council are working with two of our Health Champion organisations to gather insights from communities with low take up of MMR vaccination to better understand the barriers to vaccine take-up so that we can tailor our future approach.

Oldham Council funds the integrated children's and families service that operates out of the family hubs. This includes health visitors providing clear and evidence-based information to

parents and carers about the benefits and safety of vaccines. They can help address misinformation and help our communities understand what vaccines are due and when.



## 2. Question from Jenny Harrison

It really was useful to be able to use pensioner and disabled bus passes before 09.30 on Bee Network buses during August.

Are there any plans to put this in place permanently?

And how is the new 28-day Bee Network bus pass for 18–24-year-olds, costing £40 a month, being promoted to ensure that as many young people as possible benefit?

Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways replied, stating that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is responsible for this initiative, which aligns with its broader Bee Network strategy to improve connectivity, reduce barriers to travel, and enhance public transport access for residents across Greater Manchester.

Oldham Council actively supports these initiatives, reflecting its ongoing commitment to securing the best outcomes for local communities. Through close collaboration with TfGM and the Bee Network, the council continues to champion improved transport options that meet the needs of Oldham's residents.

We will continue to promote these offers to our residents through our usual communication channels.

## 3. Question from Rosalynn Birch

The Labour Government has increased support for parents to help with childcare costs for children from 9 months to starting school. This includes introducing 30 hours a week free childcare for eligible working parents from September 2025. Is the Cabinet Member able to say how many parents in Oldham have benefited and how much this saves in nursery fees? And what support is Oldham Council giving to childcare providers to be able to deliver this increased offer?

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People replied that, the expansion of 30 hours of free childcare for eligible working parents from September 2025 is providing significant additional support for families in Oldham.

Government data shows that at the end of the summer term, 3,054 families were already accessing the working parents entitlement, and since September, a further 906 families have taken up the extended offer.

In terms of savings, while the Government estimates that families could save up to £7,500 per child per year, our local analysis based on average nursery fees of £6.33 per hour for 1,140 funded hours suggests a potential saving of around £7,216 annually for each child. This represents a substantial reduction in childcare costs for working parents in Oldham.

To ensure providers can deliver this increased entitlement, Oldham Council is offering a comprehensive package of support. This includes training and networking opportunities, dedicated working groups, and access to both capital and revenue grants. These measures are designed to help providers expand capacity and maintain high-quality provision for families.

#### 4. Question from Valerie Leach

Given the acknowledged importance of the Saddleworth School site in providing much needed housing, including truly affordable housing which is really difficult to find in Saddleworth, please can the Cabinet Member tell us the timetable for development and when homes will start to be built?

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods replied, thanking Valerie Leach for her question. The former Saddleworth School site is earmarked for housing development as a council-owned site in our medium-term housing land supply. Officers have been addressing negotiations over the relocation of a telecoms mast on the site until recently, and the site could not come forward for development until that matter was concluded. Now that matter is resolved, the housing delivery team will be looking to bring the site to market in the near future.

However, developing a site for housing is not a quick process, bearing in mind land deals need to be negotiated and planning permission sought before a spade can even be put in the ground. As such, it will be at least two years before we see the first home completed on the site.

#### 5. Question from Dave Barter

Oldham bus users have been affected by the strikes on Stagecoach, Metroline and First buses, and Oldham residents working on the buses have been affected by many years of low pay and poor working conditions - while all three firms have seen a rise in profits and are doing very well out of the network.

Could the **Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways** tell us how the council is pressing operators to listen to their staff and ensure any pay offer is fair and above inflation, for the benefit of passengers and workers on our buses?

Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet member for Transport and Highways replied, thanking Mr Barter for raising this important issue.

The council recognises the significant disruption that recent industrial action has caused for passengers in Oldham, and we also acknowledge the concerns of bus workers who have faced years of low pay and challenging conditions.

Although pay negotiations are a matter between the operators and their staff, the council – through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester – has been actively pressing for fair treatment of workers.

I'm firmly of the view that any pay offer should reflect the rising cost of living and be above inflation, ensuring that drivers are properly rewarded for the essential service they provide.

Recent progress shows that this approach works: following sustained pressure and dialogue, Unite members at First Bus secured an exceptional pay deal worth up to 20%, and Stagecoach drivers have agreed improved offers of around 12%, alongside better conditions such as holiday entitlement and sick pay. These agreements were only reached because we insisted that operators return to the table with realistic proposals that respect the workforce and maintain service stability for passengers.

Looking ahead, we will continue to use every lever available under the Bee Network franchising model to hold operators to account. Our priority is to ensure that the network delivers for passengers and that those who keep it running are treated fairly. We will keep monitoring pay and conditions and work with unions, operators, and TfGM to prevent disputes escalating and to maintain a reliable, high-quality bus service for Oldham residents.

#### 6. Question from Steven Croft

'What action will the council take to secure removal of unsightly and inappropriate IX Wireless masts from residential areas in line with successes in other GMCA authority areas?'

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods replied, thanking Mr Croft for his question. The Council can only consider taking action to secure the removal of telecoms apparatus where the apparatus is not permitted development, and an appropriate permission has not been secured.

Whilst IX Wireless did not secure the appropriate approvals before installing some apparatus in certain other GM boroughs – and so those authorities were able to secure the removal of that unpermitted apparatus – IX Wireless have followed the correct procedure when working in Oldham and secured the appropriate planning approvals before installing their apparatus, where permission was needed.

#### 7. Question from Nicola Walsh

The gullies in Lees were supposed to be cleared in May but, after they were done in August, I've noticed some which were missed and now look hazardous, a worry as the colder weather is due to hit which will cause an issue with freezing water on pavements and roads.

One in particular on Den Lane where the bottom of Taylor Green Way meets it is completely blocked, already there is a steady flow of water onto the bad bend on Stamford Road near St John's Church.

When are the council going to attend to these missed gullies in Lees?

Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, replied that gully cleansing programme commenced late September 2024 to progressively work through all 47,500 gullies in the borough using two gully wagons, one being brought in additionally just for the task.

After just over a year, out of the 20 wards in the borough, the programme has visited over half of these, currently progressing in the 11<sup>th</sup> ward, achieving an initial clearance rate of between 70 & 80% on average.

The aim of the programme was to clear as many gullies as possible as quickly as possible. Gullies that have been found to be either more solidly blocked or inaccessible are now being dealt with, with one team currently going through the first ward on the programme again. Some gullies need digging out, others repairing, and some accessed by removal of parked cars – this process is happening in parallel. Members are helping operatives where possible ensure cars are moved in advance.

Teams will inform ward members when a revisit to the ward is made.

In accordance with the Council's stated policy on the website, ad hoc visits to clear gullies where there is a significant risk of internal flooding or highway safety will take place as part of the routine reactive highways maintenance service.

#### 8. Question from Lynne Thompson

About 12 months ago there was a stage 1 assessment of Diggle clock tower and looking at options to bring it back to use. When will this move onto the next stage? I understand there was some funding allocated in a cabinet meeting some time ago. With some of the other capital projects going on, is this money still available to move things forward to the next stage?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth replied, that works have been undertaken to Diggle Clock Tower to ensure the building remains 'wind and watertight' and is protected.

We have reprofiled some funding we had set aside for extra emergency works given the previous works have been successful.

As the building is located within the perimeter of Saddleworth Secondary School, discussions have been on-going with the school about potential future uses for the building.

The Council are also considering other alternatives uses for the building and hope to be able to bring something forward in the near future, at which point we will find the money to do this building and project justice.

#### 9. Question from Syed Maruf Ali

Recent reports and census data suggest that thousands of homes across Oldham are currently vacant, with many classed as long-term empty properties. Some sources indicate figures ranging from around 1,100 to over 4,700 empty dwellings in recent years.

Could the Council please provide the most up-to-date figures on the number of empty and long-term empty homes in Oldham?

Furthermore, what action is being taken to bring these properties back into use, and how is the Council ensuring that these homes contribute towards addressing the borough's housing shortage and supporting local families in need of accommodation?

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, replied, thanking Mr Ali for his question. The number of empty homes in the Borough fluctuates, and the majority are only empty for a short period, while work is carried out, or because the property is in probate. Latest Council Tax data indicates that there are 884 empty properties in Oldham, of which 561 are classed as "long term empty", meaning they have been vacant for a period of at least 12 months. It is these long-term empty properties which have the potential to become problematic for neighbours, as well as representing a wasted opportunity, at a time when so many are struggling for secure housing.

While the Council makes use of a variety of powers available to us around empty homes, addressing these properties can be a

complex issue, often involving significant investigative work, in order to ascertain ownership, make contact with the owner, and support them to identify the best way to bring their property up to standard and back into use.

Having looked at best practice from elsewhere, we are currently working with GMCA on options to work more closely with the owners of empty properties, to ensure that these houses are more quickly made available for people in Oldham.

#### 10. Question from Lucia Rea

Can the Council confirm whether it intends to move forward with the local CSE inquiry independently and if so, whether this will begin prior to the start of the national inquiry?

What discussions have taken place to date with the Home Office regarding the establishment of this inquiry?

What progress has been made in securing a start to the inquiry, including whether the Council has formally discussed appointing Tom Crowther KC as Chair of the inquiry?

It was never made clear to survivors or the community that the commencement of Oldham's inquiry was reliant on the timing of the national inquiry.

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People replied,

In January this year, following the announcement by Government of support for five local inquiries into child sexual exploitation, Oldham Council began the process of commissioning its local inquiry, including engaging Tom Crowther KC, who had undertaken the Telford local inquiry, as its potential chair.

However, while this work was underway, in June, Baroness Casey published the outcome of her audit on group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse which included a recommendation for a national inquiry to include targeted local investigations.

At this point conversations with the Home Office focused on whether it might be better for a local inquiry in Oldham to form part of this statutory national inquiry with the additional legal powers available to it. Conversations were held about how this could be implemented and what it would mean for our existing plans here in Oldham. An update was provided to survivors to explain that this process was underway and was likely to take some time.

We continue to await news from the Home Office of the proposed chair of the national inquiry and confirmation of Oldham's position in relation to that inquiry.

Officers have requested an update on Oldham's position within the planned national inquiry and the timescales for that information to be made available.

We will continue to seek the best outcome we can that ensures survivors have their testimony heard and get the answers they deserve.

The Mayor reminded Council that earlier in the meeting (Minute 3), Members had agreed to suspend Council Procedure Rules in respect of this agenda item.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Minutes of the Cabinet meetings held 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 and 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025, be noted.
2. That the Minutes of the meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, held 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025 and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025, be noted.
3. That the reports of the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Members, be noted.

10

**ELECTRONIC VOTING**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report OF THE Executive Director of Resources which outlined a change to the Constitution to enable electronic voting and to clarify the procedure for use of electronic voting.

The Council's Constitution sets out the way in which voting takes place at meetings of the Council or its committees. The Constitution currently provided for voting to take place by way of a show of hands or affirmation of the meeting if there was no dissent, unless a recorded vote is requested.

Council was advised that there was already a procedure in the Constitution for recording the way votes are cast, which involved each councillor declaring how they were voting. A recorded vote would be taken on the requisition of any member supported by five other Members. The results of a recorded vote were set out in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

The Council Chamber in the JR Clynes Building had facilities to enable electronic voting to produce quick, accurate numbers of members voting for, against or abstaining on a motion. The system also recorded the way that each member casted their vote. Each Member possessed a desk unit which housed a microphone, LCD screen and buttons to vote for a motion, against a motion, or to abstain from voting.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council's Constitution be updated to include the changes set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of the submitted report.

11

**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

**Motion 1: Improving Parking Provision at Royal Oldham Hospital**

Councillor Chauhan MOVED and Councillor Brownridge SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council notes:

- That Royal Oldham Hospital provides essential health services for thousands of Oldham residents every week, including emergency, maternity, and specialist care.

- That patients, visitors, and NHS staff frequently report serious difficulties finding parking spaces at and around the hospital site.
- That parking shortages lead to missed or delayed appointments, added stress for patients and families, and unfair parking fines for staff and visitors.
- That the hospital's current car park layout cannot meet the increasing demand from both hospital users and staff.

This Council believes:

- That access to healthcare should not be made more stressful by inadequate or unaffordable parking.
- That a multi-storey car park or other expanded parking solution would significantly improve accessibility and patient experience without consuming additional land.
- That NHS staff, particularly those working long or unsociable hours, should have access to safe and affordable parking.
- That dedicated and accessible parking should be available for people with mobility issues and wheelchair users.

This Council therefore **resolves** to:

1. Request that Oldham Council works collaboratively with the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust (NCA) and relevant partners to explore options for:
  - a. Developing a multi-storey or expanded car park at or near Royal Oldham Hospital.
  - b. Introducing fair and affordable parking arrangements for patients attending A&E, those with regular appointments, and NHS staff.
  - c. Creating dedicated parking directly opposite the A&E department for patients attending A&E only.
  - d. Improving access and facilities for wheelchair users and those with mobility needs.
2. Write to the Chief Executive of the NCA and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (ICB) expressing this Council's support for urgent improvements to parking provision at Royal Oldham Hospital.
3. Request that Oldham's Members of Parliament lobby the national government and publicly support a campaign for better parking provision for Oldham residents attending Royal Oldham Hospital.

**AMENDMENT:**

Councillor Quigg addressed Council and announced that he was WITHDRAWING his AMENDMENT to the MOTION that was to be seconded by Councillor Ball. Council consented to this course of action.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was CARRIED.

**RESOLVED:**

**That this Council resolves to:**

1. Request that Oldham Council works collaboratively with the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust (NCA) and relevant partners to explore options for:
  - a. Developing a multi-storey or expanded car park at or near Royal Oldham Hospital.
  - b. Introducing fair and affordable parking arrangements for patients attending A&E, those with regular appointments, and NHS staff.
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2. Write to the Chief Executive of the NCA and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (ICB) expressing this Council's support for urgent improvements to parking provision at Royal Oldham Hospital.
3. Request that Oldham's Members of Parliament lobby the national government and publicly support a campaign for better parking provision for Oldham residents attending Royal Oldham Hospital.

**Motion 2: Strengthening Standards and Transparency for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

Councillor Hindle MOVED and Councillor Hince SECONDED the following Motion:

At its meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, this Council resolved to implement an Article 4 Direction in relation to small HMOs, this Direction will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026, meaning planning applications must be made to convert a dwelling-house (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4).

The Housing Act 2004 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2018 define an HMO and set out the framework of Licensing responsibilities that sit with local authorities.

This motion is the next step in raising standards for HMOs in the Borough of Oldham, sending a clear message to residents and landlords that we take our duties and responsibilities seriously, and that we want the highest standards permitted by legislation.

This Council notes:

The persistent concerns raised by residents regarding substandard living conditions, overcrowding, fire safety risks, and poor management practices in some HMOs. That while statutory standards exist under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), enforcement and transparency vary significantly across local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

1. To review and strengthen local HMO Standards by:
  - a. Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.

- b. Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.
  - c. Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.
2. To Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints by:
  - a. Developing a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
  - b. Publishing quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
3. To Enhance Resident Engagement and Support, by launching a public awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.

#### AMENDMENT 1

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Sykes  
SECONDED AMENDMENT 1:

At its meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 this Council resolved to implement an Article 4 Direction in relation to small HMOs, this Direction will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026, meaning planning applications must be made to convert a dwelling-house (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4).

The Housing Act 2004 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2018 define a HMO and set out the framework of Licensing responsibilities that sit with local authorities.

This motion is the next step in raising standards for HMOs in the Borough of Oldham, sending a clear message to residents and landlords that we take our duties and responsibilities seriously, and that we want the highest standards permitted by legislation.

#### **This Council notes:**

The persistent concerns raised by residents regarding substandard living conditions, overcrowding, fire safety risks, and poor management practices in some HMOs.

That while statutory standards exist under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), enforcement and transparency vary significantly across local authorities.

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

1. Review and Strengthen Local HMO Standards:
  - Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.
  - Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.

- Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.
- 2. Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints:
  - Develop a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
  - Publish quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
- 3. Enhance Resident Engagement and Support:
  - Launch a public awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.
- 4. Require that councillors are informed of all new HMO applications and licensing applications that are received relating to their wards.

On being put to the vote AMENDMENT 1, was LOST.

**AMENDMENT 2**

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor Wilkinson SECONDED  
AMENDMENT 2:

At its meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, this Council resolved to implement an Article 4 Direction in relation to small HMOs, this Direction will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026, meaning planning applications must be made to convert a dwelling-house (C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (C4).

The Housing Act 2004 and The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2018 define an HMO and set out the framework of Licensing responsibilities that sit with local authorities.

This motion is the next step in raising standards for HMOs in the Borough of Oldham, sending a clear message to residents and landlords that we take our duties and responsibilities seriously, and that we want the highest standards permitted by legislation.

This Council notes:

The persistent concerns raised by residents regarding substandard living conditions, overcrowding, fire safety risks, and poor management practices in some HMOs. That while statutory standards exist under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), enforcement and transparency vary significantly across local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

1. To review and strengthen local HMO Standards by:
  - a. Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.
  - b. Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.
  - c. Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.

2. To Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints by:
  - a. Developing a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
  - b. Publishing quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
3. To Enhance Resident Engagement and Support, by launching a public awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.
4. That this Council and all relevant departments will take all necessary legal measures necessary against 'rogue' landlords who make residents lives a misery and aim to name and shame those who fail to comply with the highest possible standards.
5. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's legal department, will seek all necessary legal instruments and/or injunction/s and or any legal measures as necessary to prevent the use of HMO's for migrant accommodation in the Borough of Oldham.

On being put to the vote AMENDMENT 2, was LOST.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was CARRIED.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Council resolves to:

1. To review and strengthen local HMO Standards by:
  - d. Undertake a comprehensive review of current HMO licensing and amenity standards within the borough.
  - e. Introduce enhanced minimum requirements for space, fire safety, sanitation, and kitchen facilities, drawing on best practices from other councils.
  - f. Ensure that all licensed HMOs are subject to regular inspections and compliance checks.
- 2 To Improve Transparency and Accessibility for Complaints by:
  - c. Developing a clear, accessible online portal for residents to report concerns or complaints about HMOs.
  - d. Publishing quarterly data on HMO complaints, enforcement actions, and outcomes to improve public accountability.
- 3 To Enhance Resident Engagement and Support, by launching a public awareness campaign informing residents of their rights and how to report unsafe or poorly managed HMOs.

## **NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

### **Motion 1: Tackling the Anti-Social Use of Off-Road Motorbikes, E-Bikes and E-Scooters**

Councillor Williamson MOVED and Councillor Marland SECONDED the following Motion:

There has been a national spike in the anti-social use of off-road motorcycles, e-bikes, and scooters on UK roads and in public places.

And whilst there are trial schemes for e-bikes and e-scooters operating in Greater Manchester it is illegal for some vehicles and those not in trial schemes to be used on public highways and in public spaces.

There is a myth that the Police cannot do anything which is not true. The Police will act even when riders are not wearing helmets but only in a targeted approach made by trained officers. In fact, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) have a dedicated team of Officers.

**This Council Acknowledges:**

- That Greater Manchester Police's resources are finely stretched, and that Oldham Council cannot just ask for GMP to put resources into Oldham without a strongly evidenced basis.
- Oldham Council recognises that GMP officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern. Recent successes have been seen with Operation Vulcan and Operation AVRO - Oldham must do its bit to help the Police.
- Most motorbike, e-bike, scooter riders, use their vehicles in a safe and considerate manner and abide by the law. Sadly, there are those that don't, and this poses a serious risk to not only themselves, but other road users also.
- People can easily purchase e-bikes or e-scooters blissfully unaware they are not intended for use on the public highway or in public spaces having a logic that 'if they weren't legal, they wouldn't sell them.'
- That Oldham Council must work more closely with communities and organisations to generate a campaign to advise our residents of how and when to report issues.
- Oldham Council must continue working alongside GMP, housing providers, other partners and communities to get a message out that is clear about what constitutes an irresponsible user so that those who pose no threat to others carry on enjoying them sensibly and legally, and those that are not can be dealt with appropriately

**This Council is aware that:**

- Criminals are also using these modes of transport to commit further crimes, including drug supply, burglary, and theft. The anti-social use of these vehicles causes misery within our communities, impacting on the quality of life and posing a danger to those using the region's roads and open spaces.
- **This Council believes that:**  
Working closely with residents and partners not just the Police is key to tackling this behaviour.
- Greater Manchester Police officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern to deter, detect and disrupt offences from taking place.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. To write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM thanking him, the Officers and staff of GMP and the National Police Air Service (NPAS) for their continued hard work and dedication in tackling the anti-social use of these vehicles and ask him to ensure that this remains a priority for Greater Manchester Police.
2. To write to the Home Office and ask for further dedicated funding for GMP to use in tackling the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, electric bikes and electric scooters.
3. To use Oldham Council's Media team and ask them to carry out a campaign educating the public into the legalities of these vehicles and encouraging residents to help build up an intelligence-led picture so that GMP can carry out targeted operations by reporting instances and homes suspected of housing anti-social users which can been done anonymously.
4. Ask housing providers such as First Choice Homes, Great Places, Guinness Partnership to work with Oldham Council's media team and develop and plan of education and intelligence to support GMP in operations to tackle the anti-social use of off-road motorbike, e-scooters, and e-bikes.

**AMENDMENT**

The following AMENDMENT was MOVED by Councillor Quigg and SECONDED by Councillor Wilkinson:

There has been a national spike in the anti-social use of off-road motorcycles, e-bikes, and scooters on UK roads and in public places.

And whilst there are trial schemes for e-bikes and e-scooters operating in Greater Manchester it is illegal for some vehicles and those not in trial schemes to be used on public highways and in public spaces.

There is a myth that the Police cannot do anything which is not true. The Police will act even when riders are not wearing helmets but only in a targeted approach made by trained officers. In fact, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) has a dedicated team of Officers.

**This Council Acknowledges:**

- That Greater Manchester Police's resources are finely stretched, and that Oldham Council cannot just ask for GMP to put resources into Oldham without a strongly evidenced basis.
- Oldham Council recognises that GMP officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern. Recent successes have been seen with Operation Vulcan and Operation AVRO - Oldham must do its bit to help the Police.

- Most motorbike, e-bike, scooter riders, use their vehicles in a safe and considerate manner and abide by the law. Sadly, there are those that don't, and this poses a serious risk to not only themselves, but other road users also.
- People can easily purchase e-bikes or e-scooters blissfully unaware they are not intended for use on the public highway or in public spaces having a logic that 'if they weren't legal, they wouldn't sell them.'
- That Oldham Council must work more closely with communities and organisations to generate a campaign to advise our residents of how and when to report issues.
- Oldham Council must continue working alongside GMP, housing providers, other partners and communities to get a message out that is clear about what constitutes an irresponsible user so that those who pose no threat to others carry on enjoying them sensibly and legally, and those that are not can be dealt with appropriately

This Council is aware that:

- Criminals are also using these modes of transport to commit further crimes, including drug supply, burglary, and theft. The anti-social use of these vehicles causes misery within our communities, impacting on the quality of life and posing a danger to those using the region's roads and open spaces.
- The tactic of using a police car to make controlled contact with a moped or motorcycle (often referred to as "tactical contact" or a "tactical stop") is governed by national standards set by the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). This guidance applies to all police forces across England and Wales, not just the Metropolitan Police in London. The key requirement is that the officers involved must be appropriately trained as response and TPAC (Tactical Pursuit and Containment) drivers. The use of the tactic must be authorised by a commanding officer, who will conduct a dynamic risk assessment, weighing the seriousness of the crime against the risk to the public and the offender. The tactic was widely publicised by the Metropolitan Police as an effective measure against moped-enabled crime, which was a significant issue in London. However, the legal framework and training standards are national, enabling any appropriately trained UK police force to use it in suitable circumstances.

• This Council believes that:

Working closely with residents and partners not just the Police is key to tackling this behaviour.

- Greater Manchester Police officers will use up-to-date intelligence to help direct them to areas of concern to deter, detect and disrupt offences from taking place.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM thanking him, the Officers and staff of

GMP and the National Police Air Service (NPAS) for their continued hard work and dedication in tackling the anti-social use of these vehicles and ask him to ensure that this remains a priority for Greater Manchester Police.

2. To write to the Home Office and ask for further dedicated funding for GMP to use in tackling the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, electric bikes and electric scooters.
3. To use Oldham Council's Media team and ask them to carry out a campaign educating the public into the legalities of these vehicles and encouraging residents to help build up an intelligence-led picture so that GMP can carry out targeted operations by reporting instances and homes suspected of housing anti-social users which can be done anonymously.
4. Ask housing providers such as First Choice Homes, Great Places, Guinness Partnership to work with Oldham Council's media team and develop and plan of education and intelligence to support GMP in operations to tackle the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, e-scooters, and e-bikes.
5. Write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM asking him to make more use of the tactical contact/stopping and to ensure more officers are trained in its use, this method allows a police car to make controlled contact with a moped or motorcycle.

On being put to the VOTE the AMENDMENT carried.

On being put to the VOTE the MOTION AS AMENDED was CARRIED

**RESOLVED:**

Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM thanking him, the Officers and staff of GMP and the National Police Air Service (NPAS) for their continued hard work and dedication in tackling the anti-social use of these vehicles and ask him to ensure that this remains a priority for Greater Manchester Police.
2. Write to the Home Office and ask for further dedicated funding for GMP to use in tackling the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, electric bikes and electric scooters.
3. Use Oldham Council's Media team and ask them to carry out a campaign educating the public into the legalities of these vehicles and encouraging residents to help build up an intelligence-led picture so that GMP can carry out targeted operations by reporting instances and homes suspected of housing anti-social users which can be done anonymously.
4. Ask housing providers such as First Choice Homes, Great Places, Guinness Partnership to work with Oldham Council's media team and develop and plan of education and intelligence to support GMP in operations to tackle the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes, e-scooters, and e-bikes.
5. Write to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police Sir Stephen Watson QPM asking him to make more use of the tactical contact/stopping and to ensure more officers are trained

in its use, this method allows a police car to make controlled contact with a moped or motorcycle.



## **Motion 2: Fair Access and Funding for Non-Invasive (Digital) Post-Mortems**

Councillor Akhtar MOVED and Councillor Zaheer Ali  
SECONDED the following Motion:

### **Background:**

Council notes that when a death is sudden, unexplained, or occurs in circumstances requiring investigation, the Coroner is legally required to establish the cause of death through a post-mortem examination.

Traditionally, this has meant an invasive surgical autopsy an intrusive procedure that can be distressing for families, delay burials for several days, and conflict with religious requirements for immediate burial.

These examinations typically cost between £400 – £800 per case, rising to several thousand pounds in forensic cases, and are funded by local authorities via the coronial service budget.

Recent advances now allow the same investigative purpose to be achieved using Post-Mortem Computed Tomography (PMCT) or MRI scanning, known as a non-invasive or digital post-mortem.

The scans are undertaken by radiographers, interpreted by radiologists, and can identify a cause of death in 85–90 % of cases. They are quicker, more dignified, and culturally sensitive.

However, funding arrangements remain inconsistent nationally.

- In authorities such as Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen, Bradford, Leicester, and Sandwell, costs are fully met from the coronial budget, and families pay nothing.
- Where a local facility does not exist, or no inter-borough agreement is in place, bereaved families may currently be asked to pay £200–£650 privately to access a scan something the Chief Coroner's 2022 guidance discourages.
- Oldham, Rochdale, and Bury Councils have jointly agreed to procure a shared digital post-mortem service, due to be operational in 2026, with each authority meeting one-third of the cost.
- Oldham currently contributes a proportion of the Greater Manchester North Coroner's budget along with Rochdale and Bury.
- Digital post-mortem costs (average £300–£500) are comparable to invasive autopsy costs.
- This motion commits no additional expenditure beyond existing allocations but ensures that funding responsibility lies with the Council, not families.
- Any variations or pressures will be reviewed by the Section 151 Officer through normal budget processes.

## **Council Believes**

- Every family should have access to a non-invasive post-mortem free at the point of need where the Coroner deems it appropriate.
- Faith sensitivity and compassion should be reflected in how post-mortems are conducted.
- Clarity is needed so that no family is ever charged privately when a non-invasive scan is ordered by the Coroner.
- Oldham can adopt the Lancashire model, ensuring costs are contained within the coronial service budget and compliant with Financial Procedure Rules.

## **Council Resolves**

1. Agreement with Rochdale and Bury
2. That Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) formally agrees to Rochdale Council's request to participate in the joint procurement and delivery of the Digital Post-Mortem Services, contributing a proportion of the total cost (based on population, and requests that Bury Metropolitan Borough Council likewise confirm its participation, ensuring consistent funding and governance across the Greater Manchester North Coroner's Service.
3. Free at Point of Need  
That all non-invasive (digital) post-mortems authorised by the Greater Manchester North Coroner for Oldham residents be funded through Oldham's share of the coronial service budget, and that no bereaved family be charged directly.
4. Inter-Authority Funding Agreements  
That the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer enter discussions with partner councils and the Coroner's Office to ensure clear agreements are in place for payment of scans carried out outside the borough until the joint facility becomes operational in 2026.
5. Financial Compliance  
That any implementation of this policy be carried out within approved budget allocations for the coronial service allocations to the coronial service, and subject to the approval of the Section 151 Officer under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
6. Public Awareness and Faith Engagement  
That the Council work with local faith leaders, funeral directors, and NHS Bereavement Services to publicise the availability of non-invasive post-mortems and to support families requiring rapid burial.
7. Scrutiny and Reporting  
That the relevant Scrutiny Board receive an annual report covering:
  - the number of non-invasive vs invasive post-mortems;
  - turnaround times;
  - cost implications; and
  - family satisfaction feedback.

## **Financial Implications (For noting)**

- Oldham currently contributes a proportion dependant on population towards the Greater Manchester North Coroner Service budget, hosted by Rochdale MBC.
- Digital post-mortem costs (£300-£500 per case) are comparable to traditional autopsies.
- The proposal is therefore cost-neutral, committing no new expenditure beyond Oldham's existing allocation.
- Any variance will be reviewed by the Section 151 Officer during the annual budget process.

#### AMENDMENT

COUNCILLOR Shuttleworth MOVED and Councillor Nasheen SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

#### Background:

Council notes that when a death is sudden, unexplained, or occurs in circumstances requiring investigation, the Coroner is legally required to establish the cause of death through a post-mortem examination.

Traditionally, this has meant an invasive surgical autopsy an intrusive procedure that can be distressing for families, delay burials for several days, and conflict with religious requirements for immediate burial.

These examinations typically cost between £400 – £800 per case, rising to several thousand pounds in forensic cases, and are funded by local authorities via the coronial service budget. Recent advances now allow the same investigative purpose to be achieved using Post-Mortem Computed Tomography (PMCT) or MRI scanning, known as a non-invasive or digital post-mortem.

The scans are undertaken by radiographers, interpreted by radiologists, and can identify a cause of death in 85–90 % of cases. They are quicker, more dignified, and culturally sensitive. However, funding arrangements remain inconsistent nationally.

- In authorities such as Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen, Bradford, Leicester, and Sandwell, costs are fully met from the coronial budget, and families pay nothing.
- Where a local facility does not exist, or no inter-borough agreement is in place, bereaved families may currently be asked to pay £200–£650 privately to access a scan something the Chief Coroner's 2022 guidance discourages.
- Oldham, Rochdale, and Bury Councils have jointly agreed to procure a shared digital post-mortem service, due to be operational in 2026, with each authority meeting one-third of the cost.
- Oldham currently contributes a proportion of the Greater Manchester North Coroner's budget along with Rochdale and Bury.
- Digital post-mortem costs (average £300–£500) are comparable to invasive autopsy costs.
- This motion commits no additional expenditure beyond existing allocations but ensures that funding responsibility lies with the Council, not families.
- Any variations or pressures will be reviewed by the Section 151 Officer through normal budget processes.

## **Council Believes**

- Every family should have access to a non-invasive post-mortem free at the point of need where the Coroner deems it appropriate.
- Faith sensitivity and compassion should be reflected in how post-mortems are conducted.
- Clarity is needed so that no family is ever charged privately when a non-invasive scan is ordered by the Coroner.
- Oldham is in the process of adopting an approach similar to the Lancashire model, ensuring costs are contained within the coronial service budget and compliant with Financial Procedure Rules.

## **Council Resolves**

1. **Agreement with Rochdale and Bury**  
That Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) continues on the path it is already on and formally agrees to the joint procurement and delivery of the Digital Post-Mortem Services, contributing a proportion of the total cost (based on population, and requests that Bury Metropolitan Borough Council likewise confirm its participation, ensuring consistent funding and governance across the Greater Manchester North Coroner's Service.
2. **Free at Point of Need**  
That when the service goes live in 2026 all non-invasive (digital) post-mortems authorised by the Greater Manchester North Coroner for Oldham residents be funded through the coronial service budget, and that no bereaved family will be charged directly.
3. **Inter-Authority Funding Agreements**  
That the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer cannot instruct the Coroner's Office to pay for private scans carried out before the joint facility becomes operational in 2026.
4. **Financial Compliance**  
That any implementation of this policy be carried out within approved budget allocations for the coronial service allocations to the coronial service, and subject to the approval of the Section 151 Officer under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
5. **Public Awareness and Faith Engagement**  
That the Council continues to work with local faith leaders, funeral directors, and NHS Bereavement Services to publicise the availability of non-invasive post-mortems and to support families requiring rapid burial.
6. **Scrutiny and Reporting**  
To note that the coroner's office is a statutory service outside of the Council's control, but asks that the relevant Scrutiny Board consider inviting the Coroner to provide an update which may cover:
  - the number of non-invasive vs invasive post-mortems;
  - turnaround times;
  - cost implications; and
  - family satisfaction feedback.

On being put to the VOTE the AMENDMENT was CARRIED.

**RESOLVED**

1. **Agreement with Rochdale and Bury**  
That Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) continues on the path it is already on and formally agrees to the joint procurement and delivery of the Digital Post-Mortem Services, contributing a proportion of the total cost (based on population, and requests that Bury Metropolitan Borough Council likewise confirm its participation, ensuring consistent funding and governance across the Greater Manchester North Coroner's Service.
2. **Free at Point of Need**  
That when the service goes live in 2026 all non-invasive (digital) post-mortems authorised by the Greater Manchester North Coroner for Oldham residents be funded through the coronial service budget, and that no bereaved family will be charged directly.
3. **Inter-Authority Funding Agreement**  
That the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer cannot instruct the Coroner's Office to pay for private scans carried out before the joint facility becomes operational in 2026.
4. **Financial Compliance**  
That any implementation of this policy be carried out within approved budget allocations for the coronial service allocations to the coronial service, and subject to the approval of the Section 151 Officer under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
5. **Public Awareness and Faith Engagement**  
That the Council continues to work with local faith leaders, funeral directors, and NHS Bereavement Services to publicise the availability of non-invasive post-mortems and to support families requiring rapid burial.
6. **Scrutiny and Reporting**  
To note that the coroner's office is a statutory service outside of the Council's control, but asks that the relevant Scrutiny Board consider inviting the Coroner to provide an update which may cover:
  - o the number of non-invasive vs invasive post-mortems.
  - o turnaround times.
  - o cost implications; and
  - o family satisfaction feedback.

**Motion 3: Protecting Community Cohesion and Public Services from Asylum Accommodation in Oldham**

Councillor Woodvine MOVED and Councillor Arnott  
SECONDED the following MOTION:

Conservative controlled Local Authorities – Epping Forest (Essex) and Great Yarmouth (Norfolk) – have challenged Serco and private sector providers of housing for illegal migrants and asylum seekers in their areas at the High Court. This Council should follow their lead in seeking legal advice and challenging Home Office contracts to provide migrant housing in Oldham Borough.

**This Council notes:**

- So far in 2025, 25,000 people have crossed the Channel in small boats. Since July 2024, over 50,000 people have crossed the Channel, leaving immigration policy under this government in tatters.
- Since the Labour Party formed the UK Government there have been a record 111,000 asylum claims, claims for refugee status have hit a record high, and there has been an 8% rise in the use of hotel accommodation for asylum seekers.
- It is Conservative led councils that are taking real action to protect their residents, while other parties issue press releases and politically posture.
- The increasing pressures faced by local communities where hotels are designated for use as migrant accommodation without proper consultation or local input.
- The risk of non-hotel accommodation also being considered to house migrants in Oldham Borough.

**This Council believes:**

- That local communities must be properly consulted before significant decisions are made that impact local services, housing, and community cohesion.
- That the use of local hotels as long-term accommodation for migrants is not a sustainable solution and places disproportionate pressures on local infrastructure and services.
- That local councils, as the democratic voice of their communities, should have a say in how accommodation needs are managed and delivered.

**This Council resolves:**

1. To request the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council's Director of Legal and Legal Services, to urgently assess the merits of seeking an injunction to prevent the use of local hotels for migrant accommodation where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the community.
2. To further request the Chief Executive to instruct Officers to consider every option and seek legal advice on using injunctions, stop notices and other planning enforcement against change of use to close asylum hotels in the council area, and prevent them from being opened.
3. To write to the Secretary of State for the Home Office expressing this Council's concerns about the use of hotels, and non-hotel accommodation, in the Oldham Borough for migrant accommodation and to request full consultation with this Council on any future decisions.
4. To call on the UK Government to develop a sustainable, properly planned, and community consulted approach to housing migrants.
5. To write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, calling on the Government to adopt the Conservative proposals to

clarify in law and policy beyond doubt that such asylum hotels should always require change of use.

6. To instruct the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport & Housing Delivery to introduce the strictest limitations possible on housing / hospitality stock being converted to asylum accommodation in the Oldham Local Plan.

On being put to the VOTE the MOTION was LOST.

#### **Motion 4: Stop the Boats**

Councillor Quigg addressed Council and announced that he was WITHDRAWING the MOTION (Stop the Boats).

On being put to the vote the MOTION (to withdraw the Motion) was CARRIED.

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#### **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2025/2026**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report of the Executive Director of Resources, which advised that the Council was required to determine a Scheme for Members' Allowances following consideration of a report of an Independent Remuneration Panel convened in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025, the Independent Remuneration Panel met to consider a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme which involved looking at benchmarking data from other local authorities and changes within the political arrangements of the council. The Panel also considered proposals to amend the allowance for Independent Members/Persons appointed to the Audit Committee and Standards Committee.

The Panel further met on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025, as a result of a review of Members' allowances which was instructed by the Chief Executive, the outcome of which was subject to a separate report to the Audit Committee, on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025. Whilst the investigation outcome fell outside of the remit of the Remuneration Panel, the Panel were asked to consider the impact in relation to basic allowance and special responsibility allowances, as their previous recommendations were based on incorrect information, which was the reason why the Panel's original report was not presented to the July Council meeting.

Whilst the Council has a duty to have regard to the Panel's recommendations, it is the Council's choice whether to accept the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part, or not at all, or to determine any other scheme for 2025/2026.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That Council notes the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and approves its recommendations, as set out in Appendix 1, attached thereto and adopts the scheme of allowances as set out in Appendix 2, to the submitted report, for the municipal year 2025/26, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

2. That Council delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Governance in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal (Monitoring Officer) to:
  - (i) take all necessary action to implement 1 above.
  - (ii) update the constitution.
  - (iii) to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the scheme of allowances for implementation of the revised scheme from April 2026.
3. That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its report.

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## OLDHAM COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED the Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25, which marked the first opportunity to reflect on the progress made since the launch of the Borough's Corporate Plan 2024–2027. The Annual Report highlighted the difference the Council has made over the past year – from delivering better services and investing in neighbourhoods, to supporting residents and businesses through change. The Annual report was designed to celebrate success, show how the Council's priorities are being turned into action, and give a clear picture of the positive impact the Authority is making for Oldham.

The Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25 reflected on the first year of delivering the Corporate Plan 2024–2027. It captured the progress made against our priorities and highlighted how the Council was working to make a real difference for residents, communities and businesses. Achievements over 2024/25 included progress on the regeneration of Oldham town centre, the delivery of new housing, improvements to frontline services, and investment in cleaner, greener initiatives that supported the Council's climate ambitions.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Oldham Council Annual Report 2024/25 be noted.

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## THE LEADING OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP IMPACT REPORT 2024/25

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report of the Executive Director of Resources, which presented the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25, showcasing the progress that the Council and partners have made since the launch of Pride, Progress, Partnership in 2024. The document captures the real impact of shared ambitions and highlighted achievements across the Borough's communities, the economy and public services, while being honest about the challenges being faced. By bringing partners and residents into one story of change, the report helped the Council to celebrate its success, to learn from experience, and to focus energies on the various opportunities ahead.

The Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25 captured the progress made in the first year of delivering Pride,

Progress, Partnership. It highlights how partners across the borough have worked together to make Oldham a great place to live, grow and thrive. Examples of what's been achieved range from major regeneration projects in the town centre and new housebuilding, to initiatives that support people directly in their day-to-day lives.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Council notes the content of the Leading Oldham Partnership Impact Report 2024/25.
2. That Council acknowledges the continued work of the partnership to improve the Borough.

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**OLDHAM CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES  
PLAN 2025/26**

Councillor Mushtaq MOVED and Councillor Mohon Ali SECONDED a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, which presented the Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26. THE Plan had previously been considered by the Children's Achieving Excellence Board, the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, all of which had recommended its approval. The Plan required formal Council approval.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Oldham Children, Young People and Families Plan 2025/26, as detailed in full at Appendix 1, to the submitted report, be approved.

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**REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE ON COMMITTEES**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONED a report of the Executive Director of Resources, which advised that since the Council meeting, held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the Chief Executive received notification, on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025, that Councillors Ball, Quigg and Wilkinson will henceforth sit as Reform UK Members and Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> October that Councillors Adams and Arnott had joined the Conservative Group.

Considering this, the Council was 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 2025/26 municipal year.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the revised composition of the political groups as shown in paragraph 1.1, of the submitted report, be noted.
2. That the number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year be as detailed in paragraph 1.5, of the submitted report, be noted.

3. That any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.

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## **INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Shah SECONDED a report of the Executive Director of Resources that sought to appoint a second independent member of the Audit Committee, for a four year term concluding at the end of the municipal year 2029, that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise the conditions of appointment to this role and that the second Independent Member be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

### **AMENDMENT**

Councillor Kenyon MOVED and Councillor Al-Hamdani SECONDED an AMENDMENT to the report, as set out in the Supplementary Agenda papers, as follows:

- a. To delete Recommendation 2: "That the second Independent Member be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Audit Committee."
- b. To amend section 3.1, of the report, as follows: "To accept the recommendation to appoint to the position (and to delete the wording ..."and that the second Independent Member be appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee".

On being put to the VOTE the AMENDMENT was LOST.

On being put to the Vote the MOTION was CARRIED.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That Mr. Stuart Green be appointed as the second independent member of the Audit Committee, for a four-year term ending at the end of the municipal year 2029, and that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to finalise the conditions of appointment for this role.
2. That the second Independent Member be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Audit Committee.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 9.45pm