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CABINET
Agenda

Date	Monday 23rd March 2026
Time	6.00 pm
Venue	JR Clynes Building, Council Chamber, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AL
Notes	1. Declarations of Interest- If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Alex Bougatef or Constitutional Services at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. 2. Further information relating to this meeting is available from Constitutional Services email constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk 3. Public Questions - Any Member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the contact officer by 12.00 noon on Wednesday, 18th March 2026. 4. Filming - The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Constitutional Services Officer who will instruct that they are not included in the filming. Please note that anyone using recording equipment both audio and visual will not be permitted to leave the equipment in the room where a private meeting is held. Membership of the CABINET: Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, Goodwin, F Hussain, Jabbar, Mushtaq, Shah (Chair) and Taylor

Item No

1 Apologies For Absence

2 Urgent Business

Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair

3 Declarations of Interest

To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5 Minutes (Pages 7 - 28)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on 23rd February 2026, are attached for approval.

6 Adult Social Care CQC Assessment Outcome (Pages 29 - 32)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing which provides information for Cabinet on the outcome of the Care Quality Commission's assessment of Adult Social Care in Oldham.

7 Extension to the Adult Social Care Service Level Agreement with Miocare Group CIC 2026 (Pages 33 - 38)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Adults. Health and Wellbeing, seeking to extend Adult Social Care's Service Level Agreement with the Miocare Group.

8 Proposal to update Smokefree policy (Pages 39 - 54)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Adults. Health and Wellbeing, seeking approval to update the Council's Smokefree policy.

9 Extension of the Current Commissioning Arrangements for Care at Home (Pages 55 - 62)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Adults. Health and Wellbeing seeking an extension of the Current Commissioning Arrangements for Care at Home.

10 Approval to Tender the Domestic Property Disability Adaptions Framework (Pages 63 - 76)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Adults. Health and Wellbeing to report, seeking approval to Tender for the Domestic Property Disability Adaptions

Framework.

11 Procurement of a Crisis Payment Provider (Pages 77 - 84)

A report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability, looking for approval of the Procurement of a Crisis Payment Provider.

12 Crisis and Resilience Fund – Utilisation of Grant Allocation (Pages 85 - 120)

A report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability, requesting approval to utilise the allocation of grant funding under the Crisi and Resilience Fund.

13 Arts Council - Development Extension Grant (Pages 121 - 140)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure seeking approval to accept extension funding offered by Arts Council England for 2026/27 in support of the continued development of Oldham's cultural programme and new theatre project.

14 Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus delivery 2026 - 2029 (Pages 141 - 150)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport that will ensure the continued delivery of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training in Oldham for the period April 2026 to March 2029.

15 Grant Acceptance: City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) - Revenue Funding (Pages 151 - 160)

To consider a report of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways which seeks acceptance of grant funding under the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.

16 Staying Close Leaving Care Offer (Pages 161 - 188)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People seeking formal approval for the establishment and implementation of Oldham's Staying Close model.

17 Greater Manchester's Integrated Settlement for Education, Work and Skills (Pages 189 - 196)

A report of the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Early Years, seeking approval of funding from Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Integrated Settlement for Education, Work and Skills.

18 Special Education Needs (SEN) Travel Assistance Service – Contract Extension (Pages 197 - 202)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Education, Early Years and Skills seeking extension of the contract for Special Education Needs Travel Assistance Service.

19 High Needs Provision in Mainstream Settings Capital Work (Pages 203 - 210)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Education, Early Years and Skills requesting the approval of 'high needs' capital works to be undertaken.

20 Capital Works (Kingsland) (Pages 211 - 218)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Education, Early Years and Skills, seeking approval for various Capital Works to be carried out

21 Proposal to Undertake Statutory Consultation on the Establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (Pages 219 - 232)

A report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth that seeks approval for proposals for the commencement of formal statutory consultation on the establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation.

22 Housing Allocations Scheme 2026 (Pages 233 - 298)

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, seeking seek approval to amend the existing social housing Allocations Scheme.

23 Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 (Pages 299 - 318)

A report oof the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods detailing the Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2024/25.

24 Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024/25 (Pages 319 - 530)

A report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods detailing Oldham's Monitoring Report for 2024/25.

25 Biodiversity Duty Report (Pages 531 - 628)

A report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods which seeks approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report (2026) in line with section 40A of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

26 Princes Gate – Development Update (St Mary's) (Pages 629 - 634)

A report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth that details an update on overall scheme progress and to obtain approval for the Council to enter into the necessary Grant Funding Agreements.

27 Sale of Land at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill (Medlock Vale) (Pages 635 - 642)

Report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth regarding the sale of land at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill (Medlock Vale).

28 Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant Acceptance (Pages 643 - 652)

To consider a report of the Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth seeking approval for the acceptance of grant funding.

29 Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 - Month 10 (Pages 653 - 682)

Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability updating on the Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26, as at Month 10.

30 Local Taxation Discretionary Policies 2026/27 (Pages 683 - 716)

A report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability, requesting that the Cabinet approves Local Taxation Discretionary Policies for 2026/27.

b Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) - Acceptance of Funding (Pages 717 - 740)

c Acceptance of 2026/27 GMCA Community Safety Partnership, Voluntary and Community Sector, Hate Crime, GM Violence Reduction and Cohesion Grants (Pages 741 - 746)

31 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following 10 items of business, pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that discussions may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, under paragraph 3, as defined in the provisions of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

32 Princes Gate – Development Update (St Mary's) PART B (Pages 747 - 754)

To consider confidential recommendations.

33 Sale of Land at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill (Medlock Vale) (Pages 755 - 762)

To consider confidential recommendations

34 Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant Acceptance (Pages 763 - 770)

To consider confidential recommendations

35 Upgrade of E3 to E5 Licences for remaining user base (Pages 771 - 778)

To consider confidential recommendations.

36 CAF Compliance (Pages 779 - 788)

To consider confidential recommendations

37 Telephony Contract Renewal (Pages 789 - 794)

To consider confidential recommendations.

38 Cyber - Server Protection (Pages 795 - 802)

To consider confidential recommendations

39 Oldham Council MFD Print Solution (Pages 803 - 808)

To consider confidential recommendations.

40 Security Operations Centre (SOC) (Pages 809 - 816)

To consider confidential recommendations

41 ZTNA – Zero Trust Network Access (Pages 817 - 824)

To consider confidential recommendations

CABINET
23/02/2026 at 6.00 pm

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

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dean.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The following question was submitted by Mr. Syed Maruf Ali:
How does Oldham Council ensure adult social care is culturally and religiously sensitive for Muslim residents from South Asian communities? Specifically, how are needs such as gender-appropriate personal care, halal food, language support, and respect for religious practice assessed, delivered, and monitored by commissioned providers? What steps does the Council take when care fails to meet these standards, and what evidence assures compliance with statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 and Equality Act 2010?

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing replied, as follows:
Oldham Council is committed to delivering culturally and religiously sensitive adult social care in full compliance with the Care Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. At assessment stage, care planning identifies and records each person's individual needs, preferences, and protected characteristics. This includes gender-appropriate personal care, halal dietary requirements, language support, and support for religious observance such as daily prayers, Ramadan fasting and Eid celebrations. These requirements are embedded within the individual's care and support plan and form part of the commissioned service expectations.

During procurement, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is completed, and providers are required to demonstrate how they will meet the diverse cultural and religious needs of Oldham's communities, providing assurance at the point of contract award. Ongoing assurance is secured through structured contract monitoring and visits by Contract and Quality Monitoring Officers. Providers must evidence how culturally specific needs are being delivered in practice, for example by sourcing certified halal food and storing it appropriately; arranging access to an Imam if requested; facilitating attendance at mosque; providing prayer mats and washing facilities; respecting modesty and gender preferences in personal care; and arranging Urdu or

Bengali interpreters where required. Contract monitoring forms specifically require providers to state how culturally diverse needs are identified and met.

Where standards are not met, the Council takes prompt and proportionate action. This includes performance improvement plans, enhanced monitoring and clear corrective actions within agreed timescales, alongside additional cultural awareness, or dietary compliance training where necessary. In one case, where a care home initially expressed concern about meeting halal requirements, the Council intervened to provide guidance and require training to ensure lawful and respectful provision. Continued oversight through monitoring visits and multi-disciplinary reviews ensured compliance.

Through personalised assessment, clear contractual requirements, active monitoring, and decisive intervention where required, the Council assures itself that commissioned providers uphold residents' cultural identity, religious practice and equality rights in line with statutory duties.

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:
That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th January 2026, be approved as a correct record.

6 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD HELD 28TH JANUARY 2026**

The Cabinet considered the draft minutes of the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board held on 28th January 2026.

It was reported that the Scrutiny Board had recommended to Cabinet and to the Council that all the budget reduction proposals considered, be approved.

Resolved:
That the deliberations and comments of the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, held 28th January 2026, be noted and endorsed.

7 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD HELD 5TH FEBRUARY 2026**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Opposition budget proposals for 2026/27, that were presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board's meeting on 5th February 2026. The Scrutiny Board had recommended that the Cabinet consider the proposals submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group, which were the only Opposition Group proposals presented to the meeting.

The Cabinet considered the proposals and summarised information in relation to the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals for the 2026/27 budget.

Resolved:

1. That the deliberations and comments of the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, held 5th February 2026 be noted.
2. That, after consideration, none of the alternative budget proposals presented by the Liberal Democrats Group be accepted.

8 **REVENUE MONITOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26: QUARTER 3 DECEMBER 2025**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance that provided Members with an update as at 31st December 2025 (end of Quarter 3 – 2025/26) of the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position, the financial forecast of the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Housing Revenue Account (detailed at Annex 1), alongside the financial position of the capital programme together with the revised capital programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 (detailed at Annex 2).

In terms of the Council's Revenue Position, the forecast adverse position for 2025/26 at the end of Quarter 3 was estimated to be £15.199m (£21.094m at the end of Quarter 2 – 30th September 2025). The details within the revenue monitoring report for Quarter 3 followed on from the Quarter 2 report previously presented and highlights any significant areas of concern which may not just impact on the current year, but also when preparing future budgets. A forecast adverse position based on the Quarter 3 revenue controllable budget is £15.199m which is a favourable movement of £5.894m from the position previously reported.

The Council was exploring opportunities in conjunction with its external treasury advisors to look at our current policy on capitalising interest costs for assets under construction. This could generate a potential revenue adjustment to the Council which would reduce the forecast adverse variance for 2025/26. The outcome of this work would be reported to Cabinet, within the Month 10 revenue monitoring report, on 23rd March 2026.

Since the last report was presented to this meeting, the implementation of the agreed enhanced controls has continued to have an impact on the forecast position resulting in the favourable movement between periods. It was expected that the position would continue to improve as these agreed controls are embedded further. It was important that the organisation continues this work on mitigating and reducing the forecast revenue variance by the end of the financial year, limiting any unbudgeted use of reserves and protecting its financial resilience.

Given, the in-year financial position of the Council, the level of reserves available and the budgetary gaps reported within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the recent publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement has provided some additional support to the Council as a result of

the Fair Funding Review and the continuation of the Recovery Grant for another 3 years. Whilst the funding was welcomed, the Council must deliver within the financial resources allocated for 2026/27 onwards. The Council's strategy to transfer much needed resources to reserves to increase reserves was a positive movement in ensuring the organisations financial resilience over the medium term.

Further details of the current estimated position were included at Annex 1, to the report. Information on the forecast year end position of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) were also outlined in the report.

In terms of the Council's Capital Position, the report outlined the most up to date capital spending position for 2025/26 to 2029/30 for approved schemes. The revised Capital Programme budget for 2025/26 was £70.200m at the close of Quarter 3, incorporated the changes made from the annual review of the programme. The actual expenditure to 31st December 2025 was £40.189m (57.25% of the forecast outturn).

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option One (preferred Option) – to agree the recommendations detailed in the report.
Option 2 - to not agree the recommendations and propose alternative forecasts.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet:

1. Notes the report.
2. Notes the forecast revenue position at the end of Quarter 3 (31st December 2025) at £15.199m with further mitigations in place to reduce expenditure as detailed at Annex 1, to the report.
3. Approves the potential redundancy costs in respect of the Environmental Services Redesign.
4. Notes the projected use of general revenue usable reserves during 2025/26.
5. Notes the forecast positions for the Dedicated Schools Grant and Housing Revenue Account.
6. Approves the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 including the proposed virements and notes the forecast for the financial years to 2029/30 as at the end of Quarter 3 as outlined in Annex 2, to the report.

9 **REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2027/28 TO 2028/29**

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Finance that provided Members with the budget reduction requirement and the Administration's budget proposals for 2026/27, having regard to the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) published on 17th December 2025 and the subsequent Final Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) published on 9 February 2026. The report also presents the financial forecasts for the remainder of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period 2028/27 to 2028/29 based on the

Settlement information received from Central Government and provided an indicative narrative on the years 2029/30 and 2030/31 which are outside the LGFS period.

The submitted report presented the Council's Revenue Budget for 2026/27 together with the budget reduction requirement and the Administration's budget proposals for 2026/27 including Council Tax intentions. It also provided the financial forecasts for the MTFS period, 2027/28 to 2028/29 on the known settlement information and a high-level indicative narrative for the years 2029/30 and 2030/31 which were outside the LGFS period. Included within this report were several budget reduction proposals for consideration and a budgeted transfer to reserves for the financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29 which is the second consecutive that the Council's revenue budget has been balanced without the need to use general revenue reserves to support it.

The Council has reviewed all the underlying assumptions in its approach to setting the revenue budget for 2026/27 onwards having regard for the impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 and the allocations published in the Local Government Finance Settlement. The revenue budget gap for 2026/27 is therefore revised to £20.301m. To balance the budget, a resources review has enabled budget adjustments of £10.196m, with Transformation Programme savings of £2.000m to be applied. £8.105m of budget reductions are proposed for delivery in 2026/27 which would balance the revenue budget position.

A version of the Revenue Budget 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2027/28 to 2028/29 (based on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) received on 17th December 2025) was presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 28th January 2026. The Board scrutinised the report and the other reports on the agenda that formed a core part of the Council's strategic financial planning framework and recommended them all to Cabinet. A further meeting of the Scrutiny Board took place on 5th February 2026, which considered budget proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrat Party. The Board recommended these proposals to Cabinet (minute 7, above, refers).

The report explained that each year, the Council identified what it needs to spend on Council services for the following year as part of the budget setting process. This process also involved the identification of provisional spending plans for future financial years. This ensured that the Council's future spending plans were balanced against the funding forecasts for Government Grants, Council Tax and Business Rates revenues and aligned with the Council's corporate plan. These plans formed part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which sets out a financial forecast for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29. The first part of this report focused on the first year of the MTFS period and at Section 16 sets out a forecast for the final two years, 2027/28 to 2028/29 of the

settlement period with and indicative budget position for the years 2029/30 and 2030/31 which were outside the current settlement period.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and associated funding announcements were received on 17th December 2025, with the Final Local Government Finance Settlement being received on 9th February 2026. This was the first multi-year settlement since 2016/17 and provided actual allocations for 2026/27 and indicative allocations for the two years 2027/28 and 2028/29. Forecasts for 2026/27 were updated using actual funding information (where available) and the 2027/28 to 2028/29 estimates had been revised using information in the LGFS and the Policy Statement. These revised estimates were presented in the submitted report.

In addition to the cost pressures that were anticipated when the initial estimates for 2026/27 and future years were prepared, for the ensuing financial year and had seen further financial challenges. The challenges included:

a. Continued increase in costs and the number of placements within Children's Services.
b. Continued increase in costs and demand for Adult Social Care services.
c. Increased costs of maintaining the Council's property portfolio.

The report added that when the initial 2026/27 MTFS was prepared, the forward estimates took account of the ongoing demand pressures detailed above but, as has been reported widely throughout the financial year, demand from and complexity of care required for the Borough's residents particularly in the area of social care services had continued to place significant additional pressures on the budget in 2025/26 and subsequently beyond. In year mitigations had been implemented throughout the financial year to address the financial pressures which have had a positive impact on the revenue forecast outturn yet, as detailed in the Quarter 3 budget monitoring report (minute 8, above refers), the forecast position was still expected to end with an adverse revenue position at the end of the financial year. Any in-year overspend would impact on the level of reserves available to support the budget on an ongoing basis and the reserves available by 2026/27 were outlined in Section 13, of the submitted report.

At the same time as considering the financial challenges facing the Council, it was also important to consider the Council's commitment to the co-operative way of working. Based on a set of values and the principle of enabling and motivating everyone to "do their bit", this influenced the policy direction of the Council and its response to the various financial challenges.

As an organisation, a co-operative approach provided the opportunity to find positive and sustainable solutions to the on-going financial challenges being faced. Oldham had a values driven approach which underpinned the way that it did business.

The Council believed in the importance of fairness and responsibility. In practice, that meant maximising the positive social, economic and environmental impact that can be achieved through everything that the Council does, as set out in the Council's values.

In terms of consultation, it was reported that members of the public and stakeholders had been consulted on the proposals detailed in the report and associated appendices and invited to submit feedback. A proactive approach to communications was taken, with a multi-channel communications strategy incorporating digital, social and traditional media, ensuring that residents and businesses across Oldham were aware of the Council's 2026/27 budget proposals and were able to have their say. An update of the consultation responses was included at Appendix 11, to the report.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option 1 – that the Cabinet accepts the 2026/27 Council Tax and ASCP increases as set out at Appendix 10, of the submitted report and the budget assumptions and resulting financial forecasts presented within the report.
Option 2 – that the Cabinet proposes amendments to the assumptions which would change the resulting financial forecasts and budget reduction requirement.
Option 3 – that the Cabinet approves and commends to Council all the budget proposals included in the submitted report and the reported approach to reserves and balances.
Option 4 – that the Cabinet approves the fees and charges for 2026/27, as detailed at Appendix 8 to the report.
Option 5 – that the Cabinet requests that further work is undertaken on some, or all, of the budget proposals and the approach to reserves and balances and that the Cabinet considers a revised position.
Preferred Option - Options 1, 3 and 4 are the preferred options. Assumptions, in the report, were based on objective research and the latest available information. The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget and the budget reductions included in the Director of Finance's report fulfilled that requirement.

Resolved:
That Cabinet approves and commends to Council, on 4th March 2026:

1. The policy landscape and context in which the Council is setting its revenue budget for 2026/27.
2. The financial forecast for 2026/27 having regard to the Local Government Finance Settlements and associated funding announcements.
3. The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts at a value of £2.6m for 2026/27.
4. A proposed overall 2026/27 Council Tax increase of 4.99% for Oldham Council services (2.99% for general purposes and 2% Adult Social Care Precept) resulting in the charges set out at Table 10 of the report.

5. The Transformation Programme savings for 2026/27 at £2.000m.
6. The 2026/27 Budget Reduction proposals at a value of £8.105m.
7. The proposed transfer to reserves of £1.600m in 2026/27 to improve the financial robustness of the Council.
8. The proposal to draw on the Collection Fund for major preceptors of £155.564m for Borough Wide services and £129.237m for Council services.
9. The proposed net revenue expenditure budget for 2026/27 for the Council set at £368.053m.
10. The proposed fees and charges as set out in the schedule included at Appendix 8, of the Director of Finance's report.
11. The level of general fund balances supporting the 2026/27 budget of £18.865m underpinned by the agreed policy on Reserves.
12. That the Cabinet notes the alternative budget reduction proposals presented as part of the Liberal Democrat budget, which was previously scrutinised by the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 5th February 2026.

10 **CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27 TO 2030/31 AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP) POLICY STATEMENT**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance which set out the Capital Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31 and thereby the proposed 2026/27 capital programme, including identified capital investment priorities, together with the indicative capital programme for 2027/28 to 2030/31, having regard to the resources available over the life of the programme.

The Council's Capital Strategy and capital programme awee set over a five-year timeframe. The proposed Capital Strategy and programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31 took the essential elements of the 2025/26 to 2029/30 and previous years' strategies and programmes and moved them forward in the context of the financial and political environment for 2026/27. The Strategy did however include a longer-term vision, a forward look at those projects that were likely to run beyond the five-year strategy and programme period or be initiated subsequently. This covered a timeframe for the 10 years from 2031/32 to 2040/41.

The format of the Capital Strategy reflected the requirements of the Prudential and Treasury Management Codes issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The Capital Strategy was presented at Appendix 1, to the report. Annex C of Appendix 1, to the report, established the proposed capital expenditure and financing for the period covered by the Capital Strategy, 2026/27 to 2030/31. The Council had set out its capital programme for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31 based on the principles of the Capital Strategy.

The Capital Programme and Capital Strategy were influenced by the level of resources available. The level of prudential

borrowing included reflected the financing available in the revenue budget, capital receipts align with forecasts, and grant funding and other contributions are based on already notified allocations or best estimates.

The capital programme for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31 included additional Transport schemes funded by Grant (£16.630m), additional Disabled Facilities Grant (£2.908m), additional Council funded investment in Transport specifically for Potholes (£2.000m) and additional resource for Emerging Priorities (£1.592m), both funded by Prudential Borrowing and an increase in The Use of Flexible Capital Receipts of £2.600m until its expiry of the direction in 2030, financed from Capital Receipts. The revised capital programme includes proposed expenditure for 2026/27 of £102.464m, of which the largest category is £72.953m of expenditure on regeneration, schools, transport and infrastructure projects within the Place Directorate. Total expenditure decreases to £49.047m, £14.923m, £ 5.972m and £1.592m in 2027/28, 2028/29, 2029/30 and 2030/31 respectively. The Strategy also advised that the Council was proposing to continue the use the flexibility provided by the Government to use capital receipts to fund the revenue cost of transformation.

In terms of the Capital Programme, the 2025/26-month 9 capital monitoring position presented alongside this report included expenditure projections that were a key determinant of the 2026/27 programme. The projected outturn spending position for 2025/26 was £70.200m being financed by: Grants and Other Contributions of £41.193m, Prudential Borrowing £23.983m, Capital Receipts of £4.714m and a slight revenue contribution of £0.310m. The actual expenditure to 31st December 2025 was £40.189m (57.25%) of the forecast outturn. The position will be kept under review and budgets would continue to be managed in accordance with forecasts.

In preparing the submitted report, there had been consultation with the members of the Capital Investment Programme Board, the Council's Leadership and Senior Management team on the proposed Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31, which was also presented to and considered by the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 28th January 2026, which in itself represented a key element of the consultation process. The Scrutiny Board were content to commend the report to Cabinet. Any comments from Cabinet will be incorporated into the report presented to the Council on 4th March 2026.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option one (preferred Option) – to accept the proposed recommendations of Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31, Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy, Treasury Management Indicators, and MRP policy, as detailed in the submitted report.

Option two – to suggest an alternative approach to capital investment for 2026/27 to 2030/31, including the revision of capital priority areas.

Resolved:

1. That the Capital Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31, detailed at Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be endorsed and commended to the Council on 4th March 2026.
2. That the Capital Programme for 2026/27 and indicative programmes for 2027/28 to 2029/30 at Annex C of Appendix 1 and summarised at sections 2.2 to 2.5 of the submitted report, be endorsed and commended to the Council on 4th March 2026.
3. That the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as presented at Annex D of Appendix 1, to the submitted report, be endorsed and commended to the Council on 4th March 2026.
4. That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement 2026/27 and method of calculation and Prudential Indicators, detailed in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be endorsed and commended to the Council on 4th March 2026.

11 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ESTIMATES FOR 2026/27 TO 2030/31 AND FORECAST OUTTURN FOR 2025/26**

The Cabinet received a joint report of the Director of Finance and Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive that set out for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the detailed budget estimates for 2026/27, the strategic estimates for the four years 2027/28 through to 2030/31 and outturn estimate for 2025/26. The report also set out the recommended dwelling, non-dwelling rents and service and concierge charges to be applied from April 2026.

The submitted report detailed the HRA 2026/27 proposed original budget and the forecast outturn for 2025/26. The opportunity was also taken to present the provisional strategic budgets for 2027/28 through to 2030/31.

After taking all relevant issues into account, the projected financial position for 2025/26 was estimated to be a £3.723m positive variance when compared to the original budget forecast for 2025/26 approved at the Budget Council meeting, 6th March 2025. This was largely due to the contribution to capital of £3m being delayed until 2026/27. It was noted that the revised forecast outturn would still see HRA expenditure at £0.757m greater than income, and reserves reducing as a result.

The 2026/27 position had been presented after allowing for a proposed increase in dwelling rents of 4.8%, an increase in non-dwelling rents in line with individual contracts, a nominal increase of 2% on service charges and the setting of Extra Care Housing concierge charges to fully recover costs. The majority of HRA tenants are either the recipient of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, and it is assumed that the proposed increase

in rents would not be an additional financial pressure to the majority of tenants.

The financial projections for the HRA over the period 2025/26 to 2030/31 showed an overall reduction in the level of balances from £22.173m at the start of 2025/26 to £15.628m at the end of 2030/31.

The HRA detailed budget for 2026/27, strategic estimates for the four years 2027/28 to 2030/31, and the outturn estimate for 2025/26, were presented to the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 28th January 2026. The Scrutiny Board was content to commend the report to Cabinet without amendment.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option one (preferred Option) – to approve the recommendations in the report.
Option two – to not approve the recommendations in the report.

Resolved:
That Cabinet approves and commends to Council, on 4th March 2026:

1. The forecast HRA outturn for 2025/26 (as per Appendix A, to the report).
2. The proposed HRA budget for 2026/27 (as per Appendix B, to the report).
3. The strategic estimates for 2026/27 to 2030/31 (as per Appendix D, to the report).
4. The proposed increase to dwelling rents for all properties of 4.8%.
5. The proposed increase to non-dwelling rents as per individual contracts.
6. The proposal that service charges are increased by 2%.
7. The proposal to set Extra Care Housing concierge charges to fully recover actual costs.

12 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT - 2026/27**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27.

The report outlined the Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27, the Annual Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy, and Prudential Indicators. The Council is required through regulations supporting the Local Government Act 2003 to 'have regard to' the Prudential Code. The report was required to produce an annual Treasury Strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy setting out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to security and liquidity of those investments. The Strategy for 2026/27 covers.

a. Economic Update.
b. Prospects for Interest Rates
c. The Current Balance Sheet and Treasury Position

d. Liability Benchmark
e. The Borrowing Strategy
f. Debt Rescheduling
g. The Investment Strategy
h. Approved Counterparties, risk management and Investment Limits
i. Treasury Indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council.

The report outlined the implications and key factors in relation to each of the above Capital and Treasury Management issues and made recommendations regarding the Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27.

The report includes the most recently available economic background commentary which reflects the position as at December 2025.

The proposed Treasury Management Strategy was presented to and considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting of 14th January 2025. Following their review and scrutiny the Audit Committee was content to commend to this meeting of the Cabinet for consideration and/or comment before presentation to Council. It was reported that any comments from Cabinet will be incorporated into the reports presented to Council, on 4th March 2026.

Options/Alternatives considered:
In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Cabinet have no alternative to considering and commending the submitted report to the Council, at its meeting on 4th March 2026. Therefore, no options or alternatives were presented.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet commends the following matters, detailed in the submitted report, to the Council, at its meeting on 4th March 2026:

1. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) Projections, as detailed in paragraph 2.4.1, of the submitted report.
2. The Projected Balance Sheet position, by 31st March 2026 and future years as detailed in paragraph 2.4.1, of the submitted report.
3. The Liability Benchmark as detailed in paragraph 2.5, of the submitted report.
4. The Borrowing Strategy for 2025/26 as detailed in paragraph 2.6, of the submitted report.
5. The Annual Treasury Investment Strategy as detailed in paragraph 2.7, of the submitted report, including counterparties and treasury limits.
6. The Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as detailed in paragraph 2.8, of the submitted report.

13 **PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Director of Workforce and Organisational Culture which described that

under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the 'power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the Authority thinks fit, subject to Section 41 of the Localism Act 2011'.

The submitted Pay Policy Statement (the 'Statement') sets out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011.

The purpose of the Statement is to provide transparency and accountability regarding the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees. It excludes teaching and other school staff working for the Local Authority under the purview of a School Governing Body. It identifies:

- The methods by which salaries of employees are determined.
- The detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff, i.e. 'chief officers', as defined by the relevant legislation.
- The Committee(s) responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to the full Council.

Resolved:
That the report be noted.

14 **GREATER MANCHESTER VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY, FAITH & SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (VCFSE) ACCORD**

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health, which advised that in November 2021 Greater Manchester (GM) established a Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Accord, which was a collaboration agreement between the public and VCFSE sectors with the aim of improving outcomes for Greater Manchester's residents. It was jointly owned by the VCFSE and public sectors in GM, including NHS GM, Transport for GM, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and all ten constituent local authorities.

The Accord was supported by an implementation plan and supporting activities at a GM level. At a local level adoption was locally led, with limited accountability or responsibility for reporting to GM on implementation.
A role of the Accord was to provide opportunities to build better understanding of roles across the different sectors and how these influence working relationships. It also provided a space for cross sector networking and identification of new and creative opportunities for collaboration. The commissioning and funding task and finish group have identified Social Value as a priority. They had identified current barriers to valuing the inherent social value of the sector through procurement and were developing proposals for how this could be done differently in future.

Oldham's Live Well Implementation Plan had identified cross sector workforce development as a key enabler for the delivery of the Live Well approach at scale and plans around this are in

progress. This includes the development of leadership skills and capacity withing the VCFSE sector, led by Action Together.

Through the Borough's Engagement Framework, the Council was exploring how it could use digital insight platform (Big Oldham Convo) to ensure that insight gathered through our VCFSE was valued, and that the infrastructure was in place to capture and utilise it more effectively.

The 2026 Priorities were:

- To develop an action plan around the Borough's workforce development priority, including a focus on improving understanding between sectors.
- To test and implement proposals developed by the commissioning and funding task and finish group for an alternative model to ensure the inherent social value of the VCFSE sector is valued in procurement.

Options/Alternatives considered:
No alternatives were presented.

Resolved:

1. That the Council commits to the vision and values of the Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Accord.
2. That an SRO for the implementation of the Accord in Oldham be identified, along with officers within the Council, Integrated Care Board and Action Together who will be responsible for driving change.
3. That all partners recognise the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Accord and Public Sector Forum as the means of delivering on the accord commitments and establish clear lines of accountability and reporting through relevant organisational and Oldham Partnership governance structures.
4. That the Oldham Partnership sets out the Council's local commitments and measures of success, aligned to the Greater Manchester Accord, through the Oldham Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan.
5. That public sector leaders in the Borough, be requested to commit to being active participants in the Forum and to supporting the development and delivery of the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Accord Strategy and Action Plan.

15 **FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR ADULT SUBSTANCE MISUSE TREATMENT SERVICES 2026/27 - 2028/29**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health, the purpose of which was to note the allocation of Public Health Grant funding for 2026/27 and indictive allocations for 2027/28 and 2028/29, which was ringfenced to improve Drug and Alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery delivery and associated outcomes for Oldham.

Approval was being sought to delegate authority to agree all decisions related to the utilisation of the Public Health Grant for Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Treatment and Recovery and

Individual Placement and Support Grant (IPS) to the Director of Public Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health, and Wellbeing for above funding period. This will include the authority to vary existing contracts (and any associated collaborative commissioning agreements) or award grant agreements or contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process. It is also requested that authority is delegated to the Borough Solicitor or nominee to carry out all necessary legal formalities, including the execution of any contracts.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option A (preferred Option) – To accept the Public Health Funding allocations for drug and Alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery and delegate authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing and the Borough Solicitor or their nominee, to enact all decisions regarding allocation of the funding, as outlined in the report. Further, delegate authority to the Borough Solicitor or their nominee to carry out all legal formalities linked to the enactment of decision regarding the spend of the Public Health Grant.
Option A was the recommended option because it would ensure that Oldham Council can continue to improve prevention and early intervention around drugs and alcohol, improve access to treatment and recovery services and improve quality of provision to ensure that Oldham residents receive the best possible support to tackle drug and alcohol related harm, which will in turn improve health outcomes and reduce the number of drug and alcohol related deaths.
Option B – To not accept the Public Health Funding allocations for drug and Alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery:

Resolved:
1. That the Cabinet notes and accepts the Public Health Grant for Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Treatment and Recovery and Individual Placement and Support Grant (IPS) settlement for 2026/27 to 2028/29 including the conditions of funding outlined in this report and that confirmed funding for both elements is for 12 months, with indicative amounts for funding for future years, which will be confirmed at a later date. Agree that the grant funding is allocated to Public Health to enact, in line with the grant conditions.
2. That the Cabinet delegates authority for the execution of all decisions regarding utilisation of the funding from the Public Health Grant for Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Treatment and Recovery 2026/27 - 2028/29 to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing.
3. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Borough Solicitor and Director of Finance (or their nominees), to vary existing contracts (and any associated collaborative commissioning agreements), issue grant agreements or award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process.

4. That the Cabinet delegate authority to the Director of Legal, or his nominee, to carry out all necessary legal formalities linked to the actions delegated to the Director of Public Health, including the execution of contracts.

16 **OLDHAM STRATEGY - GIVING EVERY CHILD THE BEST START IN LIFE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director for Children's Services, which was submitted with the purpose of seeking Member's agreement to: accept the funding allocated to Oldham by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) for delivery of years 5-7 of the Best Start in Life Family Hubs and Healthy Babies Programme (formerly the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme); to delegate decision-making authority for the detailed allocation of this funding to the Executive Director Children and Young People in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Director of Finance, with the input of partners through the Family Hubs Board and to: approve the attached Best Start in Life delivery plan for Oldham, submit this to the DfE and publish it on the Council website before the deadline of 31 March 2026 in accordance with national guidance.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option One (preferred Option) - To approve the Best Start in Life plan and the delegated authority required to manage the Best Start Family Hubs and Healthy Babies grant funding for 2026–2029.
Option Two - Not to approve the Best Start in Life plan and the delegated authority for managing the Best Start Family Hubs and Healthy Babies grant funding for 2026–2029.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet:

1. Approves acceptance of the £5,633,300 funding allocated to Oldham for 2026/27 by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) for delivery of years 5-7 of the Best Start in Life Family Hubs and Healthy Babies Programme (formerly the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme)
2. Approves the delegation of authority for the detailed allocation of this funding to the Executive Director Children and Young People in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Director of Finance, with the input of partners through the Family Hubs Board.
3. Approves the attached Best Start in Life delivery plan for Oldham, and that this be submitted to the DfE and

published before the deadline of 31 March 2026 in accordance with national guidance.

17 **SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS BUSINESS CASE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, which set out proposals and to seek a mandate for creating a speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) service, integrated in the SEND and Inclusion Service.

This was part of the transformation plans for speech and language following the OFSTED Inspection in 2023; and was consistent with the Greater Manchester Balanced System work which has indicated a gap in Oldham in universal and targeted services around speech, language and communication.

This would allow greater join up of specialist teachers and specialist Speech and Language Therapy (S&LT) support for children and young people with speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN). The new provision would be school-facing and would deliver support directly in schools/settings.

There were a higher-than-average number of children and young people in Oldham who had an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) compared to national (Oldham: 6.7% and national: 5.3%).

The most common type of need for children and young people with an EHCP was autism, although SLCN remains a significant area of need.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option 1 (preferred Option) – To expand the Oldham SEND & Inclusion Service, Specialist Services Team, by increasing the capacity for support related to SLCN through a settings-based delivery model. This would be achieved through the employment of speech and language therapists, advisory teachers, and therapy assistants (possibly, and in part, through conversion of current ELSEC and Better Communication Team staff), with increased capacity to create a new model.
Option 2 – To continue to commission all S&LT services for children and young people under the current arrangements with the current provider. Current ELSEC and Better Communication funding is time limited so these teams would be vulnerable under this option.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet agrees to the creation of a S&LT universal & targeted support team, through a joint funding agreement with the integrated care partnership (ICP), with the service to sit within the existing SEND & Inclusion Service team, alongside other specialist services.

18 **APPROVAL OF DRAFT BEAL VALLEY AND BROADBENT**

MOSS MASTERPLAN AND SPATIAL DESIGN CODE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT FOR CONSULTATION

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive which was seeking approval of the draft Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix 1 to the submitted report) and supporting documents (Appendices 2 and 3) for a public consultation commencing no earlier than 25th February 2026. This would enable stakeholders to have the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code SPD before it was finalised and formally adopted.

The Cabinet were informed that the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD), was a strategic plan that covered nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts - Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

The Plan took effect and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the nine PfE authorities on 21st March 2024. PfE sets out the strategic framework for the Oldham Local Plan and allocated sites for employment and housing to meet our growth needs – in Oldham this included JPA10 Beal Valley and JPA12 Broadbent Moss. Policies JPA10 and JPA12 identify a range of criteria that development on Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss will need to address. In both cases this included a requirement for development to be 'in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code as agreed by the local planning authority. This would include the need for an infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy'.

To address the criterion detailed above, in collaboration with the Council the leading Developer Consortium has prepared a masterplan and design code covering both the Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss allocations. Following agreement of the Motion 'Ensuring Statutory and Enforceability for Places for Everyone Masterplans' on 10th December 2025, a report was taken to Cabinet on 15th December 2026 at which Cabinet's approved recommendations were to:

1. 'Endorse the Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code and, in accordance with the Motion agreed at the Council meeting on 10th December, authorise officers to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document incorporating this Masterplan and Spatial Design Code.
2. To note the timetable for the preparation of the SPD included in this addendum report.
3. To note that the report was to be considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board at the appropriate time in the new year, and should therefore be exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, in the Constitution and that the Executive Director of

Place/Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, be given delegated authority to respond to any feedback from Scrutiny as the Masterplan is taken forward to become a Supplementary Planning Document.

In line with the approved recommendation the Masterplan and Spatial Design Code, was now being prepared as a SPD that would be subject to public consultation from 25th February to 11.59pm on 27th March 2026.

Following the consultation and consideration of any comments received and any further work that may be needed, the final SPD will be brought back to Cabinet seeking formal approval to adopt and publish the SPD. Once approved and adopted the SPD will go on to inform future planning applications relating to JPA10 and JPA12 and will be a material consideration in their determination.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option 1 (preferred Option) – to approve the draft Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code SPD and supporting documents, for a public consultation commencing no earlier than 25th February 2026. Option 2 - to not approve the draft Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code SPD and supporting documents, for a public consultation.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the draft Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss Masterplan and Spatial Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix 1, to the submitted report) and supporting documents (Appendices 2 and 3), as the basis for a public consultation, commencing no earlier than 25th February 2026.
2. That the Cabinet notes that the proposed Masterplan and Spatial Design Code was previously considered by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 22nd January 2026, and endorsed to be taken forward for public consultation as an SPD, and therefore was exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution.

19 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting, for the following two items of business, on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

20 **PROCUREMENT OF A FINANCIAL INCLUSION SERVICE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources that sought approval for the procurement of a financial inclusion service.

The Cabinet was being asked to consider and agree to procure a comprehensive financial inclusion service for a 3-year period, with option to extend for a further 3-year period subject to funding being available. This consolidated offer would work closely with Council teams and across the Oldham Partnership to support residents experiencing financial crisis and improve the financial resilience of individuals and communities. The funding would be provided by the Department of Work and Pensions via the Crisis and Resilience Grant Funding commencing on 1st April 2026.

Options/Alternatives considered:
Option 1 - Do not procure a Financial Inclusion Service.
Option 2 (Preferred Option) – To procure a Financial Inclusion Service.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet agrees:

1. To the procurement of a financial inclusion service for a period of three years with an option to extend for a further three-year period subject to available funding.
2. To the extension of the current grant funding arrangement with Citizens Advice for up to three months to allow for the procurement process to take place.
3. To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability to award the contract following the completion of the procurement process.
4. To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability, to approve any extensions to the contract as provided for within the original contract terms and where there is budget available.

21 **INTEGRATED COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE (ICES) AND MINOR ADAPTATIONS – APPROVAL TO TENDER**

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Adults Social Servies (DASS), the purpose of which was to seek purpose approval to undertake a formal tender exercise for the provision of a new Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) contract, to commence no later than 1 October 2026. The proposed contract would run for a period of three years, until 30 September 2029, with the option to extend for a further two years to 30 September 2031, subject to satisfactory performance and market competitiveness.

The proposed procurement will be structured into two separate lots:

• Lot 1 – Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES)

• Lot 2 – Minor Adaptations Service

The current contract is held in the name of Millbrook Healthcare. The contract commenced on 1 October 2022 and is due to end on 30 September 2026. Although the contract includes an option to extend until 30 September 2029, this extension will not be utilised.

The Minor Adaptations element is currently included within the existing ICES contract however, this arrangement has not operated effectively, resulting in the Council having to rely on alternative contractors to meet demand. Separating the service into two distinct lots will ensure clearer accountability, improved performance, and appropriate market engagement for each service area.

Options/Alternatives considered:

a. Option 1 – Exercise the extension to the ICES contract from 1st October 2026 up to 30th September 2029.
b. Option 2 (the preferred Option) – To approve the re-tender for the Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) and Minor Adaptions for a period of 3 years from 1st October 2026 to 30th September 2029 with an option to extend for a further two years until 30th September 2031.

Resolved:
That the Cabinet:

1. Approves commencement of a tender process for the provision of the Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES), structured into two lots:
   – Lot 1: Integrated Community Equipment Service
   – Lot 2: Minor Adaptations Service
2. Approves the proposed contract duration of three years (1 October 2026 – 30 September 2029), with an option to extend for a further two years (to 30 September 2031), subject to satisfactory performance and value for money (noting Note that the procurement exercise will be led by Oldham in partnership with Tameside, Stockport, with Rochdale expected to join subject to final governance approval.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.50pm.

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Report to CABINET

Adult Social Care CQC Assessment Outcome

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults Health & Wellbeing

Officer Contact:
Jayne Ratcliffe Director Adult Social Care (DASS).

Report Author:
David Garner Head of Business Strategy, Assurance and Improvement Adult Social Care

Email: David.Garner@oldham.gov.uk

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision
This report provides information for Cabinet on the outcome of the Care Quality Commission's assessment of Adult Social Care in Oldham.

Executive Summary
The Care Quality Commission published its assessment report on adult social care in Oldham on 4 February 2026. Adult social care received a good rating and a score of 67.

In the final report the CQC praised Oldham for its strong leadership, positive culture, and person-centred approach, with most people telling assessors they had a good experience of local services.

Recommendations
None

Adult Social Care CQC Assessment Outcome

1 Background

1.1 The Care Quality Commission (CQC) was given a responsibility, through the Health and Care Act 2022, to carry out assessments of health and care systems in a local area, in order to understand how care is improving outcomes for people and reducing inequalities in their access to care, their experiences, and outcomes from care.

1.2 The assessments are based on an assessment process that focuses on 4 core themes: working with people; providing support; ensuring support and leadership and nine quality statements.

1.3 In order to reach a rating and a score for each authority the CQC uses five evidence categories:

- People's experience;
- Feedback from staff and leaders;
- Feedback from partners;
- Processes; and
- Outcomes

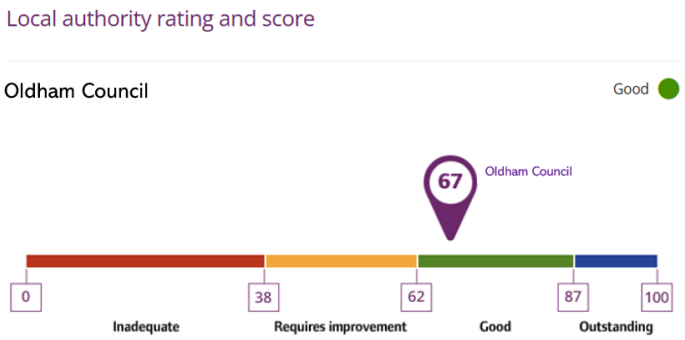
1.4 The assessment process is made up of different stages that include an information return; interviews with residents; people who are using adult social care; unpaid carers; partners; Adult Social Care staff and leadership and elected members. The final stage is the publication of the assessment report.

1.5 The assessment report provides a rating for each authority and a score based on how well the authority meets the criteria set out for the nine quality statements. Authorities receive one of the following ratings: Outstanding; Good; Requires Improvement; Inadequate. They also receive a score out of 100.

1.6 To date CQC has published 106 reports of 153 authorities. It expects to have completed all assessments by the end of March 2026. Reports will not be published during the pre-election period.

2 Current Position

2.1 Oldham's report was published on 4 February and received a rating of Good and a score of 67. Oldham is ranked in the top third of authorities to have had their report published.



2.2 The information return including a self-assessment of Oldham's view of its current position was submitted in June 2025. The onsite visit and interviews with stakeholders took place in October 2025 and a draft report received in December 2025.

2.3 In the final report the CQC praised Oldham for its strong leadership, positive culture, and person-centred approach, with most people telling assessors they had a good experience of local services. Assessors also highlighted the empathy, professionalism and clear communication shown by ASC staff.

2.4 Residents described the support they receive as "outstanding" and spoke highly of the advice they were given, including on safeguarding and financial matters.

2.5 Partnership working was also identified as a key strength, with Oldham commended for working closely with health services, care providers and community organisations to deliver joined up, coordinated support.

2.6 The CQC also praised Oldham's safeguarding arrangements, noting strong leadership oversight, effective systems, and a well-coordinated multi-agency approach to keeping people safe.

2.7 The report also identified some areas where improvement was required. These included mixed feedback from unpaid carers relating to the support they received and the availability of respite care and more work to be done on reducing waiting times for care reviews and financial assessments.

2.8 In response to the report ASC is working on plans that focus on both addressing areas of improvement and on building on the good work highlighted throughout the report. An improvement plan will form part of the overall ASC Business Plans for 2026-27 and is being developed in line with the overall corporate planning process.

3 Next steps

3.1 An Improvement Plan is being developed to identify short, medium and long-term priorities based on the areas of development identified during the self-assessment and CQC assessment process

3.2 Involvement in collective reflection on assessment results and areas of development and participation in peer support with authorities from GM and the north-west as part of the support programme being developed with NWADASS and Partners in Care and Health

3.3 Preparation for the annual self-assessment ensuring that the process includes engagement with partners across the local authority, health and voluntary and community sectors and directly with residents through our co-production plan

3.4 The ongoing assessment process is still being agreed between CQC and the Department of Health & Social Care. It is expected that the next onsite visit for outstanding and good rated authorities will be in 4 years' time. An assessment could be carried out sooner if requested by a local authority and CQC have available resources

3.5 Adult Social Care is working to build on the current good-rating and score of 67 to ensure continuous improvement across ASC in Oldham through extensive monitoring and review or ASC activity and improved outcome measurement

4 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act :

Name of File : full_book_oldham-council-local-authority-assessment-1773051369
Records held in Adult Social Care Department, Oldham Council, Spindles Shopping Centre, George Street, Oldham, OL1 1HD
Officer Name : Jayne Ratcliffe
Contact Email: Jayne.Ratcliffe@Oldham.Gov.UK

Name of File: Oldham Adult Social Care Self-Assessment June 2025
Records held in Adult Social Care Department, Adult Social Care Department, Oldham Council, Spindles Shopping Centre, George Street, Oldham, OL1 1HD
Officer Name : Jayne Ratcliffe
Contact Email: Jayne.Ratcliffe@Oldham.Gov.UK

DELETE THE SIGNATURE BOX IF THE REPORT IS A CABINET DECISION

Signed _____ Cabinet Member (specify whom)	Dated _____
Signed _____ Executive Director/Deputy Chief Executive	Dated _____

Report to CABINET

Extension to the Adult Social Care Service Level Agreement with Miocare Group CIC 2026

Portfolio Holder(s):
Cllr Barbara Brownridge, Lead Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact(s):
Jayne Ratcliffe, Director of Adult Social Care (DASS

Report Author(s):
Claire Hooley, Assistant Director of Commissioning and Market Management

Cabinet Date – 23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

The report seeks approval to extend the Service Level Agreement with Adult Social Care and Miocare Group CIC, for a range of services provided.

The report also seeks a commitment for wider Council colleagues to work with Miocare Group CIC to develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for those corporate services that Miocare Group CIC "buys back" from the Council.

Recommendations:

Cabinet members are asked to:

- Approve the Service Level Agreement with Miocare Group CIC.
- The refreshed SLA updates the provisions governing the relationship and service delivery between the Council and Miocare Group CIC. The provisions allow for variation as the future focus of the Miocare Group becomes clearer through the implementation of the Adult Social Care Target Operating Model.
- Endorse wider corporate services work with Miocare to develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for services Miocare buys back from the Council.

Extension to the Adult Social Care Service Level Agreement with Miocare Group CIC 2026

1. Background:

1.1 On 1st October 2013, the Council entered into a Service Level Agreement with Oldham Care and Support Ltd, following the creation of the company as a local authority trading company, from what had previously been "in-house" adult social care services. This agreement was superseded in 2015 following a restructuring of the company, with the parent company Oldham Care Services Ltd, and two subsidiaries, Oldham Care and Support Ltd (the "teckal company) and Oldham Care and Support at Home (the trading arm). In April 2016, the company name changed to Miocare Group Community Interest Company, and services were delivered via sub-contract arrangements through Oldham Care and Support Ltd (the teckal company) and Miocare Services Ltd (the trading arm).

1.2 It was originally envisaged that during the initial term of the agreement, decisions about company ownership would be made, which may lead to the company ultimately operating as a completely independent organisation, no longer in council ownership. However, since then there has been unprecedented levels of instability in the care sector, exacerbated in more recent times by significant workforce challenges, the covid-19 pandemic, and the national developments of significant transformation plans in respect of health and social care provision, and certain levels of uncertainty surrounding funding and charging reforms. As a result, it has felt prudent to retain Council ownership of the company.

1.3 Towards the end of 2021, as part of a wider review of Council resources and taking into consideration the prevailing market conditions and future vision with a focus on prevention and strength-based approaches, initial consideration was given to the potential options with regard to the future of MioCare and the services delivered by the company. The outcome of these considerations was to retain the current position in respect of MioCare, but to refresh the Service Level Agreement and specifications, to support a clearer view of future opportunities for and development of the MioCare delivered services, aligned to the emerging Target Operating Model for Adult Social Care and the widespread national reforms.

1.4 In 2023 the refreshed Service Level Agreement alongside a contract were put in situ, for a period of three years with the option to extend for up to two further years. This report recommends utilising the original provision to extend the SLAs, expiring 31st March 2028, or sooner should alternative developments be progressed.

2. Current Position

2.1 In partnership with MioCare, the Service Level Agreement and the service specifications have been reviewed and updates applied. The specifications relate solely to the services delivered through Oldham Care and Support Ltd. The services delivered through MioCare Services Ltd. are subject to separate agreements, such as for Extra Care Housing which were put in place following the tendering of services as part of the Care at Home framework approach originally contracted in 2018. To note, at the time of writing this report, the Extra Care Housing service is going through the moderation and evaluation stage of the tender, with these services due to expire Summer 2026, pending the outcome of the tender process.

2.2 The Service Level Agreement has been drafted for a period of 3 years with an option to extend for up to two further years. It includes all required provisions and the provision to add, remove or amend services during the life of the agreement.

2.3 The services currently covered by the agreement, and reflected in the specifications include:

- General Requirements
- Bed-Based Reablement (Medlock Court)
- Community Enablement
- Complex Needs Services (including supported living, shared lives, and respite provision)
- Helpline and Response
- Managed Services (including community equipment, adaptations and assistive technology)
- Continuity of Care Provision (to support in relation to situations of provider failure)

2.5 Further work is required to put in place Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements between MioCare and those council departments providing support services, to establish expected service levels.

2.6 A strategic review has been commissioned to take place, considering MioCare's Local Authority Owned company status. This review is due to conclude in 2026/27, for recommendations to be considered in an options appraisal for implementation.

3. Options Considered

3.1 **Option 1** - Do not extend the Service Level Agreement, and do not develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for services Miocare buys back from the council.

This would leave both the Council and MioCare Group CIC in a position where the relationship and the services to be delivered are not covered by a compliant, up to date agreement, leading to lack of clarity for all parties.

3.2 **Option 2** – Do not extend the Service Level Agreement until the future focus of MioCare Group is clarified (with reference to para 2.6), and do not develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for services MioCare buys back from the council until that time.

This would carry the same risks as Option 1 and as it is envisaged that the full implementation of the target operating model and adult social care reform will take a significant period of time, it would leave uncertainty and lack of clarity for both the Council and MioCare.

3.3 **Option 3** – Extend the Service Level Agreement for the services delivered to the Council by MioCare Group CIC, and develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for services MioCare buys back from the council.

This is the preferred option. It updates the provisions governing the relationship and service delivery between the council and MioCare Group CIC. The provisions allow for variation as the future focus of the MioCare Group becomes clearer through the implementation of the Adult Social Care Target Operating Model. It also requires wider corporate services to work with MioCare to develop Service Level Agreements and specifications of requirements for services Miocare buys back from the council.

4 Financial implications

4.1 The report is seeking to extend the Service Level Agreement with the MioCare Group CIC. The redrafted agreement is effective from 1 April 2026 and as per the provision to extend for a further two years 2026/27 and 2027/28.

4.2 Schedule 2 of the Service Level Agreement 'The Charges' outlines the basis of the charge and the mechanism for periodically reviewing the charge.

(Andy Cooper – Senior Finance Manager)

5 Legal implications

5.1 By virtue of Regulation 12(1) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, the proposed SLA would be a public contract that falls outside the scope of Part 2 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 because all of the following conditions are fulfilled:

(a) the Council exercises over MioCare a control which is similar to that which it exercises over its own departments;

(b) more than 80% of the activities of MioCare are carried out in the performance of tasks entrusted to it by the council or by other legal persons controlled by the council; and

(c) there is no direct private capital participation in MioCare with the exception of non-controlling and non-blocking forms of private capital participation required by national legislative provisions, in conformity with anything which is retained in EU law by virtue of section 4 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, which do not exert a decisive influence on Miocare.

5.2 As a result, a procurement compliant direct contract award can be made by the council to MioCare in the form of the proposed SLA.

5.3 The proposed SLA has been drafted in consultation with Legal Services and is intended to be comprehensive yet balanced agreement which protects each party.

5.4 Any provision of services by the council to MioCare would be outside the scope of Part 2 of PCR 2015 by virtue of Regulation 12(2).

Sarah Orrell – Commercial & Procurement Solicitor

6. HR / People implications

6.1 Option 3 would provide clarity for MioCare management and their workforce, no other specific workforce issues identified.

Caroline Brian, Head of Operational HR

7. Links to Co-operative Values

7.1 Entering into a new Service Level Agreement with MioCare aligns to the council's Co-operative agenda as MioCare is an organisation based in Oldham delivering health and social care support to adults in Oldham. Keeping adults healthy and safe and meeting statutory commitments is a key priority for the council. The new agreement also represents partnership with an organisation that priorities outcomes for residents.

8. Strategic Links

8.1 Alignment to Corporate Plan

In 2024 the council published a new Corporate Plan – Ready for the Future 2024 – 27. The plan shows how the council will build a future where Oldham is recognised for its ambition, inclusiveness, and strength by focusing on three key goals:

- Healthier, Happier Lives
- A Great Place to Live
- Green and Growing

There are four main focus areas, or “pillars”, that will guide this plan and help us to achieve our goals:

- Efficiency and value for money – being committed to making the best use of our resources throughout the organisation.
- Capacity building – we will build strong infrastructure to meet our needs now and in the future.
- Digital – we will use digital tools to improve services and make our organisation more efficient
- Prevention and early help – we will actively work to reduce the need for our services by focusing on prevention and early support.

8.2 The redrafting of the SLA and specifications enables us to reset the base from which future service development will take place, to align to the target operating model for adult social care and to respond to national reform.

9. Communications – comments/implications

9.1 Partnership working, ongoing communication and engagement between the council and MioCare is ongoing and MioCare have been involved in the development of the refreshed SLA and specifications, through the six-weekly Partnership meetings, at least quarterly Strategy meetings and through the MioCare Board.

10. Procurement Implications

10.1 The Teckal exemption under the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) allows public authorities to directly award contracts to "in-house" entities without competitive tender, provided strict criteria are met. This is codified in Schedule 2, paragraph 2 of the Act. This is similar to how it operated under PCR2015 and the exemption ensures that in-house, non-commercial arrangements are not subject to public procurement rules.

James England - Procurement Manager

11. Property Implications

11.1 MioCare are tenants of several council-owned buildings, occupying under Tenancy at Will documents, which have not been renewed or updated for many years. Services to the buildings, including health & safety and compliance are provided by the Technical Delivery and Facilities Management teams within Property Services to ensure servicing and repairs are managed and kept up to date. These services are not on an SLA basis, but any costs are captured as part of the Corporate Landlord model and recharged back to MioCare each year. FM and Property Services will continue to work with MioCare under these arrangements and therefore there are no specific implications at present and this arrangement will continue if the extension is agreed. However, if there are opportunities to consider how roles and responsibilities are managed through the use of SLAs, these should be considered.

(Alison Evans – Corporate Estates Manager)

12 Risk Implications

12.1 The preferred option poses the least risk to the council as providing by providing a clear agreement to govern the services delivered by MioCare. The option provides consistency and continuity whilst also retaining a level of flexibility to develop in line with the Adult Social Care Target Operating Model.

13 Key Decision Reference: HSC-04-26

14 Environmental Health and Safety Implications

14.1 None.

15 Community cohesion and crime and disorder implications

15.1 None.

16 Equality Impact Assessment

16.1 None.

17 Oldham Impact Assessment Completed?

17.1 NA.

18 Background Papers

18.1 There are no background papers to the report.

19 Appendices

Appendix one		

Report to CABINET

Proposal to update Smokefree policy

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact: Dr Rebecca Fletcher, Director of Public Health

Report Author: Neha Lamech, Policy and Strategy Officer
Ext. x3386

23/3/26

Reason for Decision
To seek approval to update and publicise the Smokefree policy in Oldham to create healthy and safe environment for our residents.

Executive Summary

It has been estimated that exposure to SHS (Second Hand Smoke) in the UK causes around 2,700 deaths in people aged 20-63 and a further 8,000 deaths a year among people aged 65 years and older. People particularly at risk from the effects of second hand smoke include pregnant women, children and people with pre-existing heart or respiratory illnesses.

Reducing smoking is one of the key priorities of Oldham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is our ambition to work towards a smoke-free Oldham. Smoking is identified as a key challenge facing the system in the Oldham Integrated Care Partnership's Locality Plan and is highlighted as one of the 18 core areas we need to improve and transform. High smoking rates and the need for improved support for self-management around smoking cessation were identified as key factors in the report by Carnall Farrar which identified priorities for addressing health and care demand and drivers of demand in Oldham.

In 2018 Oldham council developed a smokefree policy which covered all council owned properties, spaces and vehicles. Updating this policy following legislative changes proposed in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill which is currently going through the house of Lords, will be

an important step in Oldham achieving its smokefree ambitions and reducing tobacco use and smoking prevalence in the borough.

Recommendations

We recommend updating the council smokefree policy.

This will create healthier, safer spaces for our workforce and residents overall. The proportion of people that will benefit from having smokefree areas far outweighs the proportion of people who smoke. Particularly groups who are adversely affected by second hand smoke, such as children, young people, women who are pregnant and people who suffer with smoking related illnesses. Residents would be able to enjoy council owned outdoor spaces like parks, without experiencing harm from inhaling tobacco smoke. It would contribute to creating a healthier workforce, by providing the option to those that do use tobacco to access support to quit. In turn reducing the frequency of smoking related illness and associated quit days. Updating the policy will de-normalise the use of tobacco and smoking and reduce its visibility. Reputationally, it would support the council to meet its ambitions to reduce smoking as this is one of the key priorities of Oldham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is our ambition to work towards a smoke-free Oldham.

Proposal to update smokefree policy

1 Background

1.1 Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. Every year around 76,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking related illnesses. Smoking increases one's chances of developing more than 50 serious health conditions. Often resulting in higher mortality rates and more years spent in poor health due to long term conditions. Smoking is a modifiable risk factor, with strong connections to wider socio-economic determinant of health, that affects three of the major killers in Oldham, which are circulatory disease, cancer, and respiratory disease.

1.2 The UK has made considerable progress in reducing the harms related to tobacco. Smoking rates have fallen, both nationally and locally, over the last few decades. However, smoking remains the single greatest cause of preventable death, disability, ill-health and social inequality for local people.

1.3 Non-smokers are also at risk of harm through second-hand smoke exposure, especially vulnerable adults, children, and babies. Breathing in other people's cigarette smoke is called passive, involuntary or second hand smoking (SHS). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classifies environmental tobacco smoke as a Class A (known human) carcinogen alongside asbestos, arsenic, benzene and radon gas.1 There is no safe level of exposure to SHS.

1.4 Short-term effects of exposure to second hand smoke (SHS) include eye irritation, headaches, coughs, sore throat, dizziness and nausea. Adults with asthma can experience a significant decline in lung function when exposed, while new cases of asthma may be induced in children whose parents' smoke. Short term exposure to tobacco smoke also has a measurable effect on the heart in non-smokers.

1.5 In the longer-term, passive smokers suffer an increased risk of a range of smoking-related diseases. Exposure to other people's smoke increases the risk of lung cancer in non-smokers by 20-30% and coronary heart disease by 25-35%. It has been linked with an increase in cancers, dementia and stroke.

1.6 It has been estimated that domestic exposure to SHS in the UK causes around 2,700 deaths in people aged 20-63 and a further 8,000 deaths a year among people aged 65 years and older. People particularly at risk from the effects of second hand smoke include pregnant women and people with pre-existing heart or respiratory illnesses. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of second hand smoke and exposure increases the risk of cot death, glue ear, asthma and other respiratory disorders, including emphysema later in life. Research has highlighted significant risks to babies associated with SHS exposure in pregnant women. These include low birth weight, congenital anomalies, smaller head circumferences, and increased risk of still birth. In the UK, around 2 million children are estimated to be regularly exposed to SHS in the home and many more are exposed outside the home.

1.7 Tackling smoking is one of the most evidence-based and effective interventions that we can take to prevent ill health. Reducing smoking prevalence would have a significant impact on improving population health, reducing demand on health and social care services and tackling health inequalities. Smoking is an addiction most smokers were trapped into as children and young people. Most smokers want to quit and many more regret ever having started. Therefore, whole system action is needed to support those who want to quit and prevent people from starting smoking in the first place. Smokefree policy not only significantly reduces non-smokers' exposure to tobacco smoke but also encourages more smokers to quit.

2 Current Position

2.1 National position

2.2 Smoking has been prohibited by law in virtually all enclosed and substantially enclosed workplaces and public places throughout the United Kingdom since July 2007. Under the Health Act, "substantially enclosed" means premises or structures with a ceiling or roof (including temporary and retractable coverings such as awnings) and where there are permanent openings, other than windows or doors, which in total are less than half of the area of the walls. So, for example, market stalls and bus stops can be required to be smokefree if their structure is substantially enclosed. Smokefree legislation in England forms part of the Health Act 2006 and The Children and Families Act 2014.

2.3 The main points of the legislation are as follows:

- The legislation, introduced on the 1st July 2007, now makes it illegal to smoke in all public enclosed or substantially enclosed area and workplaces.
- The ban includes smoking on vehicles which serve the public and / or are used for work purposes.
- Appropriate no smoking signs must be clearly placed in all smoke free premises and vehicles.
- Under the legislation in place work smoking rooms and areas are no longer permitted. All smokers must take their smoke breaks outside.
- The owners / managers of any premises must take reasonable steps to ensure that all staff and/or visitors are aware of the ban and to uphold the ban.
- Smokers looking for an appropriate place to smoke may check the no smoking signs in and around premises to easily see which areas are restricted or ask a staff member.
- The Health Act 2006 was amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 granting the Government power to introduce regulations to make private vehicles smokefree when carrying children under the age of 18.

2.4 Prior to the implementation of the smokefree law, it was estimated that exposure to second hand smoke in the workplace caused around 617 premature deaths in the UK each year. By comparison, the total number of deaths in the UK from all other industrial accidents was reported to be 235 in 2003/4. The degree of risk depends on the extent and duration of exposure. Particularly at risk were bar staff, casino workers and other employees in workplaces where smoking was routine. It was estimated that second hand smoke caused one premature death a week among workers in the hospitality industries.

2.5 The smokefree legislation in England resulted in 1200 fewer emergency admissions to hospital for heart attacks (a reduction of 2.4%) in the 12 months following implementation of the 2007 law. Other jurisdictions have shown reductions in hospital admissions for heart attacks ranging from 8% to 40%. Other health benefits associated with smokefree legislation include reduced incidence of childhood asthma and an increase in the number of people cutting down or quitting smoking.

2.5 Opinion polls show that public support for smokefree legislation is strong and has continued to rise since the law came into effect in 2007. In 2018 YouGov polls recorded 82% of the public where in favour of smokefree legislation that would create more smokefree spaces.

2.6 Local authorities enforce the smokefree laws in workplaces, public places and work vehicles, however voluntary compliance with the law has been high and there has been little need for enforcement measures. Offences for which individuals can be fined or prosecuted occur when the law is not complied with in the following ways:

- Failure to display no smoking signs.
- Smoking in a smokefree workplace, public place, or vehicle.
- Failure to prevent smoking in a workplace, public place, or vehicle.

Fixed penalty notices can be issued for the offences of smoking in a smokefree place and for failing to display the required smokefree signs. Failure to pay the fixed penalty, and serious and repeat offenders, can be prosecuted in the magistrates' court, as well as persons in control of smokefree premises and vehicles who fail to prevent smoking taking place.

3. Oldham Position

3.1 The current smoking prevalence in Oldham is 14% (APS) which is higher than the England average. Reducing smoking is one of the key priorities of Oldham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is our ambition to work towards a smoke-free Oldham. Smoking is identified as a key challenge facing the system in the Oldham Integrated Care Partnership's Locality Plan and highlighted as one of the 18 core areas we need to improve and transform. High smoking rates and the need for improved support for self-management around smoking cessation were identified as key factors in the recent report by Carnall Farrar which identified priorities for addressing health and care demand and drivers of demand in Oldham.

3.2 In Oldham strategic tobacco control work has been driven through partnership working through the Oldham tobacco alliance. The Oldham Tobacco Alliance has been meeting regularly since it was launched in September 2021 and has made considerable progress to date. The Tobacco alliance has been working towards supporting residents to have smokefree homes, have smokefree spaces in Oldham i.e. parks. In 2018

Oldham council developed a smokefree policy which covered all council owned properties, spaces and vehicles. This includes all council buildings and town centre areas such as Parliament square. Updating this policy following legislative changes proposed in the Tobacco and vapes Bill which is currently going through the house of Lords, will be an important step in Oldham achieving its smokefree ambitions and reducing smoking prevalence in the borough. Subject to the passing of the bill, the main changes will likely reflect the updated evidence of vapes as an effective quit aid for adults that would like to quit using tobacco. This will be reflected in supporting those who are using vapes to quit while making it clear that they are not appropriate for anyone under the age of 18.

3 Options

3.1 Option1: Update the council smokefree policy.
This would be the preferred option would require working along HR and the policy team to refresh the existing policy. We would review all areas of the policy including, support for staff that would like to stop smoking. The policy would be applicable to all council owned and used properties and spaces like parks, council vehicles and council staff during work hours.

The advantage of refreshing the policy is that it would be an opportunity to assess progress over the past 7 years and make any changes needed in line with the national Tobacco and vapes bill, including changes to enforcement and penalties. This will create healthier safe spaces for our workforce and residents overall, with the advantage of protecting certain vulnerable groups from the harms of second hand smoke such as children, young people and those with suppressed immunity. It would contribute to creating a healthier workforce, by providing the option to those that do use tobacco to access support to quit. In turn reducing the frequency of smoking related illness and associated quit days.

The proportion of people that will benefit from having smokefree areas far outweigh the proportion of people who do smoke or use alternate forms of tobacco. That is the gains to health and life expectancy, are greater than the restrictions on those who wish to smoke. Reputationally it would support the council to meet its ambitions to reduce smoking as this is one of the key priorities of Oldham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is our ambition to work towards a smoke-free Oldham.

As compliance with smokefree policies is generally high, we do not foresee any problems with updating the existing policy.

3.2 Option 2: Do not update smokefree policy

3.3 This is not a recommended option. This essentially would be a do nothing approach with has reputational risks attached. Not doing anything will go against our commitments at a GM level in contributing towards a smokefree GM. It directly contradicts our local priorities in terms of providing children with the best start in life. As well as in opposition with our strategic and corporate priorities to tackle smoking, reduce prevalence in the borough, address smoking related inequalities and move towards becoming smokefree. The current smokefree policy is outdated and not

widely adopted by staff. Changes in legislation require a policy update for it to be used in away that is meaningful to

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Update the council smokefree policy

5 Consultation

5.1 Environmental health has been consulted on this policy update. The policy will apply to council owned buildings, areas, property and vehicles. This will include Parliament square which is council owned land. Environmental Health would not be able to enforce all aspects of the smoke free policy and can only enforce smoke free in enclosed spaces as defined by legislation

6 Financial Implications

6.1 This proposal relates to the update of the Council's existing Smokefree Policy. As it does not introduce any new services, commissioning activity, or external delivery costs, there are no direct financial implications arising at this stage.

6.2 Any associated costs (e.g. internal communications, signage updates, staff support) are expected to be minimal and managed within existing Public Health resources.

6.3 The proposal aligns with previous funding allocations received in 2023/24 under the DHSC's Smokefree Generation programme and supports delivery of strategic public health priorities.

6.4 There are no adverse financial implications resulting from this decision.

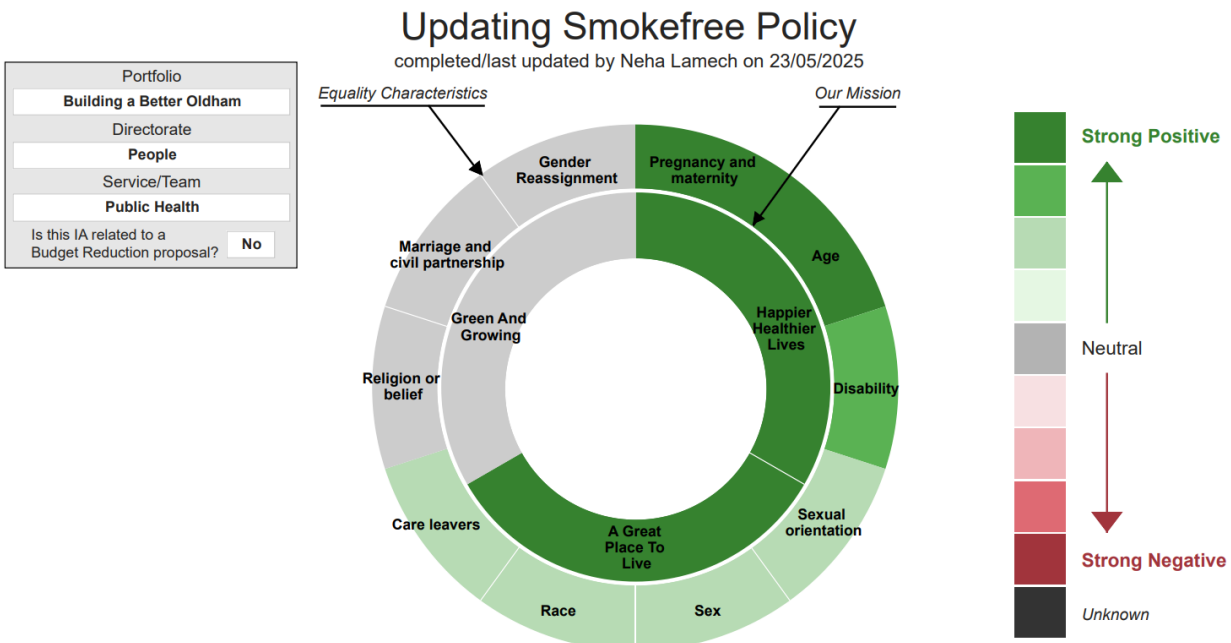
(Accountant – Sher Mahroof)

7 Legal Implications

The Tobacco and Vapes Bill is currently being considered by Parliament and if enacted will expand current indoor smoking restrictions to certain outdoor public places and workplaces. The updating of the current smokefree policy should take account of any legislative changes introduced if and when the Tobacco and Vapes Bill becomes law. (Alan Evans)

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

8.1 Yes



9 Key Decision

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision Reference

11.1 HSC-03-26

12 Background Papers

12.1 Oldham Smokefree policy

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13 Appendices

13.1 None

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Smoke free policy

November 2018

Oldham Council

Introduction

Smoking and second-hand smoke are proven health risks.

As a result, we want to put in place a strong smoke free policy and support more smokers to give up.

We recognise that smoking is an addiction and smokers wishing to reduce their consumption or to stop smoking altogether, may find it difficult so to do. We will therefore provide assistance to any employees wanting help to stop smoking.

The Health Act 2006 and accompanying regulations required all enclosed and "substantially enclosed" work and public places to be smoke free. The legislation also requires all vehicles that are used as a workplace by more than one person to be smoke free. In addition, all premises are required to display smoke free signage.

E-cigarettes are electrical devices that mimic real cigarettes but produce a vapour that is potentially less harmful than tobacco smoke. E-cigarette use is often known as 'vaping' and e-cigarette users are often known as 'vapers.'

While we acknowledge Public Health England's current position that e-cigarettes carry a fraction of the risk that cigarettes do and accept that current evidence indicates the risk to the health of bystanders from exposure to e-cigarette vapour is extremely low, this policy fully applies to the use of e-cigarettes and versions/variations of, both available now and in future.

Aim

This policy aims to de-normalise smoking across the town by creating a smoke free environment in and around our buildings, land and vehicles.

It is not about whether or not people smoke though. Instead it focuses on the protection of non-smokers from the effects of smoke and reducing the visibility of smoking and the use of e-cigarettes.

Through the implementation of this policy, we are seeking to improve the health of employees, elected members and other visitors by allowing them to work in a smoke free environment and by providing help to those smokers who wish to stop smoking.

Employees covered by this policy

This policy applies to members of the public, all Oldham Council employees as well as agency workers, external contractors and elected members. It is also applicable to community schools and voluntary controlled schools.

Oldham Council

Procedure

Smoke free areas

The following areas will be designated and signposted as smoke free areas:

- on land we own
- in buildings we own, operate or use
- in vehicles we own, lease or contract
- at entranceways or in areas adjacent to buildings
- in parks, their buildings and immediate vicinities (employees who cannot easily leave the park during a break, should abstain from smoking and should be encouraged to quit or use nicotine replacement therapy in order to abstain temporarily from smoking)
- in residential and day care settings. (employees who cannot leave the premises and grounds for a break outside of working time because of their job must abstain from smoking and should be encouraged to quit or use nicotine replacement therapy in order to abstain temporarily from smoking)

Managers are expected to ensure staff are meeting the policy. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in disciplinary action and may result in dismissal.

In addition:

Employees are also strongly discouraged from smoking in their own vehicles while on business and are required not to smoke if there are passengers in the vehicle.

Smoking off site

Employees are encouraged to ensure that, as far as possible, any branding or items (e.g. lanyards, identity badges or uniform) that make them identifiable an employee are not visible to others if they choose to smoke outside of our smoke free areas. All events organised by the Council and/or held in any of the above ‘Smoke free areas’ will be smoke free and therefore advertised as such.

Adult residential homes

The law does not prohibit smoking by residents in defined “care homes”. Where we provide this accommodation, smoking by residents will be permitted within a designated smoking room. These rooms will be designed and managed to avoid risk to others. Under these circumstances, the unit manager must operate a single controlled area with adequate ventilation where service users can smoke, such as a lounge or a smoking room. This must be separate from other parts of the unit and completely enclosed. No smoking is allowed elsewhere in the building. Employees' exposure to the exempted area should be kept to a minimum. Employees should

seek advice from their line manager who should take all reasonable steps to protect them from exposure to second hand smoke. Under normal circumstances employees should only be required to enter the area to assist people in and out or if urgent or continuous care intervention is required. Managers will seek to ensure that rooms will be kept clear of smoke for an hour before necessary routine cleaning and maintenance.

Third party premises

Employees required to visit other premises as part of their duties should advise the people responsible for the premises of our smoke free policy when arranging a visit, however, we cannot compel these premises to follow the policy. It may be possible for the premises being visited to arrange for a non-smoking area to be provided for the duration of the visit. Where this is not possible, the visited person/organisation should be requested to refrain from smoking inside the premises or in the meeting area for one hour before the visit and be asked not to smoke for the duration of the visit.

In circumstances where it is not possible to arrange a visit beforehand, employees should seek advice from their line manager, who should take all reasonable steps to protect them from exposure to secondhand smoke.

It is recognised that there will be circumstances, particularly in visiting some domestic premises, where it will not prove possible to establish such arrangements. Therefore a brief assessment of risk should be undertaken. The risk of being exposed to smoking should be weighed against the risk of not undertaking the visit.

Recruitment and new employees

Potential employees will be reminded of the smoke free policy at interview. New employees will also be made aware through our induction process

Smoking breaks

There will be no provision for employees to smoke other than the normal contractual working arrangements i.e. using flexi-time or recognised breaks.

Supporting people to stop smoking

All employees wishing to stop smoking will be fully supported by our workplace health and wellbeing offer and encouraged to use the local Stop Smoking Service. Employees will be entitled to access one hour per month of stop smoking support during work time, balanced with the needs of the service, for a six-month period (maximum of six hours).

Our internal communications networks will contain links to sources of help and information about local smoking cessation services and the NHS smoking helpline.

For any employees who wish to quit, our current local Stop Smoking Service is available via Positive Steps on 0800 288 9008 or www.positive-steps.org.uk/

Oldham Council

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Report to CABINET

Extension of the Current Commissioning Arrangements for Care at Home, Extra Care Support and Night Provision Support Services

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Barbara Brownridge, Lead Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact: Jayne Ratcliffe, Director of Adults Social Services

Report Author: Ayshia Akhtar, Commissioning Manager, ASC Commissioning and Market Management

23rd March2026

Reason for Decision

The Council's current contractual arrangements for the delivery of Care at Home, Extra Care and Night Provision support services commenced on 1 April 2019 and, following the approved two-year extension option, are due to expire on 31 March 2026.

Approval to undertake a full open tender process for new Care at Home, Extra Care and Night provision support services was granted by Cabinet on 22nd September 2025, as set out in the Cabinet report titled, “Future commissioning Arrangements for Care at Home, Extra Care support and Night Provision support services.” (Original Key Decision Reference: HSC-13-25)
The tender process for Care at Home, Extra Care and Night Provision services is underway. However, due to necessary changes in procurement timelines including extended tender submission deadlines which enables full engagement from prospective providers, evaluation and moderation requirements, and the need to ensure a safe mobilisation period for any new providers the recommissioning timetable has needed to be revised.

To ensure continuity of care for vulnerable residents, compliance with our statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, and a safe and well-managed transition to new contractual arrangements, approval is sought to extend the current contracts for a further three months until 30 June 2026, with the new contracts commencing 1 July 2026.

Executive Summary

Care at Home (CAH) services provide essential care and support to approximately 950 adults across Oldham, with around 10,850 hours of care delivered each week. The annual expenditure on CAH services is approximately £19.6 million. In addition, Extra Care supports around 159 individuals

weekly, delivering approximately 7866 hours weekly at an annual cost of £2.2 million. Night Care provision, currently delivered through a legacy block contract an annual cost of £122,207.84 These services underpin Oldham's Adult Social Care vision of supporting people to be independent healthy save and well within their own homes.

The invitation to tender is now closed, however, procurement timescales have shifted due to;

- Provider-requested extension of tender submission deadline
- Increased volume and complexity of clarification questions
- Unknown volume of tender submissions
- Need for extensive evaluation and moderation
- Need for a safe mobilisation period to prevent disruption

Given these factors, a three month extension is required to ensure continuity, protect residents and enable safe and orderly transition.

Table 1 shows the estimated spend for a 3-Month extension (April–June 2026);

Service	**Contract Life Spend (7 years)**	**Annual Spend**	**3-Month Cost**
Care at Home	£137.2m	£19.6m	£4.9m
Extra Care Housing	£15.4m	£2.2m	£0.55m
Night Care	£854k	£122k	£28k
Total	**£153m~**	**£21.9m**	**£5.47m**

Table 1

The variation is in line with regulation 72 of PCR2015 and the modification is below the 10% of the contract value.

This expenditure is essential to maintain statutory provision.

Recommendations

Option 2 is the Preferred Option

1. Approve a three-month extension of the current contracts for Care at Home, Extra Care and Night Provision from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026**,** at an estimated cost of £5.47m.

2. Approve that the new contracts commence on 1 July 2026.

1 Background

1.1 The Council's current commissioning arrangements for Care at Home, Extra Care Housing support and Night Provision commenced on 1 April 2019. These services were originally commissioned through a Flexible Purchasing System (FPS), consisting of five geographical clusters with two lead providers in each cluster and three back-up providers. Extra Care Housing support is delivered by a single provider across six schemes, while Night Care provision is delivered through a legacy block contract with one provider. The contracts were initially awarded for a five-year period and have since been extended by two further one-year periods, taking the contract end date to 31 March 2026.

1.2 These services collectively support a significant number of residents with statutory care needs. Care at Home currently delivers approximately 10,850 hours of care each week to around 950 individuals, with an annual expenditure of £19.6 million. Extra Care Housing provides 7,866 hours per week to 159 residents at an annual cost of £2.2 million. Night Care provision costs £9,423.68 every four weeks, equivalent to an annual spend of £122,507.84.

1.3 Under the Procurement Act 2023, the Council is required to commission new services using an Open or Competitive Flexible Procedure, as the previous DPS/FPS model can no longer be used for new awards below threshold. A full procurement exercise is therefore underway to secure new contracts to commence on 1 July 2026.

2 Current Position

2.1 The procurement for the new Care at Home, Extra Care Housing and Night Provision contracts began on 5 November 2025 with the publication of the Invitation to Tender (ITT). The original tender submission deadline of 1 December 2025 was extended to 19 December 2025 following multiple provider requests and in recognition of the volume of clarification questions received. This extension is necessary to ensure sufficient provider engagement and a competitive market response, but it also compresses the remaining stages of the procurement timetable.

2.2 The tender closed on Friday 19 December 2025 at 12:00 noon. A total of 572 expressions of interest were received, resulting in 117 formal submissions. Given the volume and potential complexity of submissions, the evaluation process has been scheduled to allow sufficient time for a thorough and robust assessment. Tender evaluation will take place from 5 January to 27 February 2026 and will include quality evaluation, financial assessment, compliance checks and moderation. Following completion of the evaluation, the Council intends to publish the Contract Award Notice on 6 March 2026. An 8-working-day standstill period will then commence, concluding in mid-March 2026, after which formal contract award is expected on 19 March 2026.

2.3 Mobilisation for the new contracts is scheduled to begin on 23 March 2026 and will run until 30 June 2026. This period is required to ensure a safe and seamless transition for approximately 950 Care at Home users and 159 Extra Care residents, and to allow for full TUPE processes, operational planning, workforce handover, system configuration, care plan reviews and risk assessments. The new contracts will then commence on 1 July 2026.

2.4 Given this timetable, the current contracts cannot safely end on 31 March 2026. The Council requires a three-month extension to ensure service continuity, comply with

statutory duties, and avoid significant disruption to service users and their carers.

2.5 The revised timeline is as per below;

Event	New Date
ITT Published	05 November 2025
Deadline for Clarifications	12 December 2025, 12:00
Deadline for ITT Submissions	19 December 2025, 12:00
Tender Evaluation	05 January – 27 February 2026
Contract Award Notice	06 March 2026
Standstill Period	8 working days
Contract Award	19 March 2026
Mobilisation Period	23 March – 30 June 2026
Contract Go-Live	01 July 2026

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1: Allow the existing Care at Home, Extra Care and Night Provision contracts to expire on 31 March 2026 without extension**

3.2 This option is not viable as it would be allowing the current contracts to end on 31 March 2026 without putting new arrangements in place. This is neither viable nor lawful. If the contracts were to lapse, the Council would have no formal or compliant mechanism to deliver essential adult social care services. This would breach procurement legislation, as the Council must undertake a lawful competitive process for services of this value and scale. Without contracted providers, the Council would also be unable to meet its Care Act 2014 duties to meet eligible needs, maintain care at home and safeguard vulnerable adults. This would create immediate risk for the 950 people receiving Care at Home support, 159 Extra Care residents and those relying on night provision. It would also expose the Council to legal challenge, regulatory scrutiny and reputational harm. For these reasons, this option is not recommended.

3.3 **Option 2: Proceed with the full procurement exercise and approve a three-month extension to the existing contracts, extending them from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, with the new contracts commencing on 1 July 2026 (Preferred Option).**

3.4 Under this option, the Council would continue with the current procurement process for Care at Home, Extra Care Housing and Night Provision in line with the Procurement Act 2023. The invitation to tender closed on 19th December 2025 at 12:00 noon , following an extended deadline requested by providers. Evaluation, moderation and contract award activities will take place between January and March 2026, followed by a mobilisation period from 23 March to 30 June 2026. To allow this timetable to be completed safely and without disruption to services, a three-month extension to the existing contracts is required, moving the expiry date from 31 March to 30 June 2026.

This option ensures lawful and uninterrupted service delivery and provides the time needed for a safe transition to new providers. It allows for proper mobilisation, TUPE processes, and quality checks, reducing the risk of disruption for service users and staff. The extension also protects the workforce by avoiding rushed transitions and ensures service users and families have confidence that care will continue safely. Given the extended tender deadline and the unknown volume of submissions, the extra three months are essential to complete evaluation and mobilisation properly. For these reasons, this option is the safest, most compliant and operationally sound, and is therefore the preferred option.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 **Option 2 – Proceed with the full procurement exercise and approve a three-month extension to the existing contracts, extending them from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, with the new contracts commencing on 1 July 2026.**

4.2 This option aligns with statutory obligations, procurement regulations, and best practices for service delivery. This approach provides the most flexible, compliant, and transparent solution for securing high-quality services for Oldham's most vulnerable residents.

5 Consultation

5.1 Consultation has taken place with all existing providers delivering Care at Home, Extra Care and Night Care services. Each provider has confirmed their agreement to the proposed three-month extension, recognising the importance of ensuring continuity of care and supporting a safe mobilisation period for any new contractual arrangements. In addition, the wider provider market has been informed of the revised contract start date of 1 July 2026, following the decision to extend the ITT submission deadline to 19 December 2025. Providers have been made aware that the extension is required to maintain service stability while the procurement, evaluation and mobilisation activities are completed in full.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The proposed 3-month extension of the current Care at Home, Extra Care, and Night Provision contracts from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026 will result in an estimated cost of £5.48m, broken down as follows:

Care at Home: £4.90m
Extra Care Housing: £0.55m
Night Care: £0.03m

This expenditure will be funded from the Adult Social Care allocated budget for 2026/27. The extension is necessary to maintain statutory services and ensure continuity of care during the transition to new contractual arrangements.

There is no anticipated impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy beyond the planned expenditure for 2026/27.

Failure to approve this extension would risk service disruption, potential breaches of statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, and could lead to increased costs associated with emergency provision.

Liz Taylor - Senior Accountant

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The proposed three-month extension is a permitted modification under PCR 2015 Regulation 72(1)(b), as the value (£5.47m) is well below the 10% threshold and does not alter the overall nature of the services.

Extending the contracts is necessary to maintain statutory Care Act 2014 duties, ensure continuity for vulnerable service users and allow sufficient time for evaluation and mobilisation of the new contracts. Allowing the contracts to lapse would place the Council in a non-compliant and high-risk position.

Subject to Finance confirming budget availability, there are no legal objections to approving the extension and issuing the required modification documentation

Pamela Nsofor - Solicitor

8 Procurement Implications

Based on the contract value of £153m, the proposed modification of £5.3m equates to approx. 3.46%, so is well below the threshold of 10%, and a long way short of the legal 50% modification that is allowed. The contract was commissioned under PCR2015 regulations, so these continue to apply.

PCR 2015 Regulation 72 states:

Contracts and framework agreements may be modified without a new procurement procedure in accordance with this Part in any of the following cases:

1. for additional works, services or supplies by the original contractor that have become necessary and were not included in the initial procurement, where a change of contractor—
2. cannot be made for economic or technical reasons such as requirements of interchangeability or interoperability with existing equipment, services or installations procured under the initial procurement, or
3. would cause significant inconvenience or substantial duplication of costs for the contracting authority,
4. provided that any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract;

Given the significant implications of moving this business early, impacting on service users, TUPE implications, the current tender, and other reasons, it would cause significant inconvenience to all parties if we were not able to extend the agreement by 3 months.

This is only to allow additional time to deal with the current tender and the volume of interest it has created (over 450 Expressions of Interest).

The proposed extension would be the most sensible resolution, and alternatives are likely to have significant negative impact to the council, suppliers and service users. To not approve it would leave us in a non-compliant position.

James England – Procurement Manager

9 **Human Resources implications**

9.1 There are no HR implications other than TUPE, with this report as it is a commissioned service with external providers. The TUPE process is underway as part of the procurement exercise.

10 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

10.1 Yes – as per previous Cabinet report – and no changes.

11 **Key Decision**

11.1 Yes

12 **Key Decision Reference**

12.1 HSC-13-25

13 **Background Papers**

13.1 Cabinet approval report 22nd September 2025 (Original Key Decision Reference HSC-13-25)

14 **Appendices**

14.1 None

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Report to CABINET

Approval to Tender the Domestic Property Disability Adaptions Framework for the Provision of Level Access Showers and Shower over Baths

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Barbara Brownridge, Lead Member for Health and Social Care

Officer Contact: Jayne Ratcliffe, Director of Adults Social Services

Report Author: Ayshia Akhtar, Commissioning Manager, ASC Commissioning and Market Management

Email: Ayshia.akhtar@oldham.gov.uk

DATE: 23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

Cabinet approval is required to commence a competitive procurement exercise for the Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) for the provision of Level Access Showers and Shower over Baths services. The aim of this is to award a new contract from 1 December 2026 for an initial period of two (2) years, with the option to extend for a further two (2) years. This will ensure continuity of this essential service, compliance with procurement regulations, and value for money for the Council.

Executive Summary

The Council currently operates a multi contractor Framework Agreement for Domestic Property Disability Adaptations DPDA, which commenced on 1 December 2022 for an initial term of 2 years with the option to extend twice, each for an additional term of no more than 1 year. Under the Framework Agreement, the Council places orders for the provision of Level Access Showers and Shower over Baths, as and when required. The Framework Agreements were put in place to enable the Council to meet its duty to award a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) to those who are eligible and to ensure the works funded by a DFG are completed to a high standard and in a timely manner.

The framework was originally awarded for an initial period of two years, with the option to extend for up to two further periods of twelve months (2+1+1). The initial term expired on 30 November 2024, the first and second extension was exercised, meaning the framework is currently due to expire on 30 November 2026. Four contractors were appointed to the framework and continue to deliver a high volume of essential adaptation works across the borough.

This report seeks approval for the Council to undertake a competitive procurement exercise for a closed framework under the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23). A closed framework permits suppliers to join only at the point of establishment and does not allow new entrants during its lifetime. Under PA23 regulations, the maximum term of a closed framework is four (4) years. This approach provides stability, ensures legal compliance, and allows the Council to secure a sustainable and competitive market for the delivery of essential adaptation works.

The Council intends to award places on the framework to a maximum of four (4) providers, ensuring sufficient capacity, resilience, and competition within the market. Works will continue to be allocated using a rotational system.

The framework will be awarded for an initial period of two (2) years, with the option to extend by up to two (2) further periods of twelve (12) months each (2+1+1), giving a maximum framework duration of four (4) years, in line with PA23 requirements.

The total estimated value of works delivered through the framework over the four-year term is £6,600,000 (excluding VAT). This makes the procurement an above-threshold tender, and it will therefore be advertised and conducted in full compliance with PA23 regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Recommendations

Option 2 is the preferred option;

That Cabinet:

- Approves the commencement of a competitive tender process for the provision of the Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) service as a closed framework under the Procurement Act 2023, and appoint up to four (4) providers, covering the delivery of Level Access Showers, Shower Over Baths and associated bathroom adaptations.

- Approves the proposed contract duration of two (2) years, to commence from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2028, with an option to extend for a further two (2) years, up to 30 November 2030, subject to satisfactory performance, continued funding and the achievement of value for money.

- Delegates authority to the Director of Adult Social Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Health and Social Care, to:
  - Conduct the procurement process in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation, and
  - Award the contract(s) following completion of the procurement exercise.

Approval to Tender the Domestic Property Disability Adaptions Framework for the Provision of Level Access Showers and Shower over Baths

1 Background

1.1 The Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) Framework Agreement enables the Council to commission essential home adaptation works, primarily Level Access Showers and Shower Over Baths, as and when required and at pre-agreed competitive rates. These works are funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and support the Council in meeting its statutory duties under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to provide eligible residents with adaptations that enable them to live safely and independently in their own homes.

1.2 The current Framework Agreements commenced on 1 December 2022 for an initial period of two years, expiring on 30 November 2024, with the option to extend for two further periods of up to twelve months each (2+1+1). One extension has already been exercised, and the framework is now operating within its final phase.

1.3 There are 4 contractors appointed to the framework arrangement:

- Provider A
- Provider B
- Provider C
- Provider D

1.4 The framework operates on a multi-contractor basis, with works allocated to providers using a rotation system. This allows flexibility in service delivery, ensures resilience in capacity, and enables contractors to accept or decline works based on their operational availability. This model has supported timely delivery of adaptations and helped to manage fluctuations in demand.

1.5 The total capped value of the framework over its lifetime was approved at £2,260,000. However, demand for disability adaptations has continued to increase year on year, reflecting:

- An ageing population
- Increasing prevalence of long-term health conditions and disabilities
- Hospital discharge pressures, and
- The strategic shift towards prevention and supporting people to remain at home

As a result, spend has significantly exceeded the original approved contract value, highlighting both the essential nature of the service and the scale of demand within the borough

1.6 Our vision for Adult Social Care in Oldham is to support individuals to live independently, healthy, safe and well. The service enables that to happen and works to our target operating model in terms of prevention of moving into a residential setting.

2 Current Position

2.1 The Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) Framework primarily provides essential adaptations to residents' homes, including Level Access Showers (LAS), Shower Over Baths (SOB), and associated bathroom alterations. These adaptations are critical in supporting residents to maintain independence, dignity, and personal safety, while also reducing environmental risks and supporting hospital discharge and prevention of residential care admissions. The service is therefore central to the Council's statutory responsibilities in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and to the wider Adult Social Care prevention agenda.

2.2 The current framework consists of four contracted providers who deliver adaptations on a rotational basis. This has enabled flexibility in delivery and ensured continuity of service in the face of fluctuating demand. However, since the extension of the framework in November 2024, providers have raised concerns regarding financial sustainability, citing significant increases in labour costs, materials, National Insurance contributions, and general inflationary pressures. These market conditions have created challenges for providers in continuing to deliver the service at the existing contract rates.

2.3 Under the existing arrangements, a proposal has been developed to apply a 5% uplift to contract prices to support provider sustainability and service continuity. This uplift is proposed to be backdated to April 2025 and applied through to the end of the interim contractual arrangements. While this is necessary to stabilise the market in the short term, it further highlights the need for a new long-term contract that reflects current market conditions, realistic pricing structures, and future demand.

2.4 The current contract does not contain a formal mid-term price variation mechanism, although it does allow for discretionary annual price reviews which have not previously been exercised. Benchmarking undertaken with neighbouring Greater Manchester authorities, including Tameside and Rochdale, shows that similar uplifts have been applied within their adaptation contracts to address the same inflationary pressures. This demonstrates that the current DPDA pricing structure is no longer aligned with prevailing market conditions.

2.5 In addition to pricing pressures, activity levels demonstrate that demand for adaptations remains consistently high. Delivery data shows:

2.6 Table 1, 2 and 3 below shows the number of completed Level Access Showers (LAS) and Shower Over Baths (SOB) from 2023 – 2024, 2024 – 2025 and 2025 to date along with the total costings.

2023 – 2024				
Contractors	**Level Access shower**	**Shower Over Bath**	**Bathrm Alts**	**Costs**
Provider A	52	2	1	£322,654.94
Provider B	37	6	12	£315,870.77
Provider C	34	8	0	£232,086.21
Provider D	49	5	3	£351,793.85
Total	172	21	16	£1,222,405.77

Table 1

2024 - 2025				
Contractors	**Level Access shower**	**Shower Over Bath**	**Bathrm Alts**	**Costs**
Provider A	34	2	1	£219,755.84
Provider B	12	2	2	£105,505.85
Provider C	33	4	1	£214,780.60
Provider D	29	5	1	£201,999.26
Total	108	13	5	£742,041.55

Table 2

2025 to date				
Contractors	**Level Access shower**	**Shower Over Bath**	**Bathrm Alts**	**Costs**
Provider A	51	3	1	£309,329.46
Provider B	38	2	2	£305,924.75
Provider C	35	0	1	£214,780.60
Provider D	48	5	3	£295,036.32
Total	172	10	7	£1,125,071.13

Table 3

2.7 These figures demonstrate both the scale of the service and its critical importance to residents. Activity in 2024 and early 2025 was deliberately reduced to manage financial pressures caused by overspend, rather than reflecting a reduction in demand. This has created a backlog of need which is expected to continue to place pressure on services.

2.8 Based on historic activity levels and current delivery patterns, the estimated spend for the final year of the interim arrangements (December 2025 – November 2026) is approximately £1.65 million. This would bring the total estimated lifetime spend of the current framework to approximately £5.114 million, significantly above the original capped value of £2.26 million and beyond the Procurement Act (PA23) works threshold of £4,477,174 (excl. VAT).

2.9 The financial position is summarised below:

Description	**Amount (£)**
Spend to date	3,089,518.45
Projected spend (Sept–Nov 2025)	375,023.71
Projected spend (2025/26)	1,650,000
Total projected contract spend	**5,114,000**

Table 4

2.10 The DPDA service is primarily funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant. The current financial position of the DFG (as of April 2025) is:

Description	Amount (£)
Total Budget for DFG Provision	3,044,703.82
Spend to Date	1,034,003.19
Remaining Budget	2,010,700.63
Projected additional cost from 5% uplift	56,253.56

Table 5

2.11 The current unit prices further demonstrate the impact of inflationary pressures:

Current unit costs vs. projected costs with the 5% increase		
1	Current base price for Level Access Shower = £5,000.00	Base price with 5% increase = £5,250.00
2	Current base price for Shower Over Bath = £1,716.00	Base price with 5% increase = £1,801.80

Table 6

2.12 These revised prices will need to be fully tested through open market competition to ensure value for money and market sustainability.

2.13 Based on historic delivery levels, backlog demand, and projected growth, the expected annual spend through the new framework is estimated at approximately £1.65 million per annum.

2.14 This results in a total estimated framework value of:

Table: Estimated Framework Spend	
Period	**Estimated Spend (£)**
Year 1	1,650,000
Year 2	1,650,000
Year 3 (Extension)	1,650,000
Year 4 (Extension)	1,650,000
Total over 4 Years	**6,600,000**

Table 7

2.15 This gives a total estimated framework value of £6,600,000 (excluding VAT). As this value exceeds the PA23 works threshold, the procurement will be classified as an above-

threshold tender and will be published and conducted accordingly to ensure full regulatory compliance.

2.16 While the existing framework has delivered significant benefits, it is now approaching the end of its contractual life and no further extensions are available within the original terms that would remain compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.

2.17 The Council must therefore move to a new, legally compliant and sustainable contracting model. This requires the commencement of a competitive re-tendering exercise to secure a new DPDA contract from 1 December 2026. The commissioning plan is to undertake this procurement during summer 2026, with a new contract in place and operational from 1 December 2026. The proposed new contract will be let for an initial period of two (2) years, with an option to extend for a further two (2) years, subject to performance and funding, providing stability, improved governance, and long-term value for money.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1: Do nothing and allow the Framework Agreements to end on 30 November 2026.

This option would involve taking no further action and allowing the current DPDA Framework Agreements, which are operating under their second extension, to expire on 30 November 2026. Beyond this date, there would be no formal contractual mechanism for the delivery of Level Access Showers, Shower Over Baths, or other essential adaptations.

This would prevent the Council from fully meeting its statutory duties under the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) legislation and could result in delays or the inability to provide adaptations for eligible residents. Vulnerable individuals may experience negative impacts on their health, wellbeing, independence, and safety.

Additionally, the absence of a framework would expose the Council to significant legal, operational, and reputational risks, including non-compliance with procurement regulations, while contractors would have no guarantee of work, potentially leading to disengagement from the market and reduced capacity to deliver future services.

For these reasons, this option is not recommended.

Option 2: Seek approval for the commencement of a competitive tender process for the provision of the Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) service through a closed framework under the Procurement Act 2023, covering the delivery of Level Access Showers, Shower Over Baths and associated bathroom adaptations for a duration of two (2) years, to commence from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2028, with an option to extend for a further two (2) years, up to 30 November 2030.

This option proposes the commencement of a competitive tender process for the provision of the DPDA service through a closed framework under the Procurement Act 2023, covering the delivery of Level Access Showers, Shower Over Baths, and associated bathroom adaptations.

The new contract would have an initial duration of two (2) years, running from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2028, with the option to extend for a further two (2) years to 30

November 2030, subject to satisfactory performance, continued funding, and the achievement of value for money.

Re-tendering the service would provide a legally compliant, financially sustainable, and strategically robust contractual arrangement, ensuring long-term continuity of service for residents and stability for providers. It would allow the Council to test the market, secure best value, reflect current inflationary pressures and realistic pricing, and embed social value, sustainability, and quality requirements.

To support this, approval is sought to delegate to the Director of Adult Social Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Health and Social Care, the power to:

,

- Conduct the procurement process in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation, and
- Award the contract(s) following completion of the procurement exercise.

This approach mitigates the operational, legal, and reputational risks associated with allowing the current framework to expire and ensures that vulnerable residents continue to receive timely, essential adaptations to support independence, safety, and wellbeing.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 **Option 2:Seek approval for the commencement of a competitive tender process for the provision of the Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) service through a closed framework under the Procurement Act 2023, covering the delivery of Level Access Showers, Shower Over Baths and associated bathroom adaptations for a duration of two (2) years, to commence from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2028, with an option to extend for a further two (2) years, up to 30 November 2030.**

This is the preferred option because it provides a legally compliant, financially sustainable, and strategically robust solution to deliver essential adaptations for residents. The current framework, operating under its second extension until 30 November 2026, has exceeded its financial and contractual limits, and any further extensions or short-term arrangements would not provide long-term certainty or value for money.

Re-tendering the service ensures that the Council can:

- Maintain continuity of essential adaptations for vulnerable residents, supporting independence, safety, and wellbeing.
- Secure best value through open competition and align contract pricing with current market conditions, including inflationary pressures and provider sustainability.
- Establish a contractual arrangement that is compliant with procurement legislation and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- Embed robust performance management, quality monitoring, and social value requirements into the new contract.
- Provide long-term stability for service providers, encouraging continued engagement and capacity in the market.

This option also allows sufficient time to develop a comprehensive service specification and procurement strategy that reflects current and future demand, ensuring that the Council can continue to meet its statutory responsibilities under the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) legislation. For these reasons, Option 2 is recommended as the preferred approach.

5 Consultation

5.1 A consultation will be undertaken to inform the re-tendering process and ensure that stakeholder views are considered. The consultation will focus on service delivery, quality, outcomes, value for money, and any proposed changes to the service specification.

Current service providers have been formally informed that the existing contract will come to an end on 30 November, and that the service will be subject to a full re-tender. This notification was provided in line with contractual and procurement requirements to ensure transparency and sufficient notice.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The proposed represents capital expenditure and will be a charge against the Community Health and Adult Social Care – Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) capital programme.

6.2 The estimate cost of the scheme is approximately £1,650,000pa on average, up to £6,600,000 in total.

6.3 The DFG is allocated annually and it is uncertain as to the level grant support for future years, in recent years it has been around £2.9m per annum. Although, there is a reasonable assumption that the grant funding will not cease due the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) is a mandatory statutory requirement for local councils in England and Wales under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

Jit Kara - Senior Accountant

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The proposal is to award a framework pursuant to section 45 and publish a tender notice under PA23 regulation 20(2) and accordingly is compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and constitution.

Bryan Boese – Solicitor Oldham Council

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 The new framework for the Domestic Property Disability Adaptions service will be set up as a framework under the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) regulations. A framework is a type of public procurement agreement where suppliers can only join at the initial launch, with no new suppliers allowed to enter during the framework's lifespan. The maximum term for a closed framework is 4 years.

The council seeks to award a place on the framework to a maximum of Four (4) providers. This is to ensure there is enough capacity to meet the demands of the service. Works will be allocated to providers using a rotation system.

The framework agreement will be awarded for an initial term of Two (2) years with the option to extend the agreement by up to Two (2) further periods of Twelve (12) months each. (2+1+1).

The total value of the Works over the 4-year term is estimated to be £6,600,000 excl VAT. This is therefore an above threshold tender, and the tender notice will be published accordingly to ensure compliance with PA23 regulations.

Ankur Patel – Procurement Manager

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

9.1 Yes

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 HSC-02-26

12 **Background Papers**

12.1 N/A

13 **Appendices**

13.1 N/A

Signed _____ Cabinet Member (specify whom)	Dated _____
Signed _____ Executive Director/Deputy Chief Executive	Dated _____

Approval to Tender the Domestic Property Disability Adaptations (DPDA) Service

completed/last updated by Ayshia Akhtar on 19/01/2026

Portfolio	**Adults, Health and Wellbeing**
Directorate	**People**
Service/Team	**Adult Social Care**
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	**No**



Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Sex	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Care leavers	Moderate Positive	Possible	Long Term	2	Care leavers with disabilities who are living independently may benefit from home adaptations that help them maintain their tenancy, live safely, and sustain independent living.
Age	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	All ages are eligible for DFG-funded adaptations. The framework supports independent living, prevents hospital admission, and delays residential care.
Disability	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	The service directly supports disabled residents to live safely and independently by providing essential adaptations.

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Green And Growing	Moderate Positive	Possible	Long Term	2	New framework can embed sustainability requirements and energy-efficient materials.
A Great Place To Live	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Safe, accessible homes improve quality of life and community stability.
Happier Healthier Lives	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Adaptations reduce accidents, hospital admissions, and promote independence and wellbeing.

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Report to CABINET

Procurement of a Crisis Payment Provider

Portfolio Holder:
Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact:
Fiona Greenway, Executive Director of Resources

Report Author:
Fran Lautman, Assistant Director of Customer Experience

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

To approve the procurement of a crisis payment provider to be funded by the Crisis and Resilience Grant Funding commencing 1 April 2026.

Executive Summary

Cabinet is asked to consider and agree to procure a comprehensive crisis payment provider for a 3-year period, with option to extend for a further 3-year period subject to funding being available.

As part of the scheme guidance for the Crisis and Resilience Fund, we are required to assess and administer crisis payments. This umbrella payment approach will enable the Local Welfare Provision and Crisis Payments Team to quickly support residents experiencing financial crisis. It will ensure we have access to a range of payment options including energy vouchers, supermarket vouchers, goods in kind and other types of payments so that we can support residents experiencing different types of crisis. The funding will be provided by the Department of Work and Pensions via the Crisis and Resilience Grant Funding commencing 1 April 2026.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to consider and agree:

a) The procurement of a crisis payment provider for a period of 3 years with option to extend for a further 3-year period subject to available funding.

b) To continue with the current approach of utilising a provider called HUGGG to issue crisis payments for up to 3 months to allow for the procurement process to take place.

c) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability to award the contract following the completion of the procurement process.

d) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability, to approve any extensions to the contract as provided for within the original contract terms and where there is budget available.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972 and
it is not in the public interest to disclose
the information because of the commercially sensitive information enclosed within the report.

1 Background

1.1 Oldham Council currently provides and grant funds several forms of crisis payments to support residents experiencing financial crisis. Moving forwards and supported by the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) provided by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) from 1 April 2026, we will improve and consolidate the offer to residents, making it easier to access timely and resident-focused crisis support.

Local Welfare Provision (LWP)

1.2 We currently have a (LWP) scheme. In 2025-26, it has been funded by the seventh and final round of the Household Support Fund (HSF) with a total of £180,000 available. The purpose of the scheme is to meet short-term emergency or immediate support needs and/or to support a household to establish or maintain a home in the community. The support required is assessed via an online application with evidence required to ensure that awards are provided to residents most in need. The support available includes essential domestic appliances and beds. The examples of circumstances that may be considered for support via LWP include:

- Care Leavers under the age of 25
- People who have suffered a disaster/crisis such as fire or flood
- Families under exceptional financial pressure
- Vulnerable people
- People fleeing domestic violence
- People moving out of institutional or residential care
- People moving from supported accommodation to independent living
- People who are leaving prison or detention centres
- People who are chronically or terminally ill
- People with alcohol or drug issues who are receiving addiction support

1.3 A contract is in place for the LWP service to issue wide goods and beds via a provider called FRC. The contract covers Bulky Waste Collections and LWP and expires on 31 March 2026. A short extension will be in place to ensure continuity of the LWP service until a new provider can be established. Waste colleagues are planning for the changes to Bulky collections and this is out of scope for this procurement.

Supermarket vouchers – HUGGG

1.4 As part of the Council's crisis offer, we distribute HUGGG vouchers funded by HSF. HUGGG vouchers are supermarket vouchers to support households to access food and essential items including toiletries and baby products. Several teams issue HUGGG

vouchers including Customer Services, Hosuing Options, Childrens Social Care, Specialist Independent Domestic Violence Service (IDVA) and Adult Referral Contact Centre (ARCC). The vouchers are provided by the issuing teams as they identify residents experiencing financial crisis and are not subject to a detailed financial assessment on the basis of providing timely crisis support.

1.5 Due to the constraints of HSF whereby there was a lack of certainty regarding the duration of funding, a procurement exercise was not conducted for issuing supermarket vouchers. Moving forwards, we are in a position where a procurement exercise can take place due to 3 years of funding from CRF.

Energy Vouchers

1.6 The Council currently provides energy support to residents through the Warm Homes Team. The service supports households on low incomes and those in receipt of benefits who are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to afford essential energy costs. Residents can contact the Warm Homes Team directly, who will assess their situation and determine the most appropriate support.

1.7 This support is currently funded through HSF. The service currently uses the e-Vouchers platform to issue energy vouchers. Moving forward, this provision will be incorporated into the Council's wider crisis payments offer funded through CRF.

Cash payments

1.8 In previous HSF schemes, we have provided cash payments to particular cohorts of residents. This has been done via pay points whereby a resident has been sent a payment link and has presented this at a pay point to then be issued cash from the till. Significant issues were experienced with issuing cash in this way with several residents reporting needing to travel to several sites to access cash due to the amount of cash available in tills.

1.9 In 2024/25, this approach was delivered using the Councils existing voucher provider, with 13,943 cash vouchers issued at £60 each. Vouchers were generated through the provider platform and issued to residents either by email (if possible) or by post incurring print and postage costs.

2 Current Position

2.1 Moving forwards, we are keen to utilise a cost-effective, swift and safe mechanism to directly distribute crisis support via a range of methods depending on the nature of the crisis being experienced including goods in kind, supermarket vouchers, energy payments and cash payments where this is appropriate to residents. This will also ensure we are complaint in our approach and identify the best value in our delivery

2.2 A contract and service specification will be developed subject to endorsement of this approach as set out in this paper. A transition period will be in place from April to June 2026 with the new offer implemented from July 2026 up to 31 March 2029. HUGGG vouchers will continue to be uitilised in the short-term (up to 3 months) while the procurement process takes place. This will ensure continuity of services to residents during the transition period.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1** – Do not procure a crisis payment provider

Pros – There will not be a cost to the Council for this option

Cons – Due to the commitment of 3 years of grant funding, not undertaking a procurement exercise would mean we are not complaint with procurement regulations. It would also mean we may be limited to cash payments through our internal teams where there is insufficient capacity to deliver at this scale and with BACS payments being made a small number of times a week limiting our ability to provide timely crisis payments.

3.2 **Option 2** – Procure a crisis payment provider

Pros – An umbrella provider who following our assessment of their circumstances we can utilise to issue a breadth of payment types depending on their circumstances. This includes supermarket vouchers to access food and essentials, energy vouchers, goods in kind and cash payments via Open Banking where appropriate. This breadth of approach will be resident focused depending on needs and will be more cost efficient with vouchers incurring less administration costs than cash payments.

Cons – This option will create a cost of up to £1,115,000 per year and up to £3,345,000 over 3 years. However, this will be grant funded therefore not utilising existing revenue budgets. Additionally, we are required in the CRF scheme guidance to fund a crisis payment scheme.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 2 is the preferred option due to the range of payments available and that vouchers incur less administration costs that cash payments.

5 Consultation

5.1 Sessions with staff, partners and residents have been delivered by Oldham Positive Action Network (OPAN) in reviewing the current financial support offer and to the opportunities for improvement moving forwards. A clear recommendation was to consolidate financial support into a single crisis payment scheme – this has been taken forward into this approach.

5.2 Engagement with elected members has taken place through a Financial Inclusion Task and Finish Group whereby Elected Members have shared their suggestions and ideas as to how we quickly assess and provide crisis payments to residents. Elected Members' preference was for a range of payment options to be available depending on a residents circumstances to enable a resident focused approach.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The proposal seeks approval to procure a crisis payment provider for a three-year period, with the option to extend for a further three years, fully funded through the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

6.2 The estimated maximum cost of the arrangement is £1,115,000 per annum, equating to £3,345,000 over the initial three-year term. This represents the full cost envelope of the umbrella crisis payment service, including supermarket vouchers, energy vouchers, goods in kind, and cash payments delivered through an external provider.

6.3 As the service is wholly funded by CRF grant allocations, no additional pressure is placed on the Council's existing revenue budgets. The approach ensures the Council remains compliant with procurement and grant-funding requirements, as the CRF scheme guidance mandates the provision of a crisis payment scheme. Failure to procure would risk non-compliance and may limit the Council's ability to distribute support effectively. A short transition period from April to June 2026 is planned, during which HUGGG vouchers will continue to be used to ensure service continuity. This transitional cost will also be met from within the CRF funding allocation and does not create additional financial risk.

6.4 No other material financial risks are identified at this stage. The contract will only be extended beyond the initial term where sufficient CRF grant funding is confirmed and available. Accordingly, the financial exposure to the Council remains limited to the grant funding received from the DWP

6.5 The report also seeks approval for the proposed governance arrangements outlined in recommendations C and D.

(Matthew Kearns, Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The proposal to apply Crisis and Resilience Grant Funding to the proposed procurement is consistent with the terms of the grant award agreement. I agree that the proposal is compliant with the council's constitution, and that the current contract should be extended 3 months which may be done under the Procurement Regulations. I endorse the plan described by Procurement in their comments below.

(Bryan Boese. Solicitor)

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 Procurements understanding is that Market testing is currently being carried out, following that a decision will be made as to whether we use the Open Procedure to go to market OR if there are limited providers a Closed tender process. A full specification has not yet been received and currently following discussions with the stakeholder group they are compiling all the required information for the tender documentation. Happy to proceed with either the Open or Closed Tender process.

8.2 An extension of the current contract with HUGGG (to issue crisis payments for up to 3 months) to allow for the procurement process to take place is required.

(Angela Porter, Senior Category Manager - Commercial and Environment)

9 HR Implications

9.1 There are no direct workforce implications arising from the procurement of an external crisis payment provider. 1.55 additional FTE will be in place in the team for assessing crisis payment applications. This specific proposal does not involve changes to current staffing levels, role profiles, or terms and conditions - employees within Customer Services, Local Welfare Provision and Crisis Payment Team will continue to undertake assessment and decision-making responsibilities, with the external provider supporting the processing and fulfilment of a range of crisis payments.

9.2 There are no anticipated risks to job security or any requirement for formal consultation under organisational change policies. Any minor process changes or training needs can be managed within current resources. HR therefore supports the recommendation outlined in this report.

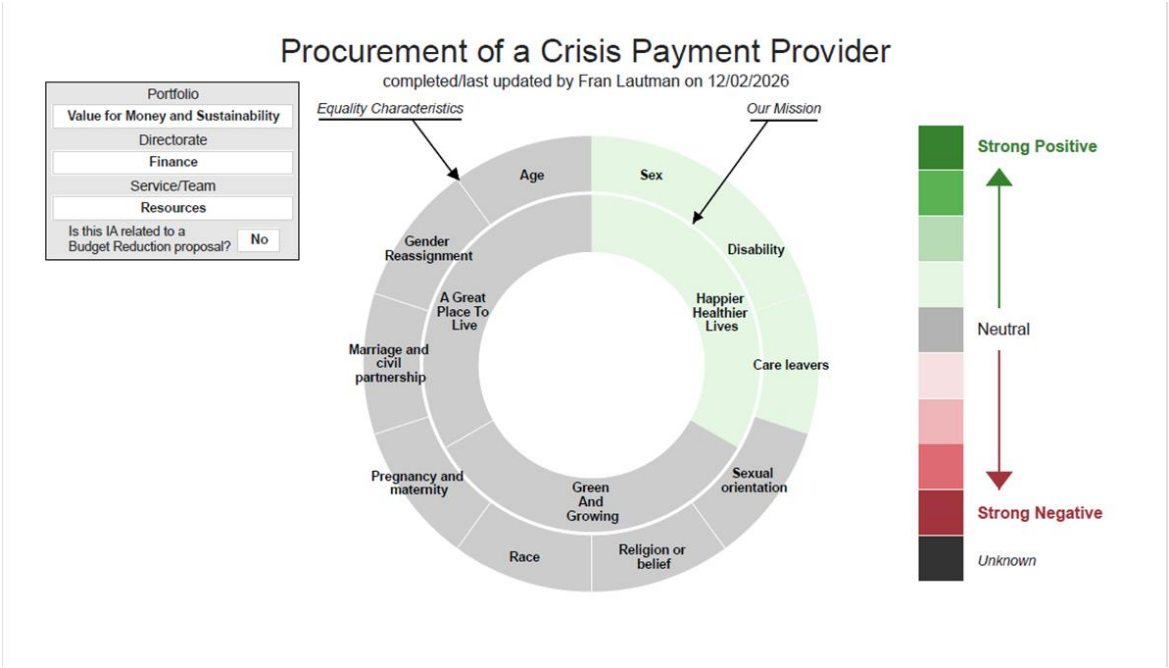
(Jingwen Yang, Workforce Business Partner)

10 Equality Impact

10.1 This scheme is designed to provide short-term emergency or immediate support to households most in need, helping them to establish or maintain a safe and stable home within the community. It will particularly benefit vulnerable residents to be defined in the schemes policy but will include care leavers under 25, people who are chronically or terminally ill, individuals moving out of institutional or residential care, those transitioning from supported accommodation to independent living, and people fleeing domestic violence.

10.2 By targeting support at those facing significant disadvantage or crisis, the scheme helps to reduce inequality and prevent homelessness, while advancing the Healthier, Happier Lives priority by enabling more Oldham residents to remain in their own homes and neighbourhoods, and supporting children and young people to grow up in stable, secure environments where they can reach their full potential.

10.3 The Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is included below:



Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Age	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Care leavers	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	The purpose of this scheme is to meet short-term emergency or immediate support needs to support a household or establish/maintain a home in the community to residents who are most in need. This could include care leavers under the age of 25.
Disability	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	The purpose of this scheme is to meet short-term emergency or immediate support needs to support a household or establish/maintain a home in the community to residents who are most in need. This could include vulnerable people, those who are chronically or terminally ill people moving out of institutional or residental care and people moving from supported accommodation to independent living.
Sex	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	The purpose of this scheme is to meet short-term emergency or immediate support needs to support a household or establish/maintain a home in the community to residents who are most in need. This could include vulnerable people and people fleeing domestic violence.

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Green And Growing	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Happier Healthier Lives	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	This scheme will support the priority under the Healthier, Happier Lives priority to care for more Oldhamers in their homes and in their local neighbourhood where they need it, and support children and young people to have a stable and safe home life where they can reach their full potential.

(James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

11 Key Decision

11.1 Yes

12 Key Decision Reference

12.1 FCR-07-26

Report to CABINET

Crisis and Resilience Fund – Utilisation of Grant Allocation

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader of Oldham Council and Cabinet Member for Growth and
Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact:
Fiona Greenway, Executive Director of Resources

Report Author:
Fran Lautman, Assistant Director of Customer Experience

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

This report seeks Cabinet approval to allocate grant funding of £5,746,881 from the UK Government to Oldham Council to deliver the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

Executive Summary

The purpose of the fund is to provide a safety net for households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock and to invest in building activity that builds individual and community financial resilience to better deal with crises in the long-term, reducing crisis need. This paper sets out how the fund will be utilised to deliver the scheme's objectives.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to consider and agree:

a) accept the full allocation of £5,746,881 of CRF Grant Funding and deliver the scheme outlined in this paper in accordance with DWP scheme guidance;
b) the Crisis Payment policy, and
c) the Housing Payment policy.

Table 1: Crisis and Resilience Fund, Recommended Option

Area of Expenditure - Crisis Payment Strand	£m
Supporting families with children and young people eligible for Free School Meals Helping around 21,000 children and young people including pre-school age, school and college age and care-leavers of college age. Funding will be issued via a supermarket voucher over May half-term at £15 and Summer at £50. The total funding across 2026-27 is £65 per eligible child.	1.365
Supporting households who experience a sudden financial shock A crisis payment payable by methods including supermarket voucher, energy voucher, goods in kind and bank payment (in exceptional circumstances) to support a household experiencing a sudden financial shock. The scheme policy is included at *Appendix A.* This is a fund of last resort for residents in significant need and experiencing a sudden financial shock.	1.000
Supporting sustainable tenancies to prevent households from entering Temporary Accommodation Assessing a households financial circumstances ensuring that all other funding and benefits are exhausted before supporting with a bond and/or up to 3 months' rent as a deposit.	0.310
Grant Funding the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector to distribute crisis funds and support Grant Funding Action Together to manage and distribute across the VFCSE sector supporting a breadth of low-income households experiencing financial crisis including: • Essential warm clothing including coats, blankets, bedding, nightwear and school uniform. • Essential items including culturally appropriate food, toiletries, sanitary products and baby items.	0.200
Providing support in a financial crisis to access food and essential supplies Issuing supermarket vouchers to provide support quickly in a crisis. Issued by front line services supporting residents such as Social Care, Family Hubs, Housing and Customer Service.	0.150
Grant Funding Oldham Foodbank to maintain stock throughout the year Grant Funding Oldham Foodbank to maintain stock levels during lower periods of donations so that residents can access emergency food.	0.040
Crisis Payment Strand Expenditure	**3.065**

Area of Expenditure - Housing Payment Strand	£m
Housing Payment Scheme – minimum amount stipulated in scheme guidance Replaces Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and support housing costs for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit claimants to prevent households from becoming homeless. The scheme policy is included at *Appendix B.*	0.429
Housing Payment Scheme – additional funding from within CRF to increase Housing Payments funds available Increasing the minimum amount stipulated in scheme guidance providing a total value of £0.507 available for residents.	0.078
Housing Payments Scheme Administration – amount stipulated in scheme guidance Administration of the scheme	0.083
Housing Payment Strand Expenditure	**0.590**
Area of Expenditure – Resilience Services	**£m**
Commissioning a financial inclusion front door from simple to complex financial queries This will include a face-to-face offer in each District, a dedicated phone line including evenings from 5pm – 9pm and digital offer. This will be provided by a third-party with specialist knowledge. This is subject to a procurement process with a Cabinet Paper dated 23 February 20256 seeking approval to commence the procurement process. It is anticipated subject to procurement timelines that the offer will be in place by the end of Summer 2026.	0.750
Welfare Rights Service Funding the Council-delivered Welfare Rights service to support residents with complex benefit applications, tribunals and appeals.	0.385
Income Maximisation Team Funding a new Council-delivered service to support residents to maximise their income. This will largely focus on benefit uptake ensuring that residents are receiving the support they are entitled to. The team will proactively contact residents who may be entitled to receive support and will also deliver drop-ins.	0.150
Grant Funding measures to improve energy efficiency and to reduce energy bills National Energy Action (NEA) will continue to deliver a hub at the Millennium Centre throughout the funding period. This will include offering energy advice, navigating and accessing government funding such as retrofit and insulation and delivery measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills for residents in significant financial need.	0.110

Expanding the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme to low-income households Additional funds for the Holiday Activity and Food programme. This expands the offer to low-income households who do not qualify for Free School Meals. Specific sessions will be provided for children and young people living in Temporary Accommodation.	0.050
Grant Funding Oldham Credit Union Grant Funding Oldham Credit Union to provide a range of products and services to support residents to access affordable loans.	0.036
Grant Funding Inclusive Bytes Grant Funding Inclusive Bytes to continue to deliver an all-age Digital Inclusion Hub at Spindles throughout the funding period.	0.020
Resilience Services Strand Expenditure	**1.501**
Area of Expenditure - Community Co-ordination	**£m**
Improving the quality, sustainability and consistency of community provided advice and guidance Training, guidance and support to avoid residents experiencing financial crisis and to ensure timely support when financial crisis is experienced wherever a resident may turn to. Delivering co-ordinated financial support campaigns and establishing a network and partnership to share data and insight, lived experiences and solutions to prevent financial crisis.	0.200
Community Co-ordination Strand Expenditure	**0.200**
Area of Expenditure – Scheme Delivery	**£m**
Scheme delivery costs: • Contingency budget • 1 x FTE Financial Inclusion Manager • Financial Inclusion system to identify residents who may be eligible for benefits and income calculator • 1.55 x FTE Crisis Payments Officer • 1 x Customer Service officer for outbound calls • Print and postage and communications campaign costs • Action Together and Oldham Foodbank Admin Fee (capped at 5%)	0.391
Scheme Delivery Strand Expenditure	**0.391**
Total Scheme Expenditure	**5.747**

1 Background

1.1 Oldham Council has been allocated £5,746,881 to deliver the CRF over the 12-month funding period, 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. This level of funding is also available for 2027-28 and 2028-29.

1.2 CRF replaces the Household Support Fund (HSF) and Discretionary Housing Payments (CRF) and provides a longer-term financial commitment. During the final round of HSF covering 2025-26, Oldham Council received £4.264 million and £429,000 in DHP funding providing a total of £4.693 million. CRF represents an increase in funding of £1.054 million available to Oldham Council to ensure we are supporting residents who are experiencing financial crisis as well as increasing individual and community financial resilience.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Objectives and Principles

1.3 The purpose of the fund is to provide a safety net for households on low-incomes who encounter a financial shock and to invest in building activity that builds individual and community financial resilience to better deal with crises in the long-term, reducing crisis need. The schemes objectives are to:

- Provide effective crisis support: timely, needs-focussed assistance to mitigate or prevent the impacts of crises.
- Improve individuals' financial resilience: enabling households to withstand and recover from financial shocks.
- Bolster local support networks: creating a joined-up visible local welfare landscape.

1.4 The scheme guidance sets out several principles for delivery of CRF:

- Support should be person-centered, needs-based, holistic and with a no-wrong front -door and trauma-informed approach.
- Avoid 'first come, first serve' models with crisis payments available for the full duration of the funding period.
- Crisis payments are a gateway to wider support and warm referrals to resilience services should be in place.
- Focus on those most in need – the UK Government scheme guidance recognises that some Free School Meal (FSM) eligible families may not routinely need support during every school holidays. The Government may seek extra information on how this is supporting the funds aims if FSM support is provided during the holidays.
- Scheme delivery costs must be reasonable but there is no cap as in HSF.

1.5 CRF should be delivered across 4 strands with no minimum spend with the exception of Housing Payments.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Crisis Payments Strand

1.6 Authorities must have a Crisis Payment Scheme available throughout the year that residents can access through an application. Councils must take a needs-based approach to assess and prioiritise recipients of Crisis Payments. Crisis payments and intended to meet occasional or short-term needs and cannot provide an alternative source of regular income.

1.7 In deciding whether to award a crisis payment, authorities should consider a crisis as a circumstance of pressing need which requires immediate action to prevent or remedy negative outcomes. Payments must be assessed and processed quickly within a target of 48 hours. This could include, but it not limited to, people going without material essentials such as food, shelter heating, essential items such as furniture and appliances or services such as water or energy. It is at the authorities discretion to determine whether an

individuals situation constitutes a crisis. Authorities should consider resources available to the applicant and their households such as money in savings or other assets.

1.8 Authorities must deliver crisis payments with cash and cash alternatives such as vouchers or in-kind good and services.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Housing Payments Strand

1.9 Housing Payments replace Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and provides financial support to residents claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit who experience a shortfall in their housing costs.

1.10 Requesting support should be via an application whereby authorities can determine and assess an individual's circumstances.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Resilience Services Strand

1.11 Resilience Services are services, programmes and activities that support building financial resilience for individuals and communities. These are often delivered by the VCFSE but can also be delivered directly by the Authority.

1.12 In building financial resilience, Councils can help their citizens manage financial shocks, preventing occurrence, recurrence and escalation of crises. There is no prescriptive list to define eligible spend, however Authorities should consider implementing services that can deliver:

- Budget maximisation: such as funding advice services
- Income maximisation: such a benefit checks and application support
- Income smoothing: such as access to affordable credit
- Financial capability: such as financial education

1.13 Councils are expended to use a significant amount of their total fund allocation on resilience services.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Community Co-ordination Strand

1.14 Authorities are required to use part of their funding to create a more connected local welfare landscape. Activities in this strand will build partnerships and referral pathways including effective co-ordination of statutory and VCFSE services creating more financially resilient communities.

DWP Scheme Guidance – Communication and Delivery Plans

1.15 Authorities must make sure their CRF schemes are clearly advertised, inclusive and accessible. Authorities must use the terms 'Crisis Payment' and 'Housing Payment' for naming their schemes and both must reference that they are funded by the CRF using UK Government Branding. Resilience Services should reference that they are funded by CRF wherever possible. It is mandatory for Authorities to make public their plans for the fund including a website page and non-digital offer.

1.16 Delivery Plans must be submitted annually and signed off by the Section 151 Office. Management Information returns using the scheme template must be submitted on a six-monthly basis and should also be signed off by the Section 151 Officer.

2 Current Position

2.1 With Oldham being the 11th most deprived of 296 authorities in England and the 2nd most deprived of the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Indices of Deprivation 2025), it is vital that we have a clear offer to support residents experiencing financial crisis as well as building financial resilience.

2.2 Data and insight have been used to inform the proposed options in addition to engagement with teams delivering the fund and Oldham Positive Action Network (OPAN) to ensure lived experienced is understood and the voices of experiences used in designing services.

2.3 There has also been considerable engagement with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the ten Greater Manchester Councils to create consistency wherever possible in scheme policy and delivery.

2.4 Furthermore, a Task and Finish Group was established with Elected Members on the theme of financial inclusion to ensure Elected Members experiences in supporting residents in financial need has been considered.

Crisis Payments Strand

2.5 As outlined in *Table 1,* it is proposed to utilise £3.065 million of CRF on the Crisis Payment strand.

Free School Meals Support during school holidays

2.6 £1,365,000 will be available to prevent holiday hunger and support around 21,000 children eligible for means-tested Free School Meals. This includes from preschool age up to and including young people and care leavers of college age with a supermarket voucher over May half-term at £15 and Summer holidays at £50.

2.7 As outlined in *section 1.4,* the CRF scheme guidance does not consider that being eligible for Free School Meals is in itself an indicator of financial crisis. However, it is important that Oldham families and educational setting are supported to plan for this change and can access other crisis and resilience offers and support. It is therefore proposed to implement a transitionary approach with clear communications plan in place for families and educational settings in readiness for the new school year 2026-27. This will include the range of support available in Oldham as part of the Council's We Can Help campaign. This approach at the time of writing is consistent with the approach being taken by 9 of the 10 Greater Manchester authorities. Impact will be closely monitored so that the CRF scheme for 2028-28 can be developed taking this change into account.

Crisis Payment Scheme - supporting households who experience a sudden financial shock

2.8 £1,000,000 is provisioned for a crisis payment scheme via an application process whereby a residents circumstances and needs will be assessed. The accompanying policy outlining how funds will be prioritised in outlined in *Appendix A.*

2.9 The new scheme will incorporate what was previously the Council's Local Welfare Provision (LWP) scheme providing white goods, furniture and beds to residents in significant financial need. For ease, one scheme will operate that residents can apply to for multiple types of crisis support - making discretionary schemes easier to access was a clear recommendation from OPAN's engagement. Similarly to LWP, Crisis Payments will be a scheme of last resort for residents experiencing significant financial crisis. This will include supermarket vouchers so that residents can choose their own supermarket of choice to

access food and essential items. It will also include energy payments and access to monies into bank accounts and other methods on a case-by-case basis. Once applications and accompanying evidence have been provided, residents will be notified within a target time of 2 working days (in line with the previous LWP scheme) if they are being provided with support. Residents will be encouraged to access wider resilience support to ensure that wherever possible, future crisis can be avoided.

Supporting sustainable tenancies to prevent households from entering Temporary Accommodation

2.10 As of January 2026, 546 Oldham households are living in temporary and commissioned accommodation including 692 children. This has decreased from 658 households in January 2025.

2.11 In response to the housing crisis, it is proposed in accordance with UK Government guidance that as in previous rounds on HSF, a proportion of funds are used to support sustainable tenancies for households working with the Housing Options service to prevent families from entering Temporary Accommodation. Each case is assessed to ensure that all other funds for example Housing Payments are utilised first as well as a review of household income to ensure that properties are affordable.

Grant Funding the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector to distribute crisis funds and support

2.12 As in previous HSF schemes, provision has been made for crisis support delivered directly across the VCFSE sector co-ordinated by Action Together. This ensures that residents can access support via several routes depending on their needs and circumstances. This includes older people, people from specific communities, for example, the Romani community and people without recourse to public funds.

Providing support in a financial crisis to access food and essential supplies

2.13 The Council has distributed emergency supermarket vouchers for several years through the HSF to support front-line workers to support a household to quickly gain access to food and essential supplies via a supermarket voucher.

2.14 During the two previous rounds of HSF, the breadth of teams that can issue supermarket vouchers was increased to ensure crisis support can be provided at the first point of contact wherever possible. This is an important offer ensuring that residents can access essential supplies including sanitary items, personal care goods, nappies, wipes and formula depending on the household needs. It also provides dignity and a person-centred approach to the household to choose their own food and essential supplies.

Grant Funding Oldham Foodbank to maintain stock throughout the year

2.15 HSF has been used for past 2 years to support Oldham Foodbank to maintain stock levels during quitter periods of donations to ensure that crisis food supplies can be accessed. It is proposed to continue to support Oldham Foodbank with the first round of CRF.

Housing Payments Strand

2.16 As outlined in *Table 1,* it is proposed to utilise £590,000 of CRF on the Housing Payment strand.

Housing Payment Scheme

2.17 £429,000 is stipulated by DWP in the scheme guidance for Oldham Council to spend on Housing Payments to cover shortfalls in costs for residents receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. This is with the aim of avoiding homelessness where possible. £83,000 has been earmarked for the review, assessment and issuing of Housing Payments. This will take place within the Revenues and Benefits service. Councils can increase the fund available for Housing Payments and an additional £78,000 is proposed providing a total of £507,000 scheme for eligible residents to apply to.

Resilience Services Strand

2.18 As outlined in *Table 1,* it is proposed to utilise £799,000 of CRF on the Resilience Services strand.

Commissioning a financial inclusion front door from simple to complex financial queries

2.19 Oldham Council currently provides and grant funds several financial inclusion services supporting multiple levels of need from low level issues to complex advice and guidance.

2.20 Citizens Advice Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale and Trafford (CA SORT) have been funded for several years to provide legal and advice services to residents in Oldham. This arrangement has been renewed on an annual basis and has been funded by a variety of core and external funding sources during this time. The offer covers a wide range of areas including debt, welfare benefits, housing, employment, energy, immigration and asylum. The offer includes online, phone, and an in-person offer in each of Oldham's districts to meet the needs and preferences of residents in accessing support and services. Demand has increased for the service through the pandemic and cost of living crisis. In 2024-25, CA SORT answered 22,000 calls from Oldham residents, with around 1,500 people accessing face to face services each quarter. The most common presenting issues were benefits and debt. The service delivers considerable income gains for Oldham residents with circa £6.9 million in 2024-25 along with £1.6m of debt written off.

2.21 This offer sits alongside the Council's Helpline service. In 2024-25, the Helpline answered 16,385 calls. The Helpline was set up at the start of the Covid 19 pandemic and evolved into a cost-of-living support offer. The Helpline has been grant funded by HSF throughout and is not part of core revenue budgets. Duplication has been identified following a service review. There is an opportunity to consolidate and strengthen the offer through the expertise of a reputable, trusted and commissioned partner with expertise at all levels of financial support and debt advice and therefore improving the experience and quality of support for residents.

2.22 In addition, the Warm Homes service also provides energy advice and crisis support duplicating the work of Citizens Advice and Helpline. The service has also seen external funding withdrawn in the last twelve months and has no core revenue budget available for 2026-27.

2.23 Moving forwards, a sustainable financial inclusion and support offer will be established with resident focus at the core of an approach. The Helpline, Warm Homes service and CA SORT will be consolidated into a single commissioned service. Expert and multi-complexity support will be available to residents to support them to navigate and resolve financial issues wherever possible and to access the various support available nationally, regionally and locally. The new service will be funded in full by CRF releasing £378,000 of core revenue funds in 2026-27.

2.24 The commissioned service will be available via face-to-face support in each District, with a dedicated phone line including evenings between 5pm – 9pm and online support. This

approach was outlined in a Cabinet Paper on 23 February 2026 seeking approval to progress the procurement process with the aim of the new service being in place by the end of Summer 2026. A transition plan will be in place to manage the changeover including resourcing, engagement and communications.

Welfare Rights Service

2.25 Moving forwards, the Council's Welfare Rights service will also be funded in full by CRF avoiding £385,000 of revenue budget expenditure.

2.26 Working closely with the commissioned financial inclusion and support service, Welfare Rights will continue to offer support with complex benefit applications, tribunals and appeals. The service will signpost to crisis payments, housing payments and resilience services on a case-by-case basis.

Income Maximisation Team

2.27 The Income Maximisation Team are a new Council-delivered service to support residents to maximise their income. It is anticipated that the team will be up and running by the end of Summer 2026. This offer has been identified as meeting a gap in current provision following on from engagement with services, elected members, the VCFSE and OPAN as part of developing the Oldham CRF scheme.

2.28 The team will largely focus on benefit uptake ensuring that residents are receiving the support they are entitled to. The team will proactively contact residents who may be entitled to receive support and will also deliver drop-in sessions in each District. The team will work in a data-focused way being clear about the outcomes and financial gains they deliver. Similarly to Welfare Rights, the service will signpost to crisis payments, housing payments and resilience services on a case-by-case basis.

Grant Funding measures to improve energy efficiency and to reduce energy bills

2.29 With the changes proposed in *section 1.5* in regard to the Warm Homes service, it's important to ensure that residents experiencing financial crisis where eligible can access measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills.

2.30 The proposed funding will support National Energy Action (NEA) to continue to deliver a hub at the Millennium Centre throughout the funding period. This will include offering energy advice, navigating and accessing government funding such as retrofit and insulation and delivery measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills for residents in significant financial need.

Expanding the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme to low-income households

2.31 It is proposed to continue following previous rounds of HSF to expand access to the Government funded Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) scheme by including low-income households above the Free School Meals threshold. This will ensure that children from low-income households can receive a hot meal and enriching activity over the holidays. The offer will also include specific provision for children and young people living in Temporary Accommodation.

Grant Funding Oldham Credit Union

2.32 Grant Funding Oldham Credit Union helps to provide a range of products and services to support residents with access to affordable loans. This ensures we meet the scheme

guidance outlined in *section 1.13* by providing affordable credit options to residents. This will be fully funded by CRF releasing £36,000 of core revenue funds in 2026-27.

Grant Funding Inclusive Bytes

2.33 Inclusive Bytes will deliver an all-age Digital Inclusion Hub at Spindles throughout the funding period. This will include delivering the Donate IT Oldham scheme providing devices and data to residents who need a device or data and do not have the funds available. This also includes leading the digital champions network across Oldham and ensuring consistent advice and information is provided as part of a no-wrong front-door approach. Lastly the funding will support the continuation of Hoot Hubs across the borough and delivery of drop in sessions across the Library network making sure that residents experiencing financial crisis can access support and services.

Community Co-ordination Strand

2.34 As outlined in *Table 1,* it is proposed to utilise £200,000 of CRF on the Community Co-ordination strand.

2.35 As part of the engagement with staff, residents and elected members outlined in *sections 2.2 – 2.4,* it was clear that understanding how to navigate the local welfare landscape in Oldham could significantly be improved.

2.36 This strand will focus on mapping current provision, identifying overlaps and gaps in support and services. It will also focus on ensuring clear pathways are in place and information about how to access support. Training will also be in place provided by the commissioned partner outlined in *section 2.23* to ensure consistency of knowledge and signposting across the Oldham system. Lastly co-ordinated financial support campaigns will be in place to maximise our collective impact on benefit uptake as well as establishing a network and partnership to share data and insight, lived experiences and solutions to prevent financial crisis.

Scheme Delivery Costs

2.37 Costs to administer the CRF schemes will also be incurred. As outlined in *Table 1,* it is proposed to utlilse £391,000 on scheme delivery as set out in *Table 1.*

2.38 A communications plan is being developed to ensure residents are kept informed about the work we are doing to support the most vulnerable and that those residents in need will know how to access support. The help available will form part of the Council's' re-launched 'We Can Help' campaign.

2.39 We will ensure the breadth of support available is promoted throughout the year particularly during the autumn and winter. The plan will also signpost to other support available including from our partners so that residents can get a full view of all the help available to them.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1** – Do not accept £5,746,881 from UK Government and do not deliver the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Pros – none identified.

Cons – failing to deliver much needed support to residents experiencing cost of living and housing crisis and failing to deliver a resilient and joined up financial support landscape in Oldham.

Option 2 – Accept the full allocation of £5,746,881 of CRF Grant Funding and deliver the scheme outlined in this paper in accordance with UK Government scheme guidance and approve the Crisis Payment policy and Housing Payment policy.

Pros – A comprehensive first-year CRF scheme prioritising crisis needs, issuing housing payments, developing financial resilience through a new one-front door approach and building our community co-ordination in the local welfare landscape to join up support.

Cons – none identified.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 The proposed option provides a transitionary scheme maintaining some aspects of HSF funded delivery and developing new approaches to support crisis and resilience.

4.2 The scheme proposed will ensure the full grant funding is spent in accordance with the grant funding criteria from the DWP within the limited time allocated.

5 Consultation

5.1 Engagement with staff, residents, elected members via a Task and Finish Group, the VCFSE, GMCA and the 10 Greater Manchester councils has taken place as outlined in *sections 2.1 - 2.4.*

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The preferred option is to accept the full allocation of £5,746,881 of CRF Grant Funding and deliver the scheme outlined in this paper in accordance with UK Government scheme guidance and approve the Crisis Payment policy and Housing Payment policy.

6.2 The Council has been awarded £5,747,881 through the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. This funding is fully ringfenced and must be used in line with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) scheme guidance. The total proposed programme costs of £5.74,881 align with this allocation.

6.3 The CRF provides resources to deliver activity across all four required strands. Crisis Payments, Housing Payments, Resilience Services, and Community Co- ordination, together with scheme delivery costs. Expenditure plans meet the requirement to fund Housing Payments at or above the minimum level set by DWP.

6.4 The model generates several revenue budget savings by consolidating existing, separately funded support services into the CRF-funded framework:

- £378k saving from ceasing core revenue funding for the Helpline and Warm Homes functions, which will be replaced by a commissioned Financial Inclusion Front Door.
- £385k saving from funding the Welfare Rights Service through CRF rather than core budgets.
- £36k saving from transferring Oldham Credit Union support from core revenue to CRF.

6.5 These savings contribute meaningfully to the Council's medium-term financial sustainability while maintaining and strengthening support for residents in crisis.

6.6 Robust governance requirements apply to CRF. The Council must submit an annual Delivery Plan, signed by the Section 151 Officer, and provide six-monthly Management Information returns. The scheme will be actively monitored throughout the year to ensure:

- Expenditure remains within budget.
- resources are prioritised effectively to avoid early overspending.
- compliance with CRF conditions is maintained; and
- Any emerging financial pressures are identified and addressed promptly.

6.7 There are no unfunded financial pressures, as all activity proposed can be fully delivered within the confirmed 2026/27 allocation.

(Matthew Kearns, Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 I confirm the proposals are lawful and comply with the Council's constitution.

(Bryan Boese, Solicitor)

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 No implications. I can confirm the procurement process we will follow for the £1 million Crisis Payment Scheme will be a Closed Tender. Following market testing, currently there are 2 potential providers that can provide the service required. This is detailed in a Cabinet Paper dated 23 March 2026. The procurement of a Financial Inclusion Service is detailed in a Cabinet Paper dated 23 February 2026. Both are fully funded by the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

(Angela Porter, Senior Category Manager - Commercialand Environment)

9 HR Implications

9.1 The workforce implications arising from the implementation of the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) relate primarily to the creation of new posts and the alignment of these roles with ongoing service redesign activity.

9.2 The proposal includes the establishment of several new CRF-funded roles across Crisis Payments, Income Maximisation and customer support functions. Job evaluation for all new posts has been completed, ensuring appropriate grading in line with Council policy. Recruitment will proceed following the Council's recruitment processes.

9.3 The redesign of financial inclusion and crisis support pathways will require clear integration of these new roles with existing teams to ensure consistent referral routes, improved triage and strengthened customer pathways. No changes are proposed to existing posts and no i impact on current Council employees is anticipated. As the commissioning activity relates to the creation of a new service, there are no TUPE implications.

9.4 HR will continue to support managers to implement the new roles, embed revised workflows and ensure that workforce planning aligns effectively with the new operating model.

(Jingwen Yang, Workforce Business Partner)

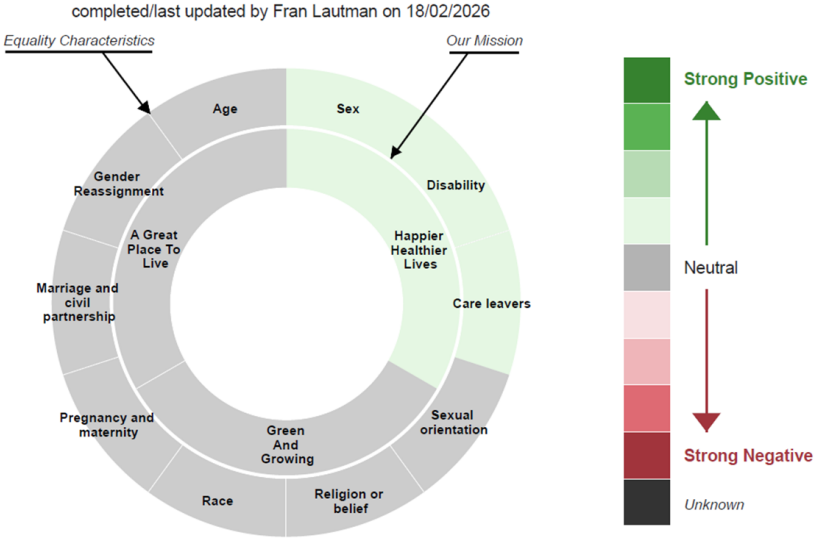
10 Equality Impact

10.1 This fund will support households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock. This includes families with children eligible for free school meals, households facing sudden financial shocks, and supporting sustainable tenancies. The Equality Impact Assessment is included below.

Crisis and Resilience Fund Utilisation of Grant Allocation

completed/last updated by Fran Lautman on 18/02/2026

Portfolio	
Value for Money and Sustainability	
Directorate	
Finance	
Service/Team	
Resources	
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	No



Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Age	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Care leavers	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	This fund will support households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock. This includes families with children eligible for free school meals, households facing sudden financial shocks, and supporting sustainable tenancies.
Disability	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	This fund will support households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock. This includes families with children eligible for free school meals, households facing sudden financial shocks, and supporting sustainable tenancies.
Sex	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	This fund will support households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock. This includes families with children eligible for free school meals, households facing sudden financial shocks, and supporting sustainable tenancies.

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Green And Growing	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Happier Healthier Lives	Moderate Positive	Possible	Short Term	1	This fund will support households on low incomes who encounter a financial shock. This includes families with children eligible for free school meals, households facing sudden financial shocks, and supporting sustainable tenancies.

(James Mulvaney, Policy Manager)

11 Key Decision

11.11 Yes

12 Key Decision Reference

12.1 FCR-02-26

13 Background Papers

13.1 None

14 Appendices

Appendix A - Crisis Payment Policy:

Crisis Payment Scheme Policy 2026/27

Guidelines for the operation of the Housing Payment element of the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

23 March 2026

Review date: 23 March 2027

1. Background

1.1 Oldham Council has delivered a Local Welfare Provision (LWP) scheme from 1 April 2013 following changs introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This followed the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Although there was no statutory requirement for local authorities to operate a local welfare scheme, Oldham Council considered it in the best interests of residents to provide a local safety net as part of our commitment to work with a resident focus.

1.2 1 April 2026, the UK Government is introducing the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF). The CRF provides grant funding for local authorities in England to support low-income households who encounter a financial shock and to support activity that builds individual and community financial resilience. The CRF covers the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029.

1.3 In accepting the grant funding, Oldham Council is required to have a Crisis Payment scheme. The Council has consolidated its previous LWP scheme into the Crisis Payment Scheme so that residents have a single, clear route into local crisis support.

1.4 Our commitment to work with a resident focus is reflected in the Crisis Payment scheme. It uses the expertise and local knowledge of Council officers, the Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE), and partner agencies in working together at pace to support residents in difficult circumstances.

1.5 The Council's commitment to working with a resident focus is reflected in the Crisis Payment Scheme. The scheme uses the expertise and local knowledge of Council officers, the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE), and partner agencies to support residents quickly and with dignity when they are in difficult circumstances. Effective local welfare schemes work best where they combine immediate crisis support with strong local partnerships and act as a gateway into wider advice and support.

1.6 Oldham Council is also committed to supporting local people to find sustainable, long-term solutions, so that help is provided to prevent people from facing crises and needing crisis support in the future. As part of assessing an application for a Crisis Payment, the Council will identify whether the applicant could benefit from other forms of support, including referrals or warm handovers to resilience services to address the root causes of hardship where this is possible and appropriate. This may also include Housing Payments (replacing Discretionary Housing Payments from 1 April 2026) for residents in receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

2. Scheme Purpose and Prioritisation

2.1 The purpose of the Crisis Payment Scheme is to provide timely, short-term support when sudden financial shocks occur, and the applicant cannot meet their essential needs. This is with the aim to help residents:

- maintain a warm, safe home;

- remain safe and well (including where there is risk to health or wellbeing);
- access essential services such as health care and
- travel to employment, training, education or essential appointments where needed

all with the aim of avoiding homelessness or severe hardship that may arise from a sudden crisis.

2.2 The scheme is intended to alleviate immediate crisis and reduce the escalation of harm. It is not designed to address ongoing financial hardship caused by day-to-day budgeting pressures where there is no immediate crisis event.

What do we mean by Crisis?

2.3 For the Crisis Payment scheme, **a crisis is an unexpected event or sudden change in circumstances that creates an immediate risk to a person or household's health, safety or ability to remain in their home, and where they do not have the financial means or support available to resolve the situation without urgent help.**

2.4 Examples may include (not exhaustive):

- fire, flood or other sudden damage to the home;
- fleeing domestic abuse or immediate safety concerns;
- leaving care, prison, detention, hospital, residential care or supported accommodation and
- sudden illness, disability, bereavement or relationship breakdown that creates immediate hardship.

Prioritisation

2.5 Funding is limited and must be prioritised based on need. The scheme should be used when there is no other reasonable alternative support available either from the Council, statutory services, or partner organisations, and where the applicant does not have sufficient savings or other funds available to cover essential needs.

2.6 The following groups will normally be prioritised where there is an immediate crisis:

- care leavers under the age of 25
- families with children under 5
- households where a member is pregnant
- households with one working-age adult
- households with a resident over 65

2.7 This list is not exhaustive and does not create an automatic entitlement to an award.

2.8 Where demand exceeds available funds, the Council may prioritise applications based on:

- severity and immediacy of risk (including risk of homelessness, harm or safeguarding concerns);

- vulnerability within the household including but not limited to children under the age of 5, pregnancy, disabilities, serious illness, older age and care experience;
- whether the crisis can be resolved through other support;
- previous awards and repeat presentation and
- remaining budget and forecast demand (to ensure the scheme remains available across the year).

3. Scheme Principles

3.1 The Crisis Payment scheme is based around the following principles:

- **Fairness and consistency:** The Council will treat each applicant fairly and equitably, with full consideration given to their circumstances.
- **Person centred:** The Council will treat everyone as an individual with different needs and circumstances taking and will be trauma informed in its approach.
- **Fund of last resort:** The scheme is intended to support people who cannot access support through other means. Applicants will be expected to explore and accept alternative support where it is available and appropriate.
- **Discretionary scheme:** The scheme is discretionary. Applicants do not have a statutory right to an award. The Council will consider applications that meet this policy, subject to available funding.
- **Budget-limited:** The scheme is funded from a limited budget. The Council may vary the operation of the scheme during the year to ensure awards do not exceed funding available. This may include tightening eligibility, limiting awards, or prioritising certain types of support.
- **Prevention and resilience:** Regardless of the outcome of an application, the Council will provide information, signposting or referrals to help reduce the likelihood of future crisis. Good crisis support should act as a gateway to wider help where possible.
- **Partner referrals and trusted referrers:** The Council will accept referrals from professionals and partners on behalf of a resident, with the resident's consent. A resident may still need to provide evidence to support a decision. The Council may define and maintain a list of "trusted referrers".
- **Reasonable adjustments and accessibility:** The scheme will be accessible, and reasonable adjustments will be considered for residents who need additional support to apply or provide evidence.

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1 To be eligible, the applicant must be:

- aged 16 or over;

- a resident of Oldham Borough, or be able to demonstrate they are about to become a resident of the borough;
- experiencing an immediate crisis as defined in this policy and
- unable to meet essential needs without support.

4.2 Applicants will normally be in receipt of benefits such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, or disability-related benefits. Awards may be made in exceptional circumstances to applicants not in receipt of these benefits where sudden crisis and financial hardship is evidenced.

4.3 An award will not normally be made where:

- Help is likely to be available from other Council funds or partner schemes that can meet the need.
- The applicant has access to other funds that could reasonably cover the crisis, such as savings.
- The applicant owns a property other than the one in which they live (unless exceptional circumstances apply).
- The need has arisen solely due to a decision or action that was reasonably avoidable, such as deliberate disposal of resources (e.g. savings).
- The applicant has received a Crisis Payment recently and there is no exceptional justification for a further award

4.4 The scheme is designed for short-term crisis. The Council may:

- Limit repeat awards within a defined period (for example, within 6 months).
- Apply additional checks for repeat applications and
- Require engagement with support services as part of the assessment (for example debt or welfare advice), where appropriate and refuse repeat support when engagement with resilience service has not taken place.

4.5 Any limits and conditions must be applied fairly and consistently as part of a person centred and trauma informed approach with discretion retained for exceptional circumstances.

5. The Application Process

5.1 The application process aims to be clear, transparent and accessible. Applications can be made:

- Online via the Council website with access to Wi-Fi and computers across the library network.
- Through a trusted referrer (professional or partner service) supporting the applicant.

- With assisted support at the Customer Service Centre at Spindles

5.2 A phone line is available to answer queries about the process and to support residents who may struggle to apply online.

Who can apply?

5.3 An application can be made by:

- the person to whom the application relates (the applicant)
- another person on behalf of the applicant (a representative), with the applicant's consent.

5.4 The Council requires reasonable evidence to assess an application. This includes:

- proof of identity and address (where needed);
- evidence of income and benefits;
- evidence of the crisis event (for example fire report, tenancy notice, hospital discharge evidence);
- evidence of essential expenditure and immediate need and
- bank statements or similar were proportionate and necessary.

5.5 The applicant will normally be asked to provide evidence within **10 working days** of the request, although this may be extended where there are exceptional circumstances or barriers. The application cannot be assessed if evidence is not provided. If evidence is not provided and there is no contact or reasonable explanation, the application will be treated as withdrawn.

Verification and checks

5.6 The Council reserves the right to verify information provided. This may include checks with:

- Other Council departments.
- Government agencies
- Other local authorities
- External organisations where relevant
- Fraud prevention checks

5.7 The Council may use information for the detection and prevention of crime including fraud and may share information lawfully for these purposes.

5.8 CRF guidance also includes audit expectations in relation to voucher use and recycling expired vouchers. The Council will ensure its processes support audit and reporting requirements.

5.9 The application process is designed to provide consistent and fair decision making by gathering appropriate data and supporting information in an accessible way.

5.10 The Council may request reasonable evidence in support of an application for a Crisis Payment award:

- The applicant will be asked to provide evidence within 10 working days of the request, although this can be extended in exceptional circumstances.
- If the applicant is unable to or does not provide the required evidence within the timeframe stipulated, then the application will be treated as withdrawn by the applicant.
- The Council reserves the right to verify any information or evidence that the applicant supplies third parties including other council departments, government agencies, other local authorities, external organisations or individuals. The Council may also use the information for detection and prevention of fraud.
- Under data sharing powers contained within the Welfare Reform Act 2012 those administering the scheme will have access to DWP data in relation to benefits to support decision making.

6. Decision Making

6.1 In deciding whether to make a Crisis Payment award, the Council will take a holistic view of the applicant's needs and circumstances, the nature of the crisis, and the available funding. The Council will consider:

- the financial circumstances of the applicant and their household;
- essential expenditure and immediate needs;
- level of debt and vulnerability indicators;
- medical issues, illnesses or disabilities of the applicant and their household;
- availability of other support from Council funds, DWP, or partners;
- safeguarding issues or risk of harm;
- whether a Crisis Payment would resolve or reduce the immediate crisis;
- whether an award would help prevent escalation or homelessness and
- whether referrals to wider support should be made.

Decision Timescales

6.2 The Council aims to make decisions as quickly as possible, recognising the urgent nature of crisis support. Where evidence is complete, the Council will aim to determine applications within 2 working days. Further time may be needed if additional checks are required or if information from partners has not been provided within this timeframe.

Award determination

6.3 If the Council decides an award can be made, it will determine:

- what type of support is appropriate based on the applicants' circumstances;
- the value or quantity of support;
- the method of delivery and
- whether additional conditions apply such as engagement with resilience services.

7. Types of Support

7.1 Crisis Support provided through the Crisis Payment Scheme is intended to be short-term and to stabilise the household following an immediate crisis. The scheme does not provide ongoing financial support or long-term income replacement.

7.2 The scheme may provide support to meet essential needs. This may include:

Immediate essentials:

- food
- essential items such as toiletries, personal hygiene products, sanitary products
- baby items such as nappies and wipes

Essential household items:

- beds and bedding
- essential furniture
- white goods for cold food storage, cooking and washing
- kitchen starter packs

Support with utilities:

- fuel and energy support

Essential travel:

- to work to ensure continued employment
- to education
- to health appointments

7.3 To reduce the Council's carbon footprint and support value for money, items may be new or pre-loved. Pre-loved items will be reconditioned and checked prior to being offered and may include a warranty were provided through suppliers.

What the scheme will not normally fund

7.4 Crisis Payments will not normally be awarded for:

- televisions, satellite costs or repairs
- installation of telephone lines
- ongoing housing costs or rent arrears
- general debts, fines or loans
- motor vehicle expenses (except limited essential travel support as above)
- TV licences
- costs associated with care provision
- non-essential goods or services

7.5 The Council retains discretion to determine what is essential based on the circumstances.

7.6 The Council will determine the most appropriate method of support, based on the type of need, risk, and safeguarding considerations. Support may be provided by:

- supplier order and payment by the Council for suitable goods or services
- food and fuel vouchers
- energy top-ups through approved mechanisms
- prepaid cards or similar controlled payment methods where available
- cash payment in exceptional circumstances where this is the most appropriate and proportionate way to resolve the crisis, and where any risks can be managed

7.7 The Council may make awards to:

- the applicant or
- their partner (where this is appropriate and supports household stability)

7.8 Where the Council provides vouchers, it will have full regard to Crisis and Resilience Fund audit expectations and reporting requirements.

7.9 The Council will determine the most appropriate method of support to be provided to successful applicants. The decision will be made based on the type of support required and the individual's circumstances.

8. Notification

8.1 The applicant and any representative or trusted referrer (where applicable) will be notified of the outcome.

8.2 The Council will notify the applicant by the most appropriate method, which may include telephone, letter or email.

8.3 Where the application is successful, notification will include:

- what support has been awarded and how it will be provided;
- any next steps and
- signposting or referrals to resilience services as appropriate.

8.4 Where the application is unsuccessful, or does not meet the level requested, notification will include:

- the reasons for the decision;
- details of the right to request a review and
- signposting to other support services including resilience services.

9. Rights of Review and Complaints

9.1 The Crisis Payment Scheme is discretionary and is not subject to a statutory appeals process.

Explanation and review

9.2 An applicant (or their representative) who disagrees with a decision may request:

- an explanation of the decision, and or
- a review of the decision

9.3 A request for review must normally be received within 10 working days of the initial notification.

9.4 Requests can be made:

- by email to LWP.CrisisPayments@oldham.gov.uk
- In writing to Local Welfare Provision and Crisis Payments Team, Spindles Shopping Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1LF

9.5 Where possible, the Council will try to resolve issues quickly by explaining decisions clearly.

9.6 If a review is requested, it will be undertaken by an officer who was not involved in the original decision. The Council may request additional evidence for the applicant to enable the review. If evidence is not provided within 10 working days, the review will be completed based on the information available

Complaints

9.7 If the applicant remains dissatisfied after a review, they may submit a formal complaint through the Council's complaints process. Complaints can be made by

- filling out the complaint form on the council website;
- by emailing customer.feedback@oldham.gov.uk or
- by calling 0161 770 8122.

9.8 Following the Council's final response, applicants may escalate to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

10. Fraud and recovery of awards

10.1 If the Council becomes aware that information in an application was incorrect, or relevant information was not disclosed (intentionally or otherwise), the matter may be investigated.

10.2 Any applicant who attempts to fraudulently claim support may be committing a criminal offence, including under the Fraud Act 2006, and this could lead to criminal proceedings.

10.3 The Council will seek to recover the value of any award made as a result of fraud or misrepresentation.

11. Safeguarding and Wider Support

11.1 The Council recognises that applicants may be vulnerable and may present with safeguarding concerns. Where appropriate, the Council may:

- make referrals to safeguarding services and
- with an applicants consent, support referrals to resilience services internally and outside of the Council to reduce the need for future crisis support. Future crisis payment support may be refused if resilience services have not been accessed.

12. Monitoring

12.1 The scheme is subject to regular monitoring and review. The Council will maintain management information to support:

- projected allocation of funds and spend;
- volumes of applications and awards;
- decision timeliness;
- repeat applications and outcomes;
- equalities data;
- access channels used;
- number of reviews and review outcomes;
- referrals to resilience services and signposting activity and
- audit and reporting requirements associated with the Crisis and Resilience Fund including any required management information returns.

Equalities

12.2 The Council is committed to ensuring the Crisis Payment Scheme is fair, accessible and inclusive for everyone. In operating the scheme, the Council will have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. The Council will take reasonable steps to ensure residents are not disadvantaged in accessing the scheme because of disability, language, literacy, digital exclusion or other barriers This may include:

- providing reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants;
- offering support to complete applications where needed;
- providing translation services where appropriate;
- accepting applications via trusted referrers or representatives and
- providing assisted digital support through Council services and partners.

12.3 The Council will capture and monitor equality data to help ensure the scheme is accessible to all parts of the community to identify any unintended barriers to access and to establish whether any specific groups or communities require engagement and/ or targeted support to access Crisis Payments.

13. Communications

13.1 The Council will publicise the scheme and provide information to relevant agencies, stakeholders and Council services, including how to apply and how trusted referrers can support residents.

13.2 The latest version of this policy will be available on the Council website.

14. Scheme Review

14.1 The Council reserves the right to review and revise the scheme at any time based on:

- demand and funding position
- learning from delivery
- changes to government guidance or grant conditions
- audit findings and equality monitoring

14.2 A Crisis Payment Policy forms part of the Cabinet Paper outlining the Oldham Crisis and Resilience Fund Scheme. Changes to the Crisis Payment scheme mid-year are delegated to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability.

Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Policy

Guidelines for the operation of the Housing Payment element of the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

23 March 2026

Review date: 23 March 2027

1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2001 the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme was introduced giving Councils' powers to make a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to top up Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

1.2 The DHP policy was revised to reflect changes to the benefits system introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012; this includes the introduction of Universal Credit, the size criteria and the benefit cap.

1.3 From April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was replaced by a localised Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme and from that date, awards of DHP no longer covered help with paying Council Tax. From April 2019, the Council has instead made provision for the award of Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHPs) to support those facing exceptional hardship in paying their Council Tax. Information about EHPs can be found on the Council's website: www.oldham.gov.uk

1.4 Our policy has been developed based on the Discretionary Housing Payments Good Practice Guide (updated May 2022) issued by the Department for Work and Pensions.

1.5 From 1 April 2026, DHP will be replaced by Housing Payment (HP) as part of the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF). The HP will closely replicate existing DHP guidelines and will adopt a phased transition over the 3-year funding period.

1.6 All officers involved in the consideration and processing of HP applications will adhere to this policy.

2. Purpose of the Scheme

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to specify how Oldham Council will operate the HP scheme and indicate some of the factors that will be considered when assessing if a HP can be made. Each case will be treated strictly on its merits, and all residents will be treated equally and fairly.

2.2 The HP Government contributions are specified by Government, and this budget will be allocated to support those most in need, including those affected by Welfare Reform.

2.3 Oldham Council will consider making a HP to residents who meet the qualifying criteria as specified in this policy. Oldham Council will seek through the operation of this policy to:

- alleviate poverty
- encourage and sustain people in employment
- sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
- support vulnerable young people in the transition to adult life

- encourage Oldham residents to obtain and sustain employment
- safeguard residents in their homes
- help those who are trying to help themselves
- keep families together
- support vulnerable or elderly in the local community
- help claimants through personal crises and difficult events
- promote good educational outcomes for children and young people
- support those affected by welfare reform
- support care leavers up to the age of 25

3. Principles of the scheme

3.1 The main features of the HP scheme are that:

- HP's are not payments of Housing Benefit (HB)
- there must be entitlement to the minimum amount of HB or Universal Credit including the housing element for rental costs (UCHE), for any period that a HP is awarded.
- the operation of the scheme is for Oldham Council to determine
- it is a discretionary scheme
- a resident does not have a statutory right to a payment
- the amount that can be paid by Oldham Council in any financial year is cash-limited by the Secretary of State and may be reduced, or increased in subsequent years
- the support should be seen as short term. However, in some instances the award can be used to provide longer-term support.

3.2 HP's cannot be used to;

- pay ineligible service charges
- minimise the effect of DWP sanctions
- make payment when HB/UCHE is suspended or
- when a resident does not have a minimum entitlement of HB or UCHE

N.B. The housing costs to which the HP relates do not have to be the housing costs of the property for which the benefit is awarded. For example, HP can be used for a rent deposit or rent in advance for a property that the claimant is yet to move into, if the applicant is already entitled to HB or UCHE for their present home.

4. The Application Process

4.1 A request for a HP is made by the completion of an online application form which is available from the council website www.oldham.gov.uk/HP. Assistance to complete an application will be provided by telephone and with assisted support at the Customer Service Centre at Spindles.

4.2 The claimant will be required to submit the e-form to the Council. The Council will request further information as required and/or verify any information or evidence provided. The Evidence must be provided within one month of the request, although this can be extended in appropriate circumstances. If the resident is unable to or does not provide the required evidence, the Council will still consider the application based on the information it does hold such as on the HB database and/or DWP systems.

4.3 Oldham Council will first explore options available to the claimant and will liaise with the homelessness prevention team in order to negotiate with the landlord a more affordable rent (where it is appropriate to do so.)

4.4 Oldham Council will use HP as a gateway to further support by using referral pathways to build financial resilience and reduce crisis need by making referrals to internal services and external advice agencies that can provide advice and information on managing finances and personal budgeting, where this could assist in providing a long-term financial solution.

4.5 Oldham Council will also undertake proactive exercises to determine specific categories of claimant who may be eligible for a HP. These cases may be awarded a HP without completing an application form.

5 Deciding whether to award a HP

5.1 In deciding whether to award a HP, the Council will consider:

- the shortfall between HB/UCHE and rent liability;
- any steps taken by the resident to reduce their rent liability, such as seeking to take on more affordable accommodation
- the financial circumstances of the resident, any partner, their dependents and other occupiers of their household
- the income and expenditure of the resident
- resident, any partner, their dependents and other occupiers of their household
- any savings or capital the resident or any partner, their dependents and other occupiers of their household may hold
- the level of indebtedness of the resident and their family;
- any medical issues, or other special needs, of the resident, partner or dependents, or other members of their household;

• the nature of the circumstances of the resident, for example where the resident has moved house in order to find more affordable accommodation and the fares to their place of work are now considerably higher;

• whether the circumstances of the resident are such that a HP would not alleviate the problems of the resident within a reasonable period (say 12 months);

• the Local Housing Allowance rates.

• the effect of the April 2013 Size Criteria changes for Social Housing Tenants; Priority will be given to those who:

- have had a property significantly adapted to meet disablement needs
- need additional space because of their disability
- are taking the necessary steps to either downsize or take on a boarder/lodger, (but see circumstances when a HP will not be awarded at 8.1 below)

• the effect of the Benefit Cap changes to Housing Benefit. Priority will be given to those who can demonstrate that they are;

- taking the necessary steps to help themselves and are working towards getting a job or additional income to meet the loss in HB/UCHE
- taking the necessary steps to move to cheaper alternative accommodation, but see circumstances when a HP will not be awarded in 6.1 below

• any other special circumstances the Council are aware of

• the possible impact on the Council of not making such an award, e.g., the resident becoming homeless, fuel poverty, child poverty etc., and the costs associated with this

• the amount available in the HP budget (the Council's overall cash limit is determined by the Government);

5.2 The Council will decide how much to award based on all the circumstances. This will be any amount between the rental liability and the amount of benefit already awarded by the Council.

5.3 An award of HP does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the resident's circumstances have not changed.

6 Circumstances when a HP will not be awarded

6.1 When a HP application is received from a resident who cannot demonstrate that they are taking the necessary steps to help themselves i.e., they have not approached or are not in continual engagement with relevant bodies that will help support them.

6.2 When a HP application is received from a resident who is not considered to be a settled resident in Oldham i.e., is not living and claiming HB/UCHE in the boundary area for the borough.

6.3 When a HP application is received from a resident that shows the overall income exceeds the outgoings or where the application shows there is unreasonable expenditure.

7 Period of Award

7.1 The Council will decide the length of time for which a HP will be awarded based on the evidence supplied and the facts known.

7.2 The start date of an award will normally be:

- the Monday following the date the application for HP is received, or

- the date on which entitlement to HB or UCHE commenced (providing the application for HP is received within one calendar month of the claim for HB/UCHE being decided), whichever is the earlier or the most appropriate.

- The Council will not usually award a HP for a period exceeding 26 weeks. HP are intended as short-term assistance and the claimant will be expected to make clear attempts to improve their financial and housing circumstances during any award. In exceptional circumstances the Council will consider an indefinite award or until such a time the resident's circumstances change.

- Claimants may make subsequent applications once their initial award has expired or if their circumstances have changed or worsened if their original application has been previously refused. There is no guarantee that future applications will result in a HP award or at the same level of award, but each case will be treated on its own merits.

- The Council will consider any reasonable request for backdating an award, but this consideration will normally be limited to the current financial year.

7.3 All awards will be dependent on the funding available to the Council.

8 Payment of One-Off Lump Sums

8.1 The Council will consider all reasonable requests for one off lump sum payments for example for; rent deposit, help with removal costs and rent in advance but usually only where benefit is not being paid direct to the landlord.

8.2 Any one-off lump sum payment for rent in advance and rent deposit will usually be restricted to a maximum that is equal to one-month contractual rent.

8.3 HP can be awarded for a rent deposit or rent in advance for a property that the claimant is yet to move into if they are already entitled to HB or UC at their present home.

8.4 When awarding HP for a rent deposit or rent in advance, it must be established that:

- the property is affordable for the tenant; and
- the tenant has a valid reason to move; and
- the deposit or rent in advance is reasonable; and
- The move is within the borough.

8.5 It must be established with the claimant whether they:

- are due to have a deposit or rent in advance in respect of their existing tenancy returned to them; or
- have received assistance from another department within the Council with a rent deposit (such as a rent deposit guarantee scheme or similar).

9. Change of Circumstances

9.1 The claimant must inform the Council if there has been a change in the claimant's circumstances.

10. Notification

10.1 Oldham Council will notify the resident of the outcome of their request within fourteen days of making a decision.

Where the application is successful, Oldham Council will inform the resident of:

- the weekly amount of the award;
- the period of the award;
- the reason for the award;
- the method of payment;
- the conditionality (requirement to undertake take certain activities), where appropriate;
- the need to report changes of circumstances;

Where the request for a HP is unsuccessful Oldham Council will explain the reasons why the decision was made and explain their rights for a review of the decision.

11. Payment of a HP

11.1 The Council will decide the most appropriate person to pay based on the circumstances of each case. This includes:

- the resident;
- their partner;
- an appointee;
- their landlord (or an agent of the landlord);
- any third party to whom it might be appropriate to make payment.

11.2 The Council will pay an award of HP by electronic transfer

11.3 Payment frequency will normally be made in line with the HB/UCHE award.

12. Overpayments

12.1 The Council will seek to recover any HP found to be overpaid. Normally this will involve issuing an invoice to the resident or the person to whom the award was paid.

12.2 The Council will not normally seek recovery for any overpayment of HP caused through our error.

12.3 A decision that a HP is overpaid will be notified by decision letter. The claimant may request a review of the decision based upon the grounds that:

- the calculation of the overpayment is incorrect
- the overpayment should not be recoverable as it was caused by Council error.

13. Fraud

13.1 Oldham Council is committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms. Where the Benefits Service suspects that such a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated as appropriate, and this may lead to criminal proceedings being instigated. Any resident who tries to fraudulently claim a HP might have committed an offence under the Theft Act (2006).

14. Review of a Decision

14.1 Oldham Council can review a HP decision in the event of a dispute, either at the time of the initial rejection or after a cancellation or recovery.

14.2 A HP decision cannot be appealed to a Housing Benefit Tribunal. However, the claimant may take any disputes to the local government ombudsman, where there is an allegation of maladministration.

15. Publicity

15.1 Oldham Council will publicise the scheme internally and externally through the Council's website and the use of partner organisations working with all interested parties to achieve this. A copy of this policy statement will be available on the Council's website.

16. Monitoring

- Oldham Council will retain overall responsibility for the monitoring of HP awards against HP budget, to ensure the scheme is administered in accordance with Council policy and within Government and Council budget.
- HP may be delivered by other organisations on behalf of Oldham Council.

17. Further assistance and information

- Residents will be signposted and referred to other organisations which can provide assistance and support.

- Information will be available at http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/100001/benefits_and_money

18. Policy Review

18.1 The Council reserves the right to review and revise the policy at any time based on information gained as a result of operating the scheme.

18.2 The HP Policy forms part of the Cabinet Paper outlining the Oldham Crisis and Resilience Fund Scheme. Changes to HP scheme mid-year are delegated to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability.

Report to CABINET

Arts Council Investment into Oldham's Cultural Programming and Venue Development Extension Grant

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Place and Neil Consterdine, Director of Communities

Report Author: [Subnum Hariff-Khan, Head of Heritage, Libraries and Arts]
Email: subnum.hariff-khan@oldham.gov.uk

20th Feb 2026

- **Reason for Decision**
  To seek approval to accept extension funding offered by Arts Council England (ACE) for 2026–27 in support of the continued development of Oldham's cultural programme and the new theatre project.
- To seek delegated authority to accept a further extension for 2027–28, should it be awarded by ACE

Recommendations

- Approve the acceptance of a grant of £656,147 from Arts Council England for the financial year 2026–27.
- Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Emma Barton) to accept a further one-year extension for 2027–28 of a similar value, should this be offered by Arts Council England

Cabinet 23rd March 2026

Arts Council Investment into Oldham's Cultural Programming and Venue Development Extension Grant

1 Background

1.1 In February 2023, Oldham Council formally accepted a £1.845 million grant (£615,000 per annum) from Arts Council England for the period 2023–26. This funding was ringfenced to:

- Engage communities and stakeholders in the development and delivery of a new theatre for Oldham.
- Develop an appropriate leadership and governance structure for the new theatre.
- Deliver a programme of performance and engagement that tests new approaches to programming, creative learning, talent development and audience development.
- Meet the outcomes and principles of ACE's Let's Create strategy.

1.2 Cabinet approved this as part of the Urgent Business – Investing in a New Theatre for Oldham report (February 2023).

1.3 Since 2023, the Council has worked with Oldham Coliseum and key cultural partners—including Oldham Theatre Workshop, Stand and Be Counted Theatre, and CHAI Ladies—to deliver a programme of cultural events, artist development opportunities, and community and schools engagement activities.

2 Current Position

2.1 Arts Council England had planned to release the next National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) application process. However, due to delays arising from the Hodge Review, the process has been postponed. Consequently, ACE has offered all currently funded organisations—including Oldham—a one year extension with a 5% uplift for 2026–27. Oldham has been offered £656,147 as part of this extension.

2.2 As with the current agreement Oldham Council will continue to offer match funding as part of the ACE investment; £138,000 grant to the Coliseum and £127,000 towards development of a new theatre model.

2.3 ACE is currently considering offering a further extension for 2027–28, for which eligibility would remain consistent with the current programme.

2.4 Acceptance of the extension funding will ensure momentum is sustained in key areas including creative learning, talent development, artistic commissioning, community participation and the continued development of the new theatre's operating model.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1 – Accept the Grant (Recommended)

Accepting the funding enables the continuation of cultural delivery, community engagement, and preparatory work for the new theatre, ensuring Oldham remains compliant with ACE requirements and well positioned for future national portfolio funding.

3.2 Option 2 – Decline the Grant
Declining the grant would significantly reduce cultural delivery capacity, limit engagement with communities, and hinder progress towards a successful launch of the new theatre. It may also impact future eligibility for ACE funding.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 The recommended option is Option 1: Accept the grant

5 Consultation

5.1 Portfolio leader has been consulted and supportive of the recommendation.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The £656k revenue grant funding will be utilised to support the Coliseum and the development of the Council's cultural programme and represents an extension to existing funding arrangements. The Council will be accountable to the Arts Council England for the use of the grant and will need to ensure that the grant is spent in line with the conditions of the funding.

(James Postle, Senior Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The proposed acceptance of the grant is lawful, subject to the Council entering into and complying with the Funding Agreement and the associated External Delegation Agreement both of which have been reviewed and substantively agreed. The Council will remain accountable to Arts Council England for compliance with the funding conditions, including monitoring, governance, reporting and onward granting requirements.
As the existing Grant Funding Agreement between the Council and Oldham Coliseum Theatre Limited expires on 31 March 2026, a variation or new grant agreement will be required to govern the 2026–27 onward funding and to ensure appropriate monitoring, audit and clawback provisions remain in place.
The funding constitutes a grant rather than a procurement arrangement and does not engage the Procurement Act 2023. Onward grant arrangements structured as grant funding and comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.
Pamela Nsofor (Solicitor)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 None
Angela Porter (Senior Category Manager Commercial & Environment)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 RBO-07-26.

12 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act :

Name of File: Urgent Business – Investing in a New Theatre for Oldham Cabinet Report February 2023



Urgent Business -Investing in a New

13 Appendices

13.1 Equality Impact Assessment

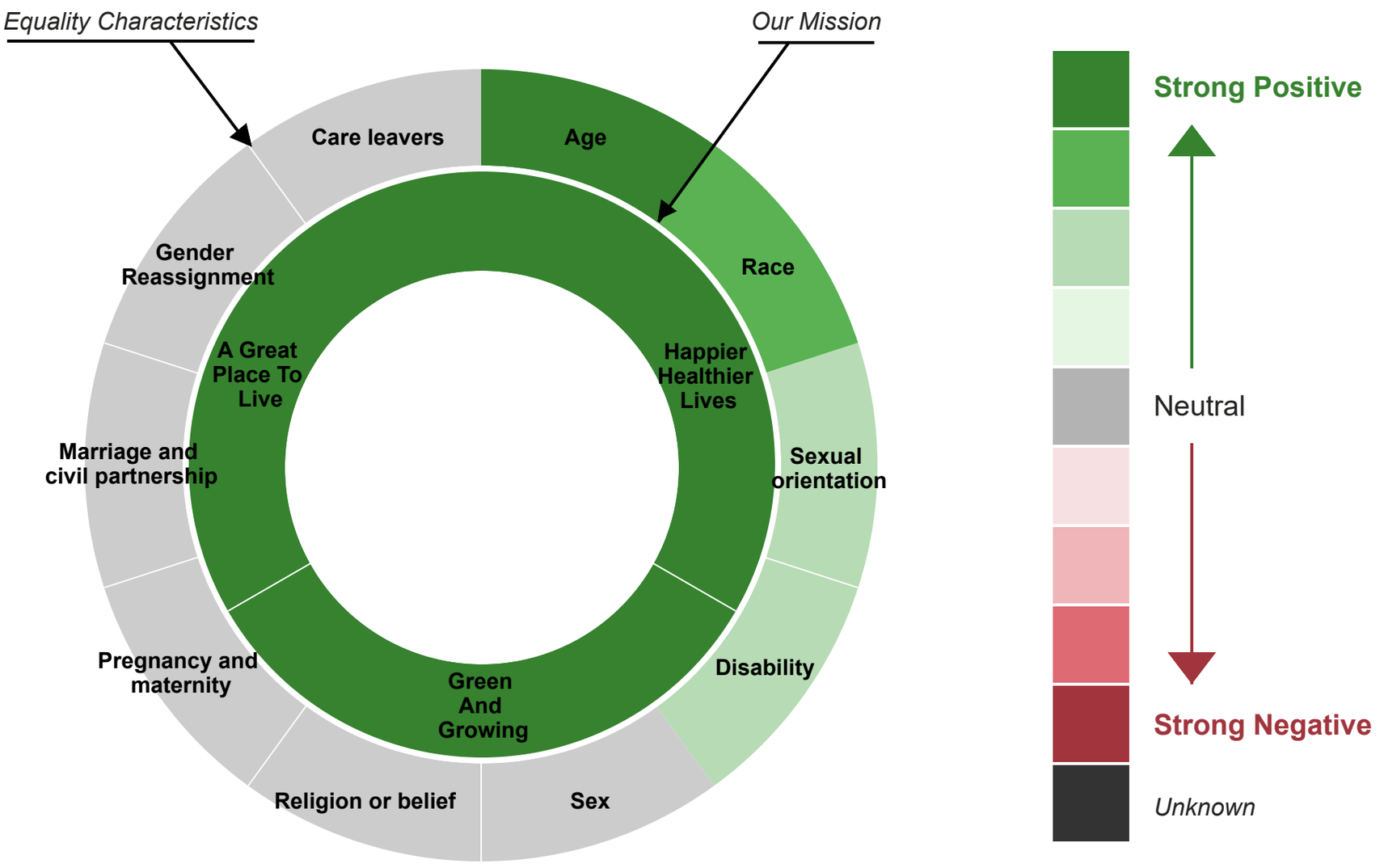


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Arts Council Investment into Oldham's Cultural Programming and Venue Development Extension Grant

completed/last updated by Subnum Hariff-Khan on 25/02/2026

Portfolio	**Thriving Communities and Culture**
Directorate	**Place**
Service/Team	**Communities**
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	**No**



Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Care leavers	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Sex	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Disability	Moderate Positive	Possible	Long Term	2	More accessible cultural programming for people with disabilities.
Sexual orientation	Moderate Positive	Possible	Long Term	2	Inclusive programming that represents and welcomes LGBTQ4+ communities.
Race	Moderate Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	4	This investment delivers Khushi Festival and diverse cultural programmes, supporting engagement of South Asian and Oldham's diverse communities.
Age	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Through this investment, children and young people will have access to high quality cultural programming impacting their wellbeing, confidence and educational attainment.

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	A strong cultural offer is essential in encouraging people to want to live in Oldham. It strengthens community pride and sense of belonging.
Green And Growing	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	The investment supports local jobs in the creative industries and supports tourism to the town.
Happier Healthier Lives	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Engagement in cultural activities supports health and wellbeing.

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Report to CABINET

Investing in a New Theatre for Oldham

Portfolio Holder:
Councillor Amanda Chadderton, Leader of Oldham Council and portfolio holder for Regeneration and Housing

Officer Contact:
Emma Barton, Executive Director, Place and Economic Growth
Katrina Stephens, Director of Public Health (with responsibility for Culture)
Shelley Kipling, Assistant Chief Executive

27 February 2023

Reason for Decision

Oldham Council is committed to the delivery of a new theatre in Oldham Town Centre.

The planned new theatre building was successful in gaining Towns Deal funding from central government in June 2021 and work has progressed significantly with detailed plans well advanced. It is proposed that the new theatre be progressed through a further consultation ahead of submitting a planning application, and funding arrangements confirmed, including the use of Towns Deal.

Alongside this, Oldham has been offered access to £1.845 million of Arts Council funding to provide performance, arts and culture across the borough over the next three-years. In order to access this funding, Oldham Council has a requirement to indicate its acceptance of this funding and to recommit to the development of a new theatre for the borough.

Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

- Formally approve Oldham Council's intention to accept £1.845 million Arts Council England funding to provide cultural activity for the borough for the years 2023-2026

- Recommit to the development of a new theatre for Oldham, and approve funding arrangements and progression of the new theatre on Union Street to planning stage.

Investing in a new theatre for Oldham

1 Background - the need for a new theatre

1.1 Oldham Coliseum began as a circus on Henshaw Street dating back to 1885, known then as the Colosseum. Built in 1887, the current theatre building based on Fairbottom Street, off Yorkshire Street, in Oldham Town Centre, had been used as a music hall and a cinema, before reopening in 1938, as the Oldham Repertory Theatre. The Oldham Rep lasted until 1978 when it was reconstituted as the Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

1.2 The current Fairbottom Street building, the adjacent office building and car park are leased by the Coliseum from the Council on a rent-free arrangement.

1.3 In 2012 Oldham Council invested £2 million into the Fairbottom Street theatre, upgrading audience areas, replacing seating, improving heating and updating ventilation. However, even with this level of investment, both the Coliseum Board and Management Team, and Oldham Council agreed that the current building could not meet the long-term needs of the theatre: it's performers, staff and its audiences deserved better.

1.4 Problems with accessibility, a lack of quality back-stage and front of house facilities and a growing list of maintenance issues common to old buildings were evident (including asbestos and lack of provision for disabled performers and visitors). A full building survey, undertaken at the time (2012), gave the building a ten-year lifespan.

1.5 The scale of the issues found and Oldham Coliseum's requirement for better facilities meant that renovating, refurbishing, repurposing or re-investing in the building was not possible. In addition, the size and topography of the site meant that rebuilding on the current site would be restrictive and very expensive as a result. In 2012, both Oldham Coliseum and Oldham Council agreed that a new theatre building on a new site was required.

1.6 Since this time, the Council has continued to undertake and pay for structural maintenance required to the building (c.£20k per year for the last ten years) as the internal maintenance, repairs and building H&S compliance falls to the Coliseum management team for up-keep.

1.7 With the ongoing issues with the building itself, work has continued between Oldham Council, Arts Council England and Oldham Coliseum Board and management team (three organisations also referenced as "the partnership" in this report) to find and create a new home for the Coliseum, and a new space for arts and performance in the town.

1.8 Over the last ten years, the partnership has developed plans for two different theatre projects, but challenges of design and layout, plus the need for a sustainable business model for the Coliseum as the future operator of the site, have meant these projects were not deliverable.

1.9 However, the development of a new theatre has remained a priority given the acknowledged issues with the current building, and this agreed approach with the partnership was central in the development of Oldham's Cultural Strategy which recognised how important arts and performance were to the town and the wider area.

1.10 In 2019/20 Oldham Council, the Arts Council and Oldham Coliseum (the partnership) jointly reviewed options once again for a new theatre – existing site and others in the town

centre - and bringing back-to-life the heritage buildings (the Old Post Office and former Quaker Meeting House) on Union Street was the preferred location / site. This site is at the heart of Oldham's growing cultural quarter, close to Oldham Gallery and Library and next door to the Old Library, which is currently being redeveloped following consultation with local communities and feedback to bring empty heritage buildings back into use as part of the Council's Creating a Better Place Strategy.

1.11 Linked to the new Cultural Strategy for Oldham, in August 2020 the ongoing partnership between the Coliseum, Arts Council England and Oldham Council saw the development of a new performance venue. ***The Oldham Making Space for Live Performance Feasibility report*** and ***Making Space Vision*** provided the basis for the current project design and subsequent successful application for a Towns Fund grant to support the delivery of this important new building.

1.12 In late 2022, following some issues with the walls at the back of the stage, a further full building survey was commissioned. This survey, completed in January 2023, found that the building needed numerous urgent health and safety compliance works. The Coliseum have been given this report (appended to Part B report) and they have been asked to urgently action the works to ensure compliance while the doors are open till the end of March. This survey confirms the conclusion of the 2012 survey that the building is beyond its expected lifespan.

1.13 The plan, agreed by all parties, and acknowledging the life-span of the current building was always that Oldham Coliseum would leave the Fairbottom Street theatre building. However, the Coliseum would continue to perform in a range of different venues across the borough – building new audiences in anticipation and readiness for the new theatre opening in 2025/26.

2 A new theatre for Oldham

2.1 The proposals in this report are for a new £24.5 million theatre at the Union Street site: they have been developed by the partnership to provide a modern, accessible venue for audiences from Oldham and beyond.

2.2 The new theatre will provide a more modern, accessible venue for performers and audiences from Oldham and beyond. The proposals include a new 300-350 seat auditorium and more intimate 120 seat studio for performance space, together with enhanced back-stage facilities, additional education, event and rehearsal space and better front-of house facilities including bar and café areas, for audiences to enjoy. The new theatre will revitalize Oldham's cultural offer and create additional jobs, both in the venue and from the surrounding area.

2.3 The space is being designed, not only as a home for Oldham Coliseum, but for use by other local arts and community organisations for both local and visiting audiences. The plans are at an advanced stage and have been developed by members of the current Oldham Coliseum Board and other cultural organisations with support from the Arts Council.

2.4 Research and dialogue with external theatre specialists has confirmed that a producing theatre can be successful in the proposed new theatre for Oldham, with a new business model, as there are many examples of other producing theatres that have been used as a benchmark - such as Contact Theatre (300), Stockport Garrick (151), Bolton Octagon (300-390), Hope Mill Theatre (120), Watermill Theatre (220), Southwark Playhouse (310), Hampstead Theatre (325).

2.5 In summer 2021, Oldham was successful in gaining a £24.4 million Towns Deal funding bid to fund four key development projects across the town. £6 million of this funding was allocated to support the delivery of Oldham's new theatre on top of the Council's capital funding commitment. To meet the requirements of the Town Deal funding and to meet our proposed opening date, work on the theatre must progress to planning stage by Summer 2023: subject to Cabinet approval, the project is on track to meet this requirement.

2.6 The new theatre plans were shared as part of the Big Town Centre consultation event and following feedback from the Coliseum, Arts Council, wider culture partners in the borough, and importantly with views from local residents and communities, partners and local businesses, the design team have progressed work on the proposals and the current plans are appended to this document.

2.7 Subject to Cabinet approving the recommendations in this report, the next stage of the theatre project involves further consultation on the emerging plans to help inform and shape the planning application due for submission in Summer. This pre-planning application consultation activity will take place to share the plans for the new theatre with local communities, partners, and performing arts stakeholders. The plans will also be shared with other external specialists to ensure the plans and proposals have continued due diligence and alignment with producing theatre requirements.

3 Oldham Coliseum Theatre (the Organisation)

3.1 The Oldham Coliseum has benefited from Arts Council funding as one of its National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) over a number of years. This funding accounts for around a third of their income alongside grants from other organisations and revenue from their successful productions.

3.2 Oldham Coliseum is provided with annual cultural funding from Oldham Council of £138,000 per year. Alongside this the Coliseum is also provided with rent-free use of the current theatre building, office space and car park: they also lease separate storage facilities from the Council. In addition, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has provided annual funding to Oldham Coliseum of c.£100,000 per year through the GM Culture Fund (2020-23).

3.3 In 2022 the Oldham Coliseum submitted a bid to retain its National Portfolio Organisation status and funding for the period 2023-2026. In November 2022, the Arts Council announced that this bid had been unsuccessful deeming it 'high risk' and referencing concerns about the theatre's financial management, leadership and governance.

3.4 Following the Arts Council funding announcements in November, the Chief Executive of Oldham Coliseum left the organisation and, shortly after, the Chair of the Board resigned followed by the Vice-Chair. Chris Lawson, previously the Coliseum's Artistic Director, stepped up as Interim Chief Executive and an Interim Chair and Vice-Chair were appointed to the Board.

3.5 Oldham Council have worked with the Arts Council since November to support the Coliseum as they worked to make changes to their programme, their organisation and sought to meet the challenges they were facing. Unfortunately, in February 2023, acknowledging the significant financial challenges they were facing, Oldham Coliseum announced its intention to close its doors stating "the current financial situation is not sustainable for the running of a full-time theatre".

4 Arts Council Funding for Oldham

4.1 Despite being unable to include the Oldham Coliseum among its National Portfolio organisations, the Arts Council, acknowledging both Oldham's designation as a levelling up place for culture and our commitment to investing in new cultural offers for the town, have ringfenced £1.845 million over three years to support the delivery of local arts and culture.

4.2 In November 2022, at the time that the outcome of the Coliseum's funding bid was announced, Oldham Council were informed by the Arts Council that this ringfenced funding would be made available. Since then, the Arts Council have provided further information on the purpose and means of access for these funds, including that the funding must be used to:

- Engage with communities and stakeholders in the development and delivery of a new theatre for Oldham
- Develop an appropriate leadership and governance structure for the new theatre
- Create a programme of performance that tests new approaches to programming, creative learning, talent development and audience development
- Meet the outcomes and principles of the Arts Council's 'Let's Create' strategy

4.3 To access this funding, Oldham Council has been asked by the Arts Council to provide a detailed plan for its proposed programme of activity and confirmation that the council intends to progress with plans for the new theatre.

5 The future for the Oldham Coliseum

5.1 Oldham's new theatre was always intended to be the future home of the Oldham Coliseum with work already underway to develop a new operating and production model for the new theatre. The Council and Arts Council remain confident in the ability to form a strong operating and business model for a producing theatre without the Coliseum should that be required.

5.2 The timings for the new theatre continue to be supported by the Arts Council and the Coliseum, and it was always the plan for the Coliseum to move out of its current home (in line with the expected life-span of the Fairbottom Street site) and to produce and perform works elsewhere in other venues across the borough, and wider areas, for a period while the new theatre was built. This would allow them to continue providing art for local audiences and, importantly, build new audiences in anticipation and readiness for the new theatre.

5.3 As part of these discussions, and, recognising the love and loyalty that theatre goers have for the Oldham Coliseum name and history, Oldham Council are continuing conversations with the Coliseum Board to try and retain some of the artistic legacy.

6 Options/Alternatives

6.1 Cabinet members may recall being formally briefed on the different options considered over the past decade, with a summary included earlier in this report, relating to:

- The future of the Coliseum building;
- The location, size, and requirements for a theatre building in Oldham;
- The funding arrangements and receipt of external grant support (Council Capital Strategy and Town Deal); and
- The emerging business case and detailed project plans (Town Deal).

6.2 Cabinet members are asked to approve the recommendations in this report, noting requirements for existing maintenance works to the current building(s), planning activity for the ACE funding allocation, and project delivery timelines, and budgets for the new theatre as set out earlier in this report.

7 Consultation

7.1 Extensive consultation has taken place throughout the development of the new theatre space including the community consultation in the town centre, with youth voices, and with disability groups as part of the Big Town Centre Conversation. Further dedicated consultations and engagements took place with communities and local businesses, linked to the requirements of the Towns Fund application process.

7.2 Consultation and engagement work took place with stakeholders, partners, Council teams and services, elected members, public sector organisations and different voices from our local communities to help define the ambitions for the new theatre.

7.3 Portfolio Holders have been consulted on the feasibility work and development of the design. Both staff and elected members have been engaged throughout this process to allow ideas and suggestions to be fed into the preferred solutions.

7.4 Ongoing dialogue continues with both the Coliseum Board and Management Team and Arts Council England.

7.5 Further consultation and engagement will take place in conjunction with standard practice for project development / planning application considerations as proposed earlier in this report.

7.6 Key stakeholder have provided the following statements in direct support of the proposals in this report:

7.6.1 **Chris Lawson, Interim Chief Executive of Oldham Coliseum Theatre**

"*We continue to support the development of a new theatre for Oldham, which we had hoped could be a new home for Oldham Coliseum. Oldham deserves a good quality theatre that produces and presents new work for local and visiting audiences. The current theatre building does not offer the space or facilities needed for a modern theatre.*

" We also welcome Oldham Council's proposal to accept the Arts Council's ringfenced funding for the town. While we remain disappointed that this funding could not be given to the Coliseum to continue our work directly, we know how much performance means to local people and support the need for ongoing investment in the arts while a new theatre is developed.

"We continue to hope that there is a place in Oldham for the Coliseum and that we can find a way to remain part of Oldham's cultural offer while overcoming our current challenges."

7.6.2 **Arts Council England**

"*Arts Council England is committed to continued investment for culture in Oldham, which hugely benefits the local community. We've ringfenced £1.845 million for the town so that people don't miss out on creative activities.*

"We are working constructively with Oldham Council on how this investment should be used to support the future of performing arts in Oldham and we are fully supporting plans for a performance space for the town.

"We have earmarked our £1.845 million investment against a proposal which we are expecting Oldham Council to develop which will be for a programme of theatre and talent development for communities right across the borough over the next three years, to make sure that there is still a strong cultural programme. That will go in tandem with the Council's plans to develop the new performance space.

"We invested some money to develop a vision for the new performance space and we are working hand-in-hand with the Council to ensure that this new space, which will be comfortable both for modern audiences and for performers, really gives a strong future for theatre in the town".

7.7.3 **Fiona Gasper, Independent Chair of Performance Space Partnership Board** - (previously Joint CEO of the Royal Exchange Theatre and Director of Transition for Manchester International Festival with responsibility for building the capacity of the company to move into The Factory, including its operational readiness)

"The Partnership Board has met regularly since the beginning of 2020. It's purpose is to bring together the key partners involved in funding, planning, and delivering the new performance space to enable the collective overview and understanding needed to monitor and support the progress of key strategic workstreams. These include funding and delivery of the capital project and business planning including operational readiness. It also provides a forum to drive the project forward by facilitating debate allowing for consensual decision making where required.

"Key partners are Oldham Council, Arts Council England, and the Coliseum and more recently representatives of locally based arts organisations with a stake in the development of the new performance space have also been attending: these include Oldham Theatre Workshop and Peshkar.

"The main business of each Partnership board has focused on updating partners on key developments of the capital project and its funding (led by Oldham Council) and Business planning and operational readiness (led by the Coliseum), ensuring that the new performance space will be fit for purpose."

8 Financial Implications

8.1 Financial comments are provided in the part B report. (James Postle, Finance Manager)

9 Legal Services Comments

9.1 Legal comments are provided in the part B report. (Rebecca Boyle, Group Solicator)

8. Co-operative Agenda

8.1 A new theatre in Oldham's Cultural Quarter will help improve Oldham's cultural offer, attract more people to the town centre and create training and employment opportunities, which are key priorities in both the Corporate and Oldham Plan
(Mahmuda Khanom, Policy Support Officer).

9 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 No HR implications. (Catherine Pearson, Strategic HR Lead)

10 **Risk Assessments**

10.1 Legal comments are provided in the part B report. (Mark Stenson, Assistant Director)

11 **IT Implications**

11.1 None applicable

12 **Property Implications**

12.1 Property comments are within the body of this report, with further details within the part b report. (Katy Webster – Assistant Director for Property and Projects)

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 Procurement comments are provided in the part B report. (Dan Cheetham, Procurement)

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 Env Health comments are provided in the part B report.
(Neil Crabtree – Head of Public Protection)

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 None

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 There has been a detailed Equality Impact Assessment completed for the Creating a Better Place programme. This will be reviewed and the new Council EIA applied once planning approval is obtained, to inform the next stage of design and the operational business model.

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 In response to the public announcements from Oldham Coliseum Theatre, and the support from the local communities – the Council has fast-tracked this report for urgent consideration under Rule 14 the Constitution Access to information Procedure Rules, following sought agreement by the Chair of the Policy, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None

20 **Appendices**

A: Layout Plans

APPENDIX A: Layout Plans for New Theatre
(Images provided by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios)

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios





EXTERNAL VISUAL

UNION STREET MAIN ENTRANCE



THE AUDITORIUM



Report to CABINET

Bikeability Core & Bikeability Plus 2026-2029

Portfolio Holder:
Councillor C Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

Officer Contact: Fiona Greenway (Executive Director Resources)

Report Author: Chris Moorhouse – Activation Officer (Public Health Service)

Email:chris.moorhouse@oldham.gov.uk

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

This decision is required to ensure the continued delivery of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training in Oldham for the period April 2026 to March 2029. Without approval of the proposed contract arrangements, Bikeability provision for children and young people would be disrupted, with adverse impacts on road safety, active travel, and public health outcomes.

Proposed contract arrangements
It is proposed to award a five-month interim contract for the period April 2026 to August 2026 via a delegated decision process (for which Cabinet approval is not required), while concurrently undertaking a competitive procurement exercise for a contract period of two years and seven months from September 2026 to March 2029 (subject to Cabinet approval).

This approach will ensure continuity of service, enable effective forward planning with schools, ensure compliance with procurement regulations, and secure value for money, while maintaining the delivery of high-quality, inclusive training in accordance with national Bikeability standards.

Executive Summary

This report seeks Cabinet approval to commence procurement of a contract for the delivery of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training in Oldham for September 2026–March 2029, subject to funding. To maintain continuity from April 2026, a five-month interim contract (April–August 2026) is proposed to be approved via the councils delegated decision process.

Bikeability, the Department for Transport's national cycle training programme, equips children and young people to cycle safely and supports Council priorities in road safety, public health, active travel, carbon reduction, and sustainable transport.

The total estimated funding for three years is £323,516 funded through the Bikeability Trust. The five-month interim contract value will be confirmed via the delegated decision report. The longer-term contract for 2026/27–2028/29 is based on annual allocations of £100,143 (2026/27), £108,540 (2027/28), and £114,833 (2028/29). Allocations beyond 2026/27 are indicative and subject to performance, including full spend and achievement of Level 2 delivery targets (Levels 1 and 2 combined).

Without new contracts, training provision would be disrupted, affecting schools and communities. The proposed approach ensures service continuity, enables effective planning, secures value for money, and maintains national Bikeability standards.

Procurement will ahere to the Councils Contract Procedure Rules and the relevant legislation under the Procurement Act 2023, awarding a contract to the most advantageous tenderer considering quality, cost, safeguarding, social value, equality, inclusion, and provider capability.

Cabinet is requested to approve the procurement and delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member and Director of Finance, to finalise documentation, conduct the tender, and award the contract within budget and subject to funding confirmation.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the commencement of a procurement exercise to tender for the delivery of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training in Oldham for a period of two years and seven months from September 2026 to March 2029
2. Approve the proposed contract term of two years and seven months for the Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus contract to provide continuity of delivery and value for money.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and the Director of Finance, to:
    - approve the final procurement and tender documentation.
    - conduct the procurement process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation; and
    - award the contract to the most advantageous tender, within the approved budget of £323,516 and subject to confirmation of funding.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To ensure continuity of Bikeability delivery in Oldham
   The current arrangements for delivering Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training are due to conclude in March 2026. Approval to award a five-month interim contract (April–August 2026) to be approved via a delegated decision report, alongside commencing procurement for the longer-term contract (September 2026–March 2029), is required to avoid any disruption to cycle training provision for children and young people across the borough.

2. To support Council priorities around road safety, public health, and active travel
   Bikeability training contributes to improving road safety, encouraging active travel, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting healthier travel choices, all of which align with Oldham Council's strategic priorities. Ensuring continuity of delivery through the interim contract maintains these benefits without interruption.

3. To secure value for money and high-quality delivery
   Procuring a longer-term contract, following a competitive tender, will provide stability for delivery, enable effective forward planning with schools, and allow the Council to achieve value for money while maintaining national Bikeability quality standards. The interim contract ensures high-quality training continues seamlessly until the longer-term contract is in place.

4. To ensure compliance with procurement and governance requirements
   Delegating authority to the Director of Environment and Transport, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Director of Finance, enables both the interim contract and the longer-term procurement to be carried out in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation, while ensuring appropriate financial and political oversight.

1. Background

Bikeability training in Oldham has historically been delivered through annual contracts, enabling alignment with yearly funding arrangements. From September 2026, it is proposed that delivery moves to a new contract for two years and seven months (September 2026–March 2029), providing greater stability of provision, improved forward planning for schools, and increased certainty for delivery partners. To ensure continuity of training during the transition, a five-month interim contract (April–August 2026) is also proposed, to be awarded via delegated decision.

In the 2025–2026 financial year, a total of 1,299 Bikeability Level 1 and Level 2 training places were commissioned across Oldham. Of these, 893 places were delivered during Quarters 1 to 3 by NCA, with performance indicating that delivery is on track to meet agreed targets by the end of Quarter 4.

Alongside this, the Oldham School Sports Partnership delivered Bikeability training beyond the 165 funded places, demonstrating strong demand for the programme and effective delivery capacity within the borough.

The proposed transition to a contract for 2 years and 7 months from September 2026, alongside the interim contract, builds on this positive delivery performance and ensures continuity of service. It will support the continued provision of high-quality Bikeability training across Oldham schools, in line with national standards and local priorities, while allowing sufficient time to undertake a fully compliant and competitive procurement exercise.

1.1 Introduction

This report seeks approval to procure a contract for two years and seven months from September 2026 to March 2029 for the delivery of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training in Oldham with an interim five-month contract (April–August 2026) to be approved via the delegated decision process, to ensure continuity of provision. Bikeability has historically been delivered through annual commissioning arrangements; moving to a multi-year contract provides greater stability, continuity of service, and improved forward planning for schools and delivery partners. The interim arrangement ensures no disruption to training during the procurement period.

The report takes account of recent delivery performance during 2025–2026, which demonstrates strong demand for Bikeability training and effective delivery across Oldham schools. Of the 1,299 commissioned training places, 893 were delivered during Quarters 1 to 3 by NCA, with additional delivery through the Oldham School Sports Partnership exceeding the funded allocation of 165 places. The proposed procurement builds on this experience, supports continued high-quality delivery, and aligns with national Bikeability standards.

Link to Corporate Plan and Priorities:

1. Healthier, Happier Lives
Promote healthy and active lifestyles for all residents, supporting wellbeing and reducing health inequalities. Enhance access to services and opportunities that improve physical and mental health outcomes.

2. A Great Place to Live
Improve road safety for children and young people, ensuring safer routes to school and community facilities. Strengthen neighbourhood connectivity, fostering safe, inclusive, and welcoming communities.

3. Green and Growing
Support sustainable and low-carbon travel options, including walking, cycling, and public transport.

Enhance access to economic, educational, and social opportunities through sustainable transport links.

Bikeability training contributes to these outcomes by enabling children and young people to travel safely, confidently and independently.

(a) Community Cohesion and Crime and Disorder Implications
(Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Bikeability training contributes to safer communities by improving cycling skills, road awareness and responsible behaviour on the public highway. The proposals are consistent with the Council's duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

(b) Risk Assessment

Key risks relate to service continuity, funding certainty and procurement timescales. These will be mitigated through early commencement of procurement, clear specifications, and delegated authority arrangements. Further details are set out elsewhere in the report.

Other Implications

(c) Co-operative Implications: Supports partnership working with schools and delivery providers. Human Resource Implications: No direct staffing implications for the Council.

Procurement Implications: Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules and relevant legislation.

Environment and Health and Safety Implications: Supports active travel and carbon reduction; safeguarding and health and safety requirements will be integral to the contract.

2 Current Position

2.1

Bikeability training in Oldham is currently delivered through annual commissioning arrangements, with provision in place for the 2025–2026 financial year. A total of 1,299 Bikeability Level 1 and Level 2 training places have been commissioned across Oldham schools.

Delivery during Quarters 1 to 3 has achieved 893 completed places, with performance indicating that agreed delivery targets are expected to be met by the end of Quarter Delivery to date demonstrates strong demand for Bikeability training and effective provision across the borough.

The current annual commissioning arrangements will conclude at the end of the 2025–2026 period. In order to ensure continuity of Bikeability Core and Bikeability Plus training from April 2026, a decision is required now to approve the procurement of a contract for two years and seven months (September 2026–March 2029). In addition, approval for a five-month interim contract (April–August 2026) will be sought via a delegated decision process to maintain uninterrupted training provision during the procurement period.

Early approval will enable officers to commence the tender process promptly, secure delivery continuity, and support long-term planning with schools and delivery partners, while ensuring compliance with procurement regulations and maintaining high-quality, nationally accredited Bikeability training.

3. Options/Alternative

Option 1 – Do nothing. The current delivery arrangements would end with no replacement contract, resulting in cessation of Bikeability training in Oldham. **Not recommended.**

Option 2 – Extend existing arrangements for three years. Extending the current arrangements would limit market testing, could conflict with procurement rules, and may not deliver best value. **Not recommended.**

Option 3 – Procure a new contract for a period of two years and seven months (Recommended option). Conduct a competitive procurement to appoint a provider for a contract period of two years and seven months (Sept 2026– March 2029). This ensures continuity, compliance with procurement rules, value for money, and high-quality delivery. Recommended. Risks and Mitigations **Preferred option – balances continuity, quality, compliance, and value for money.**

Risk	Mitigation
Disruption to Bikeability delivery	Early approval to commence procurement and a clear timetable to ensure continuity.
Funding uncertainty	Contract award subject to confirmation of funding and within approved budget; consultation with Director of Finance.
Failure to secure a suitable provider	Competitive tender process with clear specifications, robust quality criteria, and weighting to attract capable providers.
Non-compliance with safeguarding and equality requirements	Safeguarding, equality and inclusion included in tender specification and evaluation; ongoing contract monitoring.

4 Procurement Options

4.1 Contract Options for Bikeability Delivery

1. One-Year Contract (April 2026 – March 2027)

    - Run a tender process via a delegated decision (no Cabinet approval required).
    - Followed by a tender for a two-year contract (April 2027 – March 2029) requiring Cabinet approval.

2. Delayed Start Three-Year Contract (September 2026 – September 2029)

    - Delay the start of the new contract to September 2026 and award a three-year contract (Cabinet approval required).

3. Interim Five-month contract followed by a Contract for Two years and Seven months. (Preferred Option)

    - Directly award a five-month interim contract (April 2026 – August 2026) via the delegated decision process (no Cabinet approval required).
    - Concurrently run a competitive tender for a contract period of two years and seven months (September 2026 – March 2029), requiring Cabinet approval.

Preferred Option:
Option 3 is recommended as it provides the most effective balance of continuity, compliance, and value for money.

Reason for Selecting Option 3:

- Continuity of Service: Ensures uninterrupted delivery of Bikeability training for children and young people across all Oldham schools.
- Compliance: Fully aligns with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation.
- Value for Money: The procurement will assess the most advantageous tender, balancing cost and quality.
- High-Quality Delivery: Maintains standards in line with national Bikeability requirements, including safeguarding and inclusive provision.
- Stability for Schools and Providers: A three-year contract provides certainty for planning and resourcing, reducing the administrative burden associated with annual contract renewals.

5 Consultation

5.1 Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken with the following groups to inform you of the proposals in this report:

Schools and Education Providers: Headteachers and school staff have been consulted regarding the demand for Bikeability training and the effectiveness of current delivery

arrangements. Feedback indicates strong support for continued provision and the proposed move to a 5-month contract April 26 – August 26 via a delegated decision process and concurrently run a tender process for a period of Two years and Seven months from September 26 – March 29.

Current Delivery Partners: NCA and the Oldham School Sports Partnership have been engaged regarding delivery capacity, performance, and lessons learned from previous years.
Internal Departments: Consultation has taken place with the Finance, Legal, and Procurement teams to ensure compliance with Council procedures and funding arrangements.

No wider public consultation has been undertaken, as Bikeability delivery is a statutory programme with established school-based participation and funding allocation. Feedback from schools and delivery partners has been incorporated into the design of the procurement approach and contract specification.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The proposal is to undertake a competitive procurement exercise for a contract period of three years, from April 2026 to March 2029 for delivery of the Bikeability Training Programme.

The cost to deliver the full three-year programme, five months of which will be approved through the delegation decision process, will be £323,516.

The cost to deliver a 2 year and 7-month programme from September 2026 to March 2029 will be a minimum of £293k. It should be noted, unused funding from the first 5 months of the Programme will be available to be used within the remainder of 2026/27.

Year	**Contact Value £**
2026/27 - April to August (5 months) DDR approval expected	30,000
2026/27 – September to March (7 months)	70,143
2027/28	108,540
2028/29	114,833
Total 3 Year contract value	**323,516**
2 Years 7 months contract value	**293,516**

This will be fully funded from the three years £323,516 Bikeability grant allocation within Road Safety, Cost Centre 40630.

This scheme will be closely monitored to ensure compliance with the grant conditions and that all expenditure is maintained within the grant allocation.

(John Edisbury)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The report confirms that a formal Open Tender Process will be used for the longer-term contract, which is appropriate given the contract value and ensures transparency, equal treatment of providers, and adherence to the Procurement Act 2023. Award of the contract must remain conditional on confirmed Bikeability grant funding, with ongoing contract management required to ensure compliance with safeguarding requirements, equality duties, and the grant conditions
(Pamela Nsofor Solicitor)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 This contract will be procured for a term of two years and seven months. For the purposes of the five-month interim period, up to £30,000 of the total value will be allocated and confirmed via the delegated decision report (DDR). The remaining value for the longer-term contract is therefore £293,516, with the full total funding contract value being £323,516

Rule 4 of the Contract Procedure Rules governs the procurement process which needs to be undertaken. In this matter, the Council can tender the opportunity, or it can try to identify an existing third-party Framework Agreement and call off under it to meet its requirements.

The contents of this report confirm that an open tender process is recommended, and approval is requested to carry out the process and to award and enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for the services.

In line with Rule 4.3 of the contract procedure rules for contracts of this value, the council will undertake a formal Open Tender Process with the support of the commercial procurement unit (CPU). The opportunity will be advertised on the councils e-procurement portal and the Central Digital Platform. All the required notices will be published as required by the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations.

It is essential that all relevant tender documentation, including the service specification and the form of contract, are included in the invitation to tender. The tender documentation must state any selection criteria and the award criteria which will be applied to the tender evaluation process and any sub-criteria. The advertised scoring criteria will detail how each part of a tender will be scored.

All tenders will be evaluated in line with selection criteria and the award criteria to ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken. The CPU will support with this process along with issuing Assessment Summaries to ensure compliance.

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes/No [delete as appropriate] Ctrl and click to follow link to complete https://app.powerbi.com/home?experience=power-bi

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 FCR-02-26

12 Background Papers

12.1 None

13 Appendices

13.1 None.

Report to CABINET

Grant Acceptance: City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) – Revenue Funding

Portfolio Holder:
Councilor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

Officer Contact:
Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Report Author:
Joanna Ward, Strategic Transport Team Leader

Email:Joanna.ward@oldham.gov.uk

Mar 2026

Reason for Decision

To formally accept £496,000 in City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS1) revenue grant funding that has been allocated to Oldham Council to Support the development of the borough's transport pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP).

Recommendations

1) That the grant offer from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS1), for revenue grant funding of £496,000 available to Oldham Council to support the development of our transport pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP) be accepted;

2) That approval is granted for part of this resource to be used to support Council teams, as required, in developing a pipeline to potentially secure further capital funding for Oldham; and

3) That approval to the Director of Legal Services or his nominated representatives be granted to execute and complete any contractual documents.

Grant Acceptance: City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Revenue Funding

1 Background

1.1 At the GMCA meeting on 27 June 2025, approval was granted to allocate £5.9m of CRSTS1 revenue funding to Greater Manchester Local Authorities, as set out in

Section 9 of the CRSTS Reprioritisation Strategy Report. Section 9 states:

"In addition to the capital reallocations, it is proposed to allocate 50% (i.e. £5.9m) of the £11.8m of additional CRSTS1 revenue funding to the Local Authorities to support the development and delivery of the Integrated Pipeline, and to retain 50% for the ongoing development of the Bee Network. It is intended that both allocations will be predominantly utilised to support the development of the longer-term transport priorities to be set out in the ten-year Integrated Pipeline and updated Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Delivery Plan."

1.2 Following this approval, a proposal on the distribution of the Local Authority allocation was considered at the Directors of Place (DoP) meeting on 29 July 2025. It was agreed that the 2025/26 revenue funding would be apportioned on a population basis. This approach was subsequently recorded in the DoP report presented on 12 August 2025.

2 Current Position

2.1 As a result of this agreed distribution, £496,000 has been made available to Oldham Council to support the development of its transport project pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP).

2.2 A letter from TfGM to Oldham's Deputy Chief Executive was sent to confirm this on 25th August 2025 (see attached).

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Accept the grant funding of £496,000 and develop the transport project pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP).

3.2

3.3 Decline the grant funding £496,000 and then be unable to develop the transport project pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP). Risk falling behind on required transport plans and potential future funding opportunities.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 That the grant offer from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), providing £496,000 in revenue funding to Oldham Council to support the development of the transport pipeline and the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), be accepted.

4.2 This option will enable the Council to:

- Progress the development of a robust transport project pipeline, ensuring Oldham is well-positioned to secure future capital funding.
- Advance the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), strengthening alignment with Greater Manchester's strategic transport priorities.
- Provide targeted support to Council teams, enabling the necessary technical, planning and business-case work to be undertaken at pace.
- Maximize opportunities within the CRSTS City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, ensuring Oldham benefits fully from regional investment programmes.
- Reduce the risk of missed funding windows, by ensuring schemes are sufficiently developed and ready for submission when opportunities arise.

4.3 Rejecting or delaying this acceptance risks missing further funding opportunities and could undermine Oldham's wider strategic transport and regeneration objectives.

5 Consultation

5.1 The Portfolio Holder (Transport and Highways) and Senior Management were briefed in February 2026.

5.2 Engagement with senior stakeholders and ward members will continue as the pipeline and Local Implementation Plan develops.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 Approval to accept the CRSTS grant will increase the financial resource available to the Council by £496,000. The grant is provided to the Council to support the development of our transport pipeline and Local Implementation Plan (LIP).

6.2 Separate cost centres will be established for each project funded by this grant to ensure individual compliance with the grant conditions and to monitor that all expenditure remains within the allocated funding.

6.3 There is no assumption of any match funding from the Council when accepting the grant. Therefore, there are no adverse financial implications anticipated.

6.4 Although the original grant conditions expected all spend to be incurred by 31 March 2026, a further email from TfGM has since confirmed that the grant may be carried forward into 2026/27. TfGM have confirmed that they will allow eligible expenditure up to the end of September 2026. The service is therefore encouraged to ensure that the grant is fully spent by September 2026.

(Mohammed Hussain)

7 **Legal Implications**

7.1 The proposal to accept the funding from City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement is lawful and in line with the council's constitution. (Bryan Boese – solicitor)

8. **Procurement Implications**

8.1 [None (S.Kapoor Commercial Procurement Unit)

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

9.1 No

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 RBO-06-26.

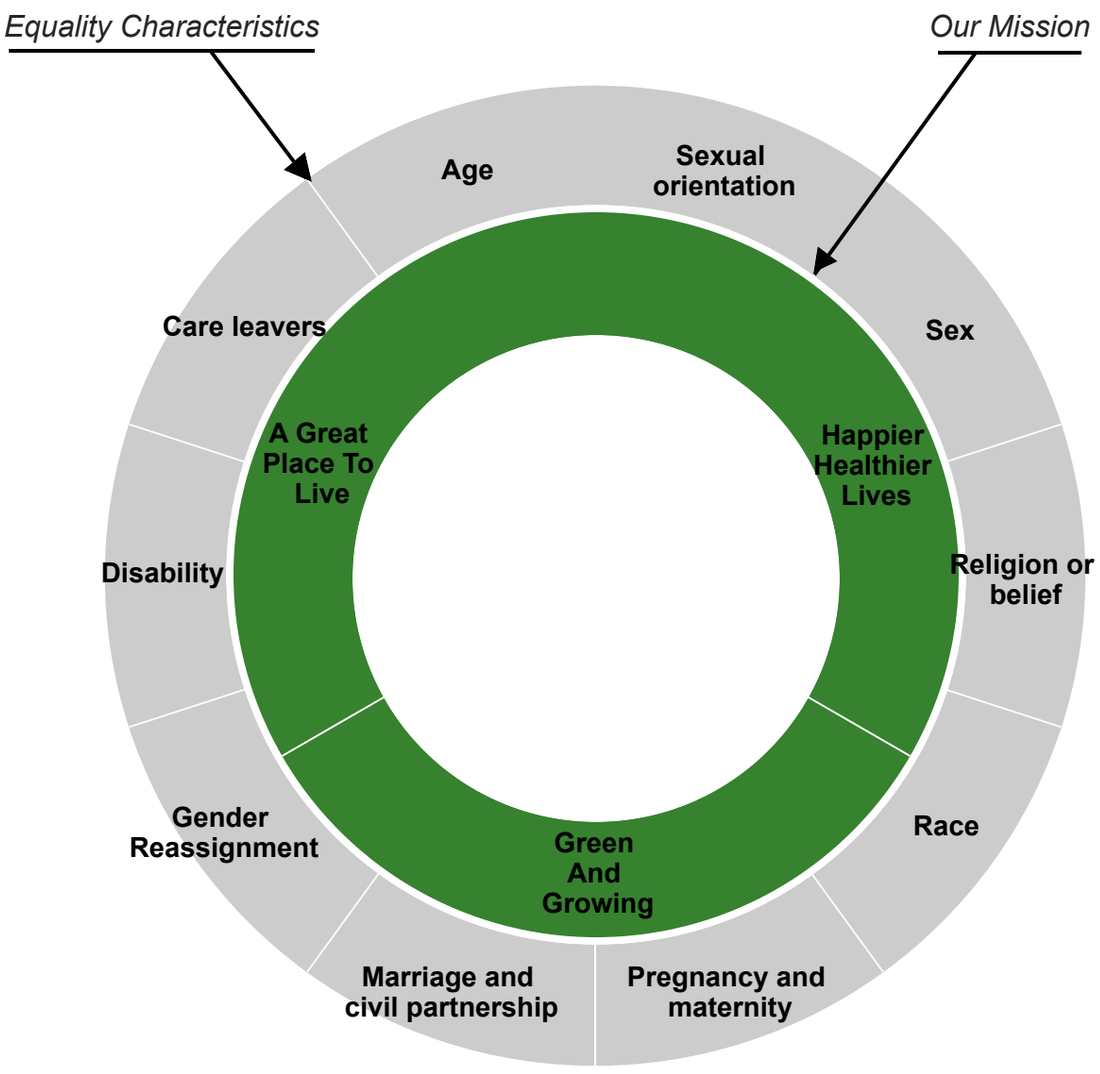
12 **Appendices**

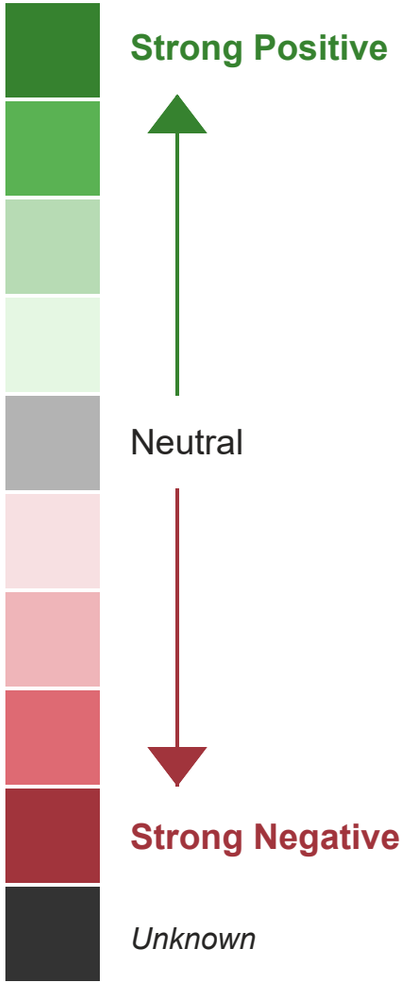
12.1 [All appendices for the report should be listed]

Grant Acceptance: City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRS…

completed/last updated by Joanna Ward on 27/02/2026

Portfolio	**Building a Better Oldham**
Directorate	**Place**
Service/Team	**Environment**
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	**No**





Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Age	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Care leavers	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Disability	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Sex	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Possible	Long Term	0	

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	This funding and the associated projects will help to make places where people can enjoy safe neighbourhoods vibrant local spaces, and stronger community connections, through high quality public places.
Green And Growing	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	The CRSTS revenue funding will provide the resources needed to plan, manage, and deliver improvements to local transport networks, supporting projects that make it easier for people to travel, access services, and enjoy better-connected places
Happier Healthier Lives	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	This funding and the associated projects will make it easier for people to get around using active travel and easier to access the services and social opportunities they need to live healthier, happier lives.

Negative Impacts

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	What action can be taken to mitigate the potential negative impacts?	Action(s)	Owner(s)	Timescale(s)	If the negative impacts can't be mitigated, why should the project/decision proceed?

Strong Positive Impacts that are Possible

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	What action can be taken to increase the likelihood that positive impacts are realised?	Action(s)	Owner(s)	Timescale(s)

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Report to CABINET

Staying Close Leaving Care Offer

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr S Mushtaq

Officer Contact: Julie Daniels, Executive Director, Children's Services

Report Author: Nick Whitbread, Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

The decision is required to formally approve the establishment and implementation of Oldham's **Staying Close model**, which provides an enhanced, relationship-based package of practical and emotional support for care leavers aged 16–25 whose welfare requires provision beyond the statutory Local Offer. The Staying Close programme strengthens early planning from age 16, ensures each eligible young person has a **Trusted Person**, improves access to and sustainment of suitable accommodation, and coordinates multi-agency support across health, wellbeing, education, employment, and relationships. Approving the model enables Oldham to address significant local needs—including housing pressures, mental health inequalities, and risks of homelessness and social isolation—while embedding a sustainable, multi-agency approach that improves long-term outcomes for care leavers.

The decision also ensures compliance with the national Staying Close programme, secures alignment with Oldham's existing Leaving Care pathways, and enables the Council to utilise the allocated DfE grant funding (£331,091 per year for three years) to deliver a high-quality, evidence-based offer that represents an "invest to save" opportunity through reduced crisis demand, improved tenancy sustainment, and better EET outcomes.

Recommendations

Approve the acceptance of the grant money with the purpose to establish and implementation of Oldham's **Staying Close model.**

Staying Close Leaving Care Offer

1 **Background**

1.1 Oldham Council is implementing a new **Staying Close** model to strengthen support for care leavers aged 16–25 whose welfare requires more intensive provision than the statutory Local Offer alone. The decision follows national rollout of the Department for Education's Staying Close programme and reflects Oldham's commitment to improving outcomes for young people transitioning from care into adulthood.

1.2 Oldham's local context includes significant socio-economic pressures, high levels of deprivation, challenges in the local housing market, and increasing mental health inequalities. These factors contribute to heightened risks of homelessness, social isolation, disrupted education, and poor wellbeing for many care leavers. Young people in Oldham have consistently highlighted the need for improved mental health support, stable accommodation, practical life-skills, and stronger relationships with trusted adults—all of which underpin the design of the Staying Close model.

1.3 The borough's care leaver population presents with a wide range of needs, including trauma histories, experiences of exploitation, SEND-related needs, and a diverse cohort including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children who require culturally sensitive support. Oldham operates within established multi-agency partnerships including housing, ICB/NHS mental health services, DWP SPOCs, Youth Justice, the Virtual School, and the VCSE sector. Staying Close integrates closely with these structures to ensure consistent, joined-up pathways for young people.

1.4 The model builds on existing Leaving Care services by introducing a dedicated **Staying Close Team**, offering enhanced relational support, smaller caseloads, a Trusted Person for each young person, earlier transition planning from age 16, and improved coordination across housing, health, education, employment and wellbeing. It is designed as a sustainable, long-term component of Oldham's Local Offer and contributes to an "invest-to-save" approach by preventing homelessness, reducing crisis service use and supporting young people towards independence.

2 Current Position

2.1 Funding has been provisionally approved by the DfE and we await Grant renumeration letters in March 2026.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1 – Do Nothing / Continue with Existing Leaving Care Provision

Under this option Oldham would continue delivering its statutory Local Offer for care leavers without implementing the enhanced Staying Close model.

- **Advantages:**
  - No structural change to current service delivery.
  - No need for new workforce investment.

- **Disadvantages:**
  - Oldham would not utilise the DfE Staying Close grant (£331,091 per year), risking reduced long-term outcomes and missed "invest-to-save" opportunities.
  - Fails to enhance clear local needs including risks of homelessness, mental-health inequalities, social isolation, and poor EET outcomes among care leavers.
  - Young people would not benefit from earlier planning from age 16, smaller caseloads, Trusted Person relationships, or enhanced wellbeing and accommodation support—all core elements identified as priorities by young people.
  - Does not meet expectations set out in national Staying Close guidance.

Conclusion:
This option does not meet the needs of Oldham's care leavers and does not align with the national programme.

3.2 **Option 2 – Partial / Limited Implementation of Staying Close**

This option would introduce some elements of the model—for example, a Trusted Person offer or some housing-related support—but without creating the full Staying Close Team, multi-agency pathway, or full accommodation, wellbeing and EET support package.

- **Advantages:**
  - Lower cost and reduced staffing requirement.
  - Minimal changes to existing structures.

- **Disadvantages:**
  - Risks non-compliance with DfE grant expectations and may undermine sustainability planning.
  - Would not deliver the full benefits evidenced in the Delivery Plan, especially the relational model, reduced caseloads, mental-health navigation, and integrated housing and EET support.
  - Fails to address complexity of need (trauma, exploitation risks, SEND, UASC, homelessness pressures).
  - Would weaken governance, data, and performance monitoring mechanisms essential for DfE reporting.
  - Young people could receive an inconsistent and diluted offer; does not reflect their feedback on the need for better emotional support, practical help, and consistent relationships.

Conclusion:
This option offers limited benefits and does not meet the programme requirements.

3.3 **Option 3 – Full Implementation of the Staying Close Model (Recommended)**

Oldham implements the full Staying Close model as set out in the Delivery Plan, including: a dedicated Staying Close Team; dual adviser/Trusted Person roles; early planning from age 16; multi-agency referral panel; mental wellbeing navigation; tenancy sustainment support; group skills development; digital engagement; comprehensive data and evaluation; and strong governance via the Corporate Parenting Board.

- **Advantages:**
  - Fully utilises DfE grant funding and aligns with national Staying Close expectations.
  - Provides enhanced, relationship-based support tailored to the needs of Oldham's care leavers, including those at highest risk of homelessness, exploitation, mental-health difficulties, and social isolation.
  - Embeds a sustainable multi-agency approach with housing, health, employment, adult services, and education partners.
  - Reduces crisis demand and supports long-term cost avoidance in homelessness, health crises, and justice involvement.
  - Strong governance, data, and performance oversight ensure continuous improvement and service quality.

Conclusion:
This option best meets Oldham's needs and maximises impact.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 3 – Full Implementation of the Staying Close Model

This is the preferred option because it delivers the comprehensive Staying Close model described in the Delivery Plan, offering a high-quality, relationship-based and multi-agency approach that directly addresses Oldham's contextual pressures—housing instability, mental-health inequality, trauma, and the risk of young people falling through gaps in transition. https://oldham365-my.sharepoint.com/personal/nick_whitbread_oldham_gov_uk/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc={D093BBA8-1025-4705-AF2E-202AB8435EC3}&file=Oldham Staying Close Delivery Plan January 2026.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true

It introduces a dedicated Staying Close Team with reduced caseloads; Trusted Person roles; early pathway planning from age 16; a multi-agency referral panel; wellbeing and life-skills support; mental-health navigation; and strong governance reporting to the Corporate Parenting Board. This model responds to the expressed priorities of young people, ensures compliance with DfE expectations, and aligns with Oldham's strategic commitment to improving outcomes for care leavers.

The preferred option also supports an "invest-to-save" approach by reducing homelessness, crisis presentations, and instability, while improving EET engagement and long-term independence, contributing to financial sustainability beyond the three-year grant period. [Oldham Sta...nuary 2026 | Word]

4.2 Staffing Structure

As per the Delivery Plan, the Staying Close team consists of 6 posts (5 FTE roles + 1 apprentice):

1. Staying Close Team Manager (1.0 FTE)
2. Staying Close Personal Advisers – 2 posts (2.0 FTE)
3. Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker (1.0 FTE)
4. Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator (1.0 FTE)
5. Wellbeing & Participation Apprentice (1.0 FTE)

These roles form the operational leadership, relational support, safeguarding continuity, mental-health navigation, and wellbeing/participation functions central to the Staying Close model.

4.3 Oldham's Staying Close model will be delivered by a dedicated multi-disciplinary team consisting of a Team Manager, two Staying Close Personal Advisers, a Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker, a Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator, and a Wellbeing & Participation Apprentice. This structure enables reduced caseloads, continuity across transitions, strengthened safeguarding, improved mental-health navigation, and a wellbeing-focused offer aligned to young people's priorities. Total costs are funded through the Staying Close DfE grant allocation.

5 Consultation

5.1 Feedback on Delivery Plan from the DfE received 3rd February 2026:

Overall, we are very happy with your plan.

The strengths included:

- *your consideration of eligibility and the cohort targeted*
- *stakeholder engagement, with a multiagency panel planned to support internal referrals, collaboration with housing providers*
- *Clear KPIs and data reporting to corporate parenting board*
- *An ambitious but deliverable timeline for service delivery from July 2026.*
- *Costs and roles are suitable and meet the requirements of the programme guide.*

5.2 Oldham has been 'buddied' with Stockport who have had a Staying Close offer in place since 2022.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The report is requesting formal approval of the Staying Close model. The model consists of the following additional staff:

	Grade	FTE		
Team Manager	10	1	£	74,460
Personal advisors/Trusted person	6	2	£	104,020
Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker	7	1	£	58,380
Mental Health Care Navigator	6	1	£	52,010
Wellbeing & Participation Apprentice	Level 3	1	£	30,520
		6	£	319,390

The posts are costed at the top of grade and are inclusive of on costs.

Funding

The Council has submitted a delivery plan to the DfE for the Staying Close funding which is £331,091 from 2026-27 for 3 years. As outlined in the report, the submission has had positive feedback from the DfE with funding confirmation expected March 2026.

The new posts are within the funding envelope and therefore there are no adverse financial implications. It should be noted, recruitment to the posts should not commence until final funding confirmation is received.

(Nicola Harrop – Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The Council must be satisfied it can meet the objectives and terms and conditions and milestones imposed by the funding authority including any obligation to provide match funding, to monitor, keep records and file returns. Officers must also check the terms do not conflict with other funding conditions for the scheme already in place and ensure compliance with all relevant regulations including Transparency obligations.

7.2 All works, services and goods procured by or on behalf of the Council must be procured in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and all other relevant regulations including, where applicable, the Financial Procedure Rules and Land and Property Protocol. Officers must work with legal colleagues to approve and formalise the terms of any grant agreement or MOU in conjunction with finance and audit colleagues.

7.3 The Service must ensure that Subsidy Control is considered (if relevant) in consultation with Legal Services and that all relevant assessments are made and recorded and all relevant regulations and legislation are complied with. External advice may be needed to support these activities.

7.4 If any grant funds are to be spent on supplies, works or services, the Council must undertake any commissioning activity in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, incorporating relevant national procurement legislation.

7.5 The Report Author has confirmed that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules continue to be complied with (Rebecca Boyle – Corporate Group Solicitor).

8 HR Implications

8.1 I would advise the service to look at what positions and empty positions you have within current structure where you may be able to have them reevaluated by the JE team to ensure the tasks and duties within the positions is aligned to expectations of Staying Close.

8.2 Seek expressions of interest from current staff to retain knowledge and experience.

8.3 Service to be aware that staff gain employment rights after two years and should funding stop after three years, the Council need to be aware of redundancy costs. Be aware that redundancy should be the last resort and redeployment opportunities should be sought in the first instance.

8.4 Adherence to Oldham's policies is required.

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes – EIA completed - 

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 CYP-01-26

12.2 Report Timescales:

Meeting	Deadline
Children's DMT	Mon 9 Feb
Cabinet Member Approval	Thur 19 Feb
Management Board on 4 March	Friday, 27 Feb

Leadership on 9 March	Lunchtime on Weds, 4 March (any amends from management board to be made by lunchtime)
Cabinet on 23 March	Close of Weds, 11 March

13 **Background Papers**

13.1 Please see Staying Close Delivery Plan at Appendix I

Department for Education

Staying Close

Delivery plan form

January 2026

Project start: April 2026

Section 1 – How your plan will be reviewed

There are four questions that we would like further information about. The questions focus on:

1) Your proposed Staying Close model
2) Engagement with stakeholders and partners
3) Governance
4) A clear and realistic delivery plan

Delivery plans will be reviewed to ensure that plans are realistic and feasible for delivery. We will either agree your plan or give suggestions for improvements. As long as your plans are within the scope of Staying Close, this will not impact the funding allocation we offer you – the feedback process is designed to support you to implement the programme.

Section 2 – Contact details
Part A – Contact details

Name of Local Authority (LA)	OLDHAM COUNCIL
Name of Officer	NICK WHITBREAD
Role of Officer	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – CORPORATE PARENTING
Officer contact email	nick.whitbread@oldham.gov.uk
Region (East Midlands, East of England, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, West Midlands, Yorkshire and Humber).	NORTH WEST

Section 3 – Your Staying Close model

Q1) Please set out your proposed Staying Close model. This should include:

- Details of your Staying Close offer; how it will build on any existing provision; how it will meet the minimum offer set out in the new Staying Close guidance and how you plan to enhance your offer through innovative or bespoke elements.
- How your offer will meet the needs of your young people (please include any specific needs or characteristics of your young people or contextual detail of the local area which have relevance to the model, and which cohorts you intend to target).
- How you will ensure that your model is sustainable year on year and is embedded in your local offer to care leavers.

Total word count: (Max 1000 words)

Oldham's Staying Close model provides an enhanced, relationship-based package of practical and emotional support for care leavers aged 16–25 whose welfare requires provision beyond the statutory Local Offer. It builds on existing Leaving Care services by establishing a dedicated Staying Close Team embedded within the Leaving Care service and working in close partnership with housing, health, education and employment services. The model meets the minimum expectations of the Staying Close programme by: identifying need early (from age 16) through pathway planning; identifying a Trusted Person to each eligible young person; supporting access to and sustainment of suitable accommodation; and coordinating support across health and wellbeing, relationships, education, employment and participation in society.

We will enhance our offer through four bespoke features: (i) Dual Adviser Model: where needs exceed Oldham's Local Offer, a Staying Close Personal Adviser (SC-PA) will combine statutory PA duties with the Trusted Person role, reducing fragmentation, enabling earlier relationship-building (from 16–17), and maintaining smaller caseloads (up to 10) to deliver intensive support. (ii) A Multi-Agency Pathway: we will operate a single referral 'front door' to Staying Close, with triage at a fortnightly panel involving Leaving Care, Housing Options, Adult Social Care, ICB/NHS mental health partners and EET leads, mirroring good practice in transition boards. (iii) A Wellbeing & Skills Offer: the team will coordinate life-skills (cooking, budgeting, tenancy sustainment), group activities to address loneliness, and rapid access to in-house mental-health triage (brief interventions and supported referrals to AMHS). (iv) Digital Engagement: to sustain relationships for care leavers living out of area or working irregular hours, we will use scheduled video check-ins and secure messaging alongside face-to-face work, ensuring continuity without replacing relational practice.

Oldham's care leavers include young people who have experienced trauma, disrupted education and mental health challenges, with some at heightened risk of homelessness and NEET. Housing supply pressures and transitions to adult services can create a 'cliff-edge' without coordinated support. Our model targets three cohorts: (a) Eligible/Relevant 16–18-year-olds for early planning and relationship-building; (b) Former Relevant 18–25-year-olds

whose welfare requires Staying Close (including those returning after opting out of PA support); and (c) specialist groups—young parents, those leaving custody, and former Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), who may require culturally and linguistically sensitive support and help to build community networks.

For accommodation, the team will plan transitions early, assess suitability, and coordinate options across all accommodation options. Where necessary, we will explore rent-guarantor arrangements and use a joint housing protocol for prevention and contingency planning, consistent with expectations to avoid unsustainable temporary options and reduce homelessness risk. Independent living skills will be taught practically (e.g. cook-and-eat sessions), with materials that are accessible and tailored; financial capability will be strengthened through budgeting coaching, support to manage bills/arrears, and facilitation of access to welfare entitlements via Jobcentre Plus Care Leaver SPOCs.

For health and wellbeing, Trusted Persons, SC-Pas and a specialist Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator will provide proactive wellbeing check-ins, brief interventions (where we have an in-house practitioner), and facilitated referrals to adult mental-health services, advocating with CAMHS/AMHS thresholds where appropriate and working with ICB partners. We will also address loneliness through group activities, peer networks and volunteering opportunities. These actions are in direct response from the surveys and voices of our young people, who have highlighted mental wellbeing and preventative mental wellbeing support as their main priorities for service improvement moving forward.

For EET, we will link with local colleges, apprenticeship providers and employers; offer application and interview support; and ensure access to bursaries, with additional support for care leavers in higher education (holiday accommodation planning and university services). Finally, participation and relationships work will focus on network-building, family finding/reunification where safe, mentoring links, and support for democratic participation (e.g. voter registration and ID).

Our sustainability approach addresses governance, workforce, finance, data and continuous improvement. Governance: The Staying Close Team will report bi annually to the Corporate Parenting Board, with senior oversight from Children's Services leadership. We will operate clear operational management lines within Leaving Care, ensuring alignment between pathway planning and Staying Close delivery and enabling cross-council corporate-parenting accountability.

Workforce and practice model: We will maintain reduced caseloads for SC-PAs (up to 10) and for the dedicated transitional safeguarding practitioner (generally <15, flexed for complexity) – this role will bridge safeguarding responsibilities between children's and adult services, ensuring continuity of protection and risk management during transition, including young people at risk of sexual and criminal exploitation. We will invest in a core training offer (trauma-informed practice, motivational interviewing, tenancy sustainment, welfare rights, and cultural competence for UASC). This ensures quality and continuity across transitions.

Data, outcomes and learning: We will implement a data model aligned to DfE quarterly returns, capturing assessments, uptake, activity and outcomes (accommodation sustainment, EET engagement, wellbeing, reduced crisis presentations). Routine case audits and young people's

feedback will drive iterative improvements and commissioning decisions.

Financial sustainability and 'invest-to-save': Over the three-year grant window, we will model cost avoidance in homelessness (reduced temporary accommodation spend), crisis health usage, and youth justice involvement through tenancy sustainment and earlier intervention. We will seek economies of scale via joint commissioning (e.g., supported accommodation provisions), explore social value leverages with local partners, and align Staying Close with existing funded programmes to avoid duplication. Financial monitoring, overseen by Children's Services finance and audited annually, will evidence effective grant usage and inform future baselining within Oldham's core budgets.

Embedding in the Local Offer: We will publish the Staying Close criteria, referral route, Trusted Person arrangements and entitlements within Oldham's Care Leaver Local Offer, ensuring transparency for young people and partners and securing long-term continuity as Staying Close responsibilities evolve nationally.

Submitted word count: 935

Q2) Please set out how you will engage partners and stakeholders in the development and delivery of your Staying Close offer. This should include:

- How you will work with other teams within your LA, private children's homes providers, charities, the voluntary sector and other relevant organisations.
- How you will embed effective partnership working in your Staying Close model.
- How you will work with LA services out of area to support care leavers who no longer live in the local authority.

Total word count: (Max 500 words)

Oldham will embed strong, accountable and collaborative partnership working at every stage of the Staying Close pathway, recognising that high-quality outcomes for care leavers rely on seamless multi-agency coordination. Our partnership approach is both operational and strategic, ensuring that all agencies with a role in supporting care leavers contribute consistently and are aligned around shared priorities for safety, stability and long-term independence.

Internal partnership working
Within Oldham Council, the Staying Close Team will work alongside Children in Care Social

Work teams, Leaving Care, Housing Options, Youth Justice, the Virtual School, Commissioning, Adult Social Care, SEND, and Early Help to ensure young people experience a smooth transition through services and do not fall through gaps. A dedicated referral and fortnightly multi-agency panel will provide joint decision-making, ensuring that accommodation, EET, health, risk and safeguarding needs are considered in a coordinated way. Clear escalation pathways will enable urgent issues—such as emerging homelessness risks, mental health deterioration, or exploitation concerns—to be rapidly addressed by the relevant partners. The Staying Close Team Manager will sit within the Leaving Care service so that Staying Close is fully integrated into existing pathway planning processes. Joint supervision, aligned assessments, shared digital case notes and collaborative planning meetings will ensure consistency of practice and reduce duplication for young people.

External partnership working with providers and the voluntary sector
Oldham's Staying Close model relies on strong engagement with private providers, registered housing providers, and the voluntary and community sector. We will ensure partners are brought together to review how the Staying Close offer is working in practice, share best practice, identify barriers and drive joint problem-solving. Accommodation providers will be closely involved in transition planning from age 16, strengthening preparation for adulthood and enabling young people to build confidence before leaving care.
Partners such as DWP Care Leaver SPOCs, Voluntary Section and local FE providers will offer coordinated welfare and EET support, ensuring young people can access bursaries, training and employment opportunities through a streamlined route.

Partnership working with health services
Given Oldham's clear need for improved mental health access, partnership with ICB/NHS services is central. The Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator will act as a bridge between Staying Close and local mental health services, facilitating referrals, advocating where thresholds are challenging, and ensuring continuity when young people transition from CAMHS to AMHS. Shared training, escalation protocols and multi-agency case discussions will support consistent decision-making.

Out-of-area support
For care leavers placed outside Oldham, the Staying Close team will maintain oversight through digital engagement, planned visits, information-sharing agreements and partnership arrangements with host authorities. This ensures young people continue to receive consistent support regardless of geographical location.

Co-production with young people
Young people's voices remain central. The Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum will continue to influence service design, review operational processes, contribute to performance monitoring and sit on recruitment panels for Staying Close staff. Continuous feedback loops—including surveys, group discussions and reflective sessions—will inform ongoing improvements.
Through these coordinated partnership structures Oldham will deliver a cohesive, high-quality Staying Close offer that wraps around young people and supports safe, meaningful transitions into adulthood.

Submitted word count: 521

Q3) Please set out the governance model for your Staying Close offer. This should include:

- How you will secure senior support for Staying Close within your LA and ensure strategic oversight, scrutiny, and support.
- Management and responsibility for operational delivery.
- The role of your Corporate Parenting board in the ongoing development and delivery of your Staying Close offer.

Total word count: (Max 500 words)

Governance will operate at strategic and operational levels. Strategic oversight sits with the Corporate Parenting Panel, chaired by young people and senior elected members and the Director of Children's Services as programme sponsor. Corporate Parenting Panel will receive bi-annual performance dashboards, financial reports and thematic deep-dives (e.g. accommodation sustainment, mental health access). This will provide opportunity to review impact, offer scrutiny and assurance in progress of the delivery plan.

Operational accountability lies with the Staying Close Team Manager within the Leaving Care Service, supported by the established Head of Service, SC-PAs, Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker and Wellbeing and Participation Apprentice. Monthly management meetings will review caseloads, workforce capacity, risk registers and partnership development.

Safeguarding integration is critical: the Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker will link children's and adult safeguarding board priorities, ensuring continuity for young people with complex needs. Escalation routes for high-risk cases will be embedded in governance protocols, with immediate reporting to senior managers and safeguarding partnerships.

Performance monitoring will include KPIs on accommodation sustainment, EET engagement, wellbeing outcomes and crisis reduction. Data will feed into DfE quarterly returns and local dashboards. Quality Assurance exercises and young people's feedback reports will inform continuous improvement.

Established Children's Services decision-making systems will approve process and policy changes and resource allocations, ensuring alignment with statutory duties and strategic priorities. Governance will also oversee compliance with grant conditions, value-for-money assurance, and sustainability planning beyond the funding window.

Submitted word count: 234

Q4) Please set out a clear and realistic delivery plan to demonstrate how you will

establish and deliver Staying Close in your locality (you may attach relevant plans if available). This should include:

- High level milestones for 2026-27.
- A detailed resource plan (capacity, expertise, roles and responsibilities).
- Risks, mitigations and contingencies.

Total word count: (Max 1000 words)

Purpose and scope
This delivery plan sets out how Oldham will establish and deliver Staying Close with clear milestones, capacity and roles, workforce development, dependencies, risks and contingencies, monitoring and evaluation, and sustainability actions.

A. High-level milestones (2026–27)
Q1 (Apr–Jun 2026): Mobilisation and set-up

- **Recruitment & onboarding**: Appoint Staying Close Team Manager, SC-Personal Advisers, Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker, Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator and Wellbeing and Participation Apprentice. Complete HR checks, induction, and IT setup.
- **Referral / Access**: Stand up single referral / access route; agree fortnightly multi-agency transition panel terms of reference and escalation pathways.
- **Pathways & documents**: Establish eligibility criteria, update assessment tools, include the Trusted Person / Staying Close offer in Oldham's Care Leaver Local Offer; update joint housing protocol and information-sharing agreements.
- **Training & practice standards**: Deliver core training (trauma-informed practice, tenancy sustainment, welfare rights, safeguarding transitions, cultural competence for UASC). Establish practice standards and working model.
- **Comms & engagement**: Brief internal services and external partners (Virtual School, SEND, Voluntary Sector, accommodation providers, FE/Skills, DWP, ICB/NHS); launch comms to young people, carers and homes.

Q2 (Jul–Sep 2026): Initial delivery and data foundations

- **Caseload build**: Begin support for first cohorts – Eligible / Relevant 16/18 – establish Trusted Person, support with Pathway Planning and contingency planning; Former Relevant 18 – 25 – prioritise those with complex needs, challenging circumstances, risk of homelessness, crisis reduction, NEET
- **Wellbeing & Skills Hub**: Launch group life-skills sessions (budgeting, cook-and-eat, tenancy sustainment), peer activities to address loneliness and brief wellbeing interventions.
- **Digital engagement**: Implement secure messaging/video check-ins for all young people but including those out-of-area and irregular-hours work; integrate with case management for audit trail.
- **Data dashboard**: Turn on KPI dashboard (accommodation sustainment, EET engagement, wellbeing indicators, crisis reduction, impact of work undertaken); produce Q2 outcomes report for Corporate Parenting Panel.

Q3 (Oct–Dec 2026): Consolidation and improvement

- **Scaling**: Expand access, embed joint work with ICB/NHS for mental health services and escalation where thresholds are challenging.
- **Audit & quality:** Complete quality assurance exercises; test the Staying Close / Trusted Person model fidelity (contact frequency, relationship-building, practical support) and impact of pathway planning.
- **Workforce CPD:** Run targeted masterclasses (motivational interviewing, tenancy risk planning, complex case conferencing).
- **Invest-to-save analysis**: Start measuring cost avoidance trends (e.g. temporary accommodation reductions, supported accommodation reductions, crisis health usage, reduced justice involvement).
- **Partnership forum:** Hold quarterly forum to address blockages and share best practice.

Q4 (Jan–Mar 2027): Evaluation and forward plan

- **Annual evaluation**: Combine KPI results, audit findings, cost-benefit insights, and young people's feedback into a full-year review; recommend improvements and commissioning changes.
- **Sustainability & scaling plan:** Confirm 2027–28 capacity and commissioning requirements; refine Local Offer content; align with budget setting.
- **Reporting**: Produce annual summary for Corporate Parenting Panel and DfE returns; share a young people-friendly report.

B. Detailed resource plan (capacity, expertise, roles, responsibilities)
Core team (indicative FTE mix):

- Staying Close Team Manager (1.0): Operational lead, performance/governance reporting, practice standards, partnership coordination. Establish, develop and maintain a multi-agency Care Leaver Hub.
- SC-Personal Advisers/Trusted Persons (2.0): Identify Trusted Person and Pathway Planning support for young Eligible Care Leavers and provide additional support to Former Relevant Care Leavers, combining statutory PA and Trusted Person function,

reduced caseloads (up to 10), intensive relationship-based support, practical life-skills coaching, multi-agency coordination and pathway planning.

- Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker (1.0): Bridge between children's and adult safeguarding services; risk management, complex case conferencing, exploitation/risk assessments, safeguarding escalation.
- Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator (1.0): provide signposting to digital, app-based, helpline and face-to-face support to care leavers. Provide advice to recommend self-help, precautionary safety / crisis advice and provide a listening ear through the Trusted Person
- Wellbeing and Participation Apprentice (1.0): Promote participation and engagement activities, support wellbeing assessments, support referrals to AMHS/VCSE services; staff consultation and reflective practice.

C. Workforce development (quality, supervision, wellbeing)

- Induction & core training: Trauma-informed practice; motivational interviewing; tenancy sustainment and budgeting; welfare rights/DWP SPOCs; safeguarding transitions; cultural competence (UASC); mental wellbeing
- Supervision & fidelity: Monthly supervision (case-based and reflective), quarterly practice observation, and fidelity checks on Trusted Person delivery (in touch, goals tracked, outcomes).
- CPD & joint learning: Quarterly masterclasses with partners (ICB/NHS, housing, FE/Get Oldham Working, DWP); reflective sessions for complex transitions.

D. Digital engagement and information governance

- Tools: Secure messaging and scheduled video check-ins; simple micro-learning tools (budget prompts, tenancy tips).
- IG & consent: Privacy notices explained to young people; consent-based data sharing; GDPR-compliant partner agreements; safeguarding-led information sharing when risk indicates necessity.
- Access & equity: Offer digital alternatives for those with shift work, anxiety, or distance; retain face-to-face for relationship building and complex support.

E. Risks, mitigations, and contingencies

Key risks & mitigations:

1. Workforce capacity/retention: Reduced caseloads; targeted recruitment; agency/secondments backfill; wellbeing supports; succession planning.
2. Housing supply constraints: Joint housing protocol; early planning; private-sector engagement; explore rent-guarantor; prioritisation for highest risk; floating support to stabilise.
3. AMHS access/thresholds: In-house brief interventions; agreed escalation routes with ICB; case conferencing; advocacy; use of VCSE pathways while AMHS is pending.
4. Engagement and loneliness: Peer groups, mentoring, flexible digital/face-to-face options; Trusted Person outreach and practical hooks (cook-and-eat, moving-day support).
5. Data quality and timeliness: Standard templates, monthly QA, analyst oversight, feedback loops to practitioners, and data-literacy refreshers.

6. Financial pressures: Invest-to-save tracking; aligning spend to outcomes; mid-year adjustments with Corporate Parenting Panel oversight.
7. Safeguarding complexity: Transitional Safeguarding Officer coordination; formal escalation protocol; multi-agency meetings; contingency placements.

Contingencies:

- Process for emergency accommodation pathway for placement breakdowns; rapid access list and floating support.
- Staffing plan for demand spikes (bank/agency, temporary secondments).
- Service continuity via digital contact/remote delivery during disruptions.
- Critical incident protocol (safeguarding) with immediate senior notification and partner convening.

F. Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

- KPI set (quarterly): Accommodation sustainment rate (3/6/12 months), EET engagement and progression, wellbeing indicators (e.g. loneliness/self-rated wellbeing), crisis events (A&E, homelessness presentations), timeliness of assessments and Trusted Person allocation and in touch.
- Audit & young people's voice: Monthly case audits; quarterly surveys/focus groups led by the Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum; co-production actions logged and tracked.
- Governance reporting: Quarterly performance and finance reports to Corporate Parenting Panel; DfE returns; annual narrative and cost-benefit summary.

G. Sustainability and onward plan

- Embed in BAU: Integrate SC within Leaving Care workflows; pathways in the Local Offer; maintain joint housing and ICB agreements.
- Financial sustainability: Evidence cost avoidance (supported accommodation, crisis health, justice). Use findings to inform budget baselining and joint commissioning.
- Readiness for future duty: Keep alignment with national Staying Close progression, ensuring Oldham is positioned to meet evolving statutory requirements smoothly.

H. Dependencies and enabling conditions

- Corporate support: Ongoing cross-council backing (Children's Services, Housing, Adult Social Care, Finance, Legal, Comms).
- Partner commitment: Active engagement from ICB/NHS, DWP SPOCs, FE/skills providers, VCSE and housing partners.
- Data & systems: Reliable case management, dashboards, and IG processes; capacity for timely returns and analysis.
- Young people's participation: Consistent co-production via forums and feedback, influencing priorities and improvements.

Submitted word count: 1104

Section 4 - Costings

Please set out how you will use the funding to establish and deliver the offer. Costs should include the number of young people you anticipate will access support each year,. You will have received details of your costing allocation separately.

Sustainability models should be developed and you should evidence how you will realise Staying Close as an 'invest to save' opportunity. You should also consider where you can achieve economies of scale over the three years.

The Department reserves the right to clarify and challenge costs where it deems necessary.

Summary of costs

Financial year	**2026-27**	**2027-28**	**2028-29**
DfE Funding Allocation (see email)	**£331,091**	**£331,091**	**£331,091**
Number of young people	**180**	**180**	**180**
Indicative cost per young person	**£1839**	**£1839**	**£1839**

Breakdown of costs

Please set out a detailed breakdown of your proposed costs. These costings should provide reasonable assurance that your delivery proposal and delivery of your proposed Staying Close model can be provided within the funding allocation.

Area of spend	**Detail**	**2026-27**	**2027-28**	**2028-29**
Workforce – Team Manager	Salary costs and oncosts	**£71,560**	**£71,560**	**£71,560**
Workforce – Staying Close Personal Adviser x 2	Salary costs and oncosts	**£98,820**	**£98,820**	**£98,820**
Workforce – Transitional Safeguarding Social Worker	Salary costs and oncosts	**£55,520**	**£55,520**	**£55,520**

Workforce – Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator	Salary costs and oncosts	**£49,410**	**£49,410**	**£49,410**
Wellbeing & Participation Apprentice	Salary costs and oncosts	**£30,520**	**£30,520**	**£30,520**
Establish Care Leaver Hub	Resources, materials, equipment costs	**£10,000**	**£10,000**	**£10,000**

Financial monitoring and assurance

Please set out below how you will monitor the use of funding to ensure it is used effectively and demonstrates good value for money.

Total word count: (Max 500 words)

Oldham Council will implement a robust, multi-layered financial monitoring and assurance framework to ensure that Staying Close funding is used effectively, transparently and delivers demonstrable value for money. Our approach draws on established Children's Services financial governance, strengthened by specific controls tailored to the Staying Close grant, outcome-based commissioning principles and rigorous oversight through corporate parenting governance.

1. Financial governance and oversight

Children's Services Finance will maintain a dedicated Staying Close cost centre with clearly coded expenditure lines for workforce, accommodation-related costs, operational delivery, resources, commissioning and evaluation. This will enable precise tracking of spend against the approved budget profile and ensure strong alignment with grant conditions.

A detailed **monthly budget monitoring report** will be reviewed jointly by the Staying Close Team Manager, Head of Service and Finance Business Partner. This will include variance analysis, forecasted outturn, narrative explanations for movements and early-warning indicators for potential overspend or underspend. Corrective actions will be agreed at each meeting and fed into the departmental finance cycle.

2. Internal controls and compliance

Standard financial controls will apply, including mandatory purchase order (PO) processes, delegated decision-making thresholds, and audit trails for all expenditure. The Staying Close Team Manager will have responsibility for sign-off of day-to-day spending within their delegated limits, with any exceptional or one-off costs requiring authorisation by the Head of Service/

3. Assurance on workforce costs

Given that workforce represents the largest proportion of Staying Close expenditure, staffing structures and caseload capacity will be reviewed quarterly. Costed scenarios will ensure that any fluctuations in demand, recruitment delays or national pay-award pressures are monitored early. Workforce spending will be benchmarked against other Leaving Care service components to ensure proportionality and value for money.

4. Outcome-linked commissioning and value for money

Where external spending is required (e.g., wellbeing resources, group activities, specialist support), Oldham will use outcome-linked commissioning principles. Specifications will include measurable outputs such as improvements in independent living skills, wellbeing indicators or tenancy sustainment, ensuring expenditure is directly tied to impact.

Value-for-money analysis will incorporate:

- **Cost avoidance tracking**, including reductions in temporary accommodation use, crisis presentations, repeat homelessness and unplanned care episodes.

- **Unit cost monitoring** for key outcomes such as sustained EET engagement, tenancy duration, reduced NEET rates and improved mental wellbeing.

- **Sensitivity modelling** to test financial resilience against changes in referral volume or complexity.

5. Mid-year adjustments and continuous improvement
If monitoring identifies variances or emerging pressures, mid-year budget re-profiling will be undertaken with Finance and reported to Corporate Parenting Board. Adjustments may include reallocating underspend to high-impact interventions, strengthening workforce capacity or investing in preventative supports that reduce downstream cost pressures.
Finally, financial learning—including insights from audits, quarterly reviews, cost avoidance analysis and young people's feedback—will inform annual service redesign and long-term sustainability planning, ensuring Staying Close remains an efficient, high-impact and financially accountable component of Oldham's Local Offer.

Submitted word count: 471

Section 5 – Contextual information and number of young people to support
Part A -

Please provide any contextual information that specifically links to your Staying Close offer. This could include information about your LA and locality, your broader care leaver offers, number of children's homes, number of and the specific needs of your young people and your approach to multi-agency working.

Total word count: (Max 500 words)

Oldham's Staying Close offer is being developed within a distinctive local landscape shaped by complex socio-economic pressures, a growing cohort of young people with high support needs, and long-established multi-agency partnerships committed to improving outcomes for care leavers. Oldham is characterised by areas of significant deprivation, a younger-than-average population, and persistent challenges relating to housing availability, health inequalities and mental wellbeing. These contextual factors directly influence the way care leavers transition to adulthood and therefore underpin the design and priorities of our Staying Close model.

The borough currently has a mixed accommodation and care estate, including local authority, voluntary sector and private children's homes, as well as a diverse range of supported accommodation providers operating under the joint housing protocol. Young people leaving care in Oldham often face acute barriers in securing and sustaining accommodation, with pressures on social housing, variable quality in the private rented sector and rising costs of living. Our Staying Close model therefore places a significant emphasis on tenancy sustainment, contingency planning, crisis prevention and early identification of risks that could lead to homelessness, aligning with young people's feedback that "housing stability" and "being able to cope alone" are their top priorities.

Oldham's care leaver population also presents with a wide range of specific needs, including emotional and mental health difficulties, disrupted education, experiences of trauma, exploitation risks, and social isolation. A proportion of our cohort includes young people with SEND needs, those who have experienced exploitation (CCE/CSE), young parents, care leavers who have been in secure or custodial settings, and former Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). UASC in particular benefit from culturally sensitive support, language access, community-building opportunities and help navigating complex immigration or legal processes. These nuanced needs inform our enhanced Staying Close offer, including the Trusted Person, the Mental Wellbeing Care Navigator, and our targeted wellbeing and life-skills support.

Oldham has a long history of multi-agency working, and Staying Close will integrate fully within these established partnerships. Our joint housing protocol, the Corporate Parenting

Partnership, the ICB/NHS mental health collaboration, the Virtual School, Youth Justice Service, DWP Care Leaver SPOCs and local VCSE partners all contribute to shared pathways and a consistent local offer. Feedback mechanisms through the Children in Care Council, the Care Leaver Forum and wider participation structures ensure continuous co-production. Young people have repeatedly emphasised the importance of accessible mental health support, practical help in moments of crisis, opportunities to build peer networks, and a smoother transition into adult services. These insights have strongly shaped the operational model and core priorities of Staying Close.

Given the size of Oldham's care leaver population and the phased nature of support, we anticipate supporting **approximately 70 young people each year**, recognising that duration, intensity and timing of engagement will vary. This includes Eligible/Relevant young people from age 16 who benefit from early planning, and Former Relevant young people up to age 25 whose welfare requires continued or re-engaged support.

Overall, Oldham's contextual environment—marked by high need, strong partnership foundations and clear feedback from young people—creates both the imperative and opportunity for a robust, relationship-led Staying Close model that strengthens safety, stability and long-term life chances.

Submitted word count: 523

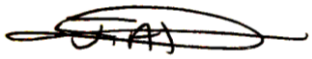
Part B - Number of young people your Staying Close offer will support

Please set out the number of young people you aim to support in each delivery year. (We accept this is an indicative number and recognise that young people will need to access the support at different times and may require the support for different length of times).

	2026-27	**2027-28**	**2028-29**
Number of young people	**30**	**40**	**50**

Section 6 – Declaration

Please complete the below declaration, to be signed by both the LA's bidding officer and the Director of Children's Services (DCS).

DECLARATION* (Please complete in block capitals) Signatures must be either be submitted electronically or scanned in.	
I confirm that the information given in this application is true and complete; that, if successful, the local authority will administer any grant in accordance with the letter supplied by the Department for Education.	
Full name:	NICK WHITBREAD
Position (Job Title):	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – CORPORATE PARENTING
Date:	19TH JANUARY 2026
Contact details including email address:	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE LEVEL 8 SPINDLES SHOPPING CENTRE OLDHAM OL1 NICK.WHITBREAD@OLDHAM.GOV.UK
Signature:	
Countersigned (by the DCS):	 JULIE DANIELS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – OLDHAM CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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Report to CABINET

Greater Manchester's Integrated Settlement for Education, Work and Skills

Portfolio Holder: Councillor M Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and Councillor F Hussain, Cabinet member for Business Enterprise and Employment

Officer Contact: Jon Bloor, Assistant Director, Employment and Skills, Paul Tinsley, Interim Director of Education and Early Years

Report Author: Amanda Youlden, Post 16 and Skills Lead

March 2026

Reason for Decision

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is currently working with each of the ten local authorities to determine how devolved funding will operate. This activity is taking place with teams across the Council and has implications for various services and choices that the Council will want to make. This is part of the latest devolution deal and includes an integrated settlement that allows GMCA to prioritise areas of activity to deliver the GM Strategy and constituent policies, including Get GM Working, Live Well and Local Growth Plans.

This report specifically relates to an initial tranche of Integrated Settlement (IS) funding that is being allocated for Education, Work and Skills via GMCA and the position known to officers at the time of writing.

The report outlines the funding confirmed to Oldham from GMCA at this stage for extensions to 3 projects currently being funded in the Oldham area.

Request to accept the funding and permission extend associated contracts for additional Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) support (forms part of Targeted Specialist Services and Support (TSSS) contract), year 2 of economic inactivity trailblazer funding and associated projects and WorkWell Vanguard for the financial year 2026/2027.

Advising members that GMCA have made the decision to cease funding a fixed term post, in addition to the IS. GMCA suggest that the post is continued to be funded by this current allocation, if Local Authority's (LA's) choose to do so.

The report outlines the proposal for the allocation of the funding, and the intention of Officers to primarily secure the associated posts within the education, work and skills delivery teams that have been affected by the move across to the IS and the decisions GMCA have made in relation to the level of funding and allocations. The delivery teams affected are Action Together, Get Oldham Working, Positive Steps and Post 16 Service.

Advising members that further funding is to be allocated to Education, Work and Skills via the GMCA IS. Allocations not yet determined and will advise members when Officers are made aware.

Recommendations
Members accept the additional funding to deliver the extensions to the three schemes, namely NEET support, Trailblazer and WorkWell Vanguard, and the proposed use of the funds that support Oldham residents.

Members agree to sign the grant funding agreement issued by GMCA.

Members agree that each of the three funds bear the cost of the Education, Work and Skills Co-ordinator post previously funded by GMCA.

Members to note the change to grant funding mechanism for education, work and skills funding via the GM Integrated Settlement.

Greater Manchester's Integrated Settlement for Education, Work and Skills

1 Background

1.1 The Greater Manchester Integrated Settlement is a funding framework that provides £630 million to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), allowing greater flexibility in funding services and a localised view of where support is required.

1.2 The integrated settlement replaces a system of separate funding pots from different government departments into the Greater Manchester economy, including funding for adult skills, employment support, economic inactivity trailblazer and funding identified for NEET (not in education, training or employment) support for young people.

1.3 An outcomes framework has been established to measure the impact of the funding on local residents and services.

1.4 Whilst the wider integrated settlement covers a variety of funding pots across Local Growth and Place, Local Transport and Housing regeneration and retrofit. This report deals only with the funding relating to IS allocations for education, work and skills.

2 Current Position

2.1 In December 2025, GMCA received approval from their Treasurer to expedite funding requests totaling £22.6 million that were requested to ensure key local employment and skills provision remains in place for 2026/27. This funding covers the following activity in Oldham:

- Economic Inactivity Trailblazer - £566,475
- Locality Led NEET - £480,000
- WorkWell Vanguard - £381,475

2.2 Previous reports that outline the three projects are attached at item 13.

2.3 In addition to confirming the above funding, GMCA confirmed they would no longer be providing additional funding for the Education, Work and Skills Co-ordinator post that has been funded for the past two financial years. GMCA's expectation is that LA's fund this post from the £1,427,645 allocation above.

2.4 GMCA has now confirmed that funding for two other work and skills programmes currently delivered in Oldham has now ceased. These are Support to Succeed, sub-contracted to deliver in Oldham by Get Oldham Working and Community Grants, delivered by community groups across Oldham and managed pan-GM by WEA.

2.5 The removal of the three projects effectively removes £969,567.36 (£536,899.96 Community Grants, £52,667.40 EWS Co-ordinator and £380,000.00 Support to Succeed) from Oldham to support residents into employment and skills.

2.6 Further funding is expected to be received for education, work and skills delivery in Oldham from the IS, however this has not yet been confirmed by GMCA and we await future decisions on these allocations.

2.7 Previously, each funding stream was passported to localities separately, with a separate requirement for approval, grant agreements and monitoring arrangements and requirements. GMCA, taking into account the feedback from LA's and their own departments on the unnecessary additional workload the additional funding streams create they intend to streamline processes, providing one integrated funding settlement to each Local Authority, therefore minimising the administrative and monitoring processes and associated costs

2.8 The grant agreement that this report deals with is only in relation to the provision outlined at 2.1. Further reports on the wider IS allocation will follow when detail emerges.

2.9 GMCA expect that this funding will support the delivery of existing programmes of work during this transitional year, whilst Greater Manchester moves across to the IS model of funding. Accepting the funding and agreeing this model gives Officers time to work with GMCA to influence the shaping of the model understand how the new model will be implemented and ensure Oldham is ready implement the employment and skills support via the IS in a seamless way and ensure residents are not affected.

2.10 The primary function of the proposed model of funding is to secure existing staff working in the wider Oldham partnership of work and skills. The model allows us to continue to deliver services at no detriment to Oldham residents and retains the expertise developed in Oldham. This provides GMCA the time to fully develop Oldham's allocation (as per 2.6) and allows Officers the next 12 months to develop a model of delivery that works for Oldham residents.

Empower Oldham	£461,769.00
Work Well Vanguard	£236,200.00
Trailblazer (One Front Door)	£239,267.00
Trailblazer (Volunteering into Employment)	£65,000.00
Trailblazer (GOW Healthy)	£60,000.00
Support to Succeed	£233,052.00
Work and Skills Co-ordinator	£52,667.40
Contingency	£79,689.60
	£1,427,645.00

2.11 The required monitoring for the three projects has not yet been agreed or made available. Officer's understanding from GMCA is that monitoring requirements will be in line with previous year's expectations.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1: We accept the extension to the funding up to 31 March 2027 and continue to deliver the three projects, and adjust the funding to secure the internal post. This option secures additional support for residents in Oldham that is not funded by Council funding.

3.2 Option 2: We decline the extension to funding up to 31 March 2027. This option effectively removes existing provision, resource and support for residents.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1 is Officer's preferred option. This option secures additional funding and therefore support for residents that would not normally be available.

5 Consultation

5.1 No consultation is required or has been undertaken. There are no declared interests.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 This report seeks approval to accept GMCA funding of £1,427,645 and to extend the related contracts that provide additional support for young people who are NEET through the TSSS contract. It also requests approval to continue year two of the Economic Inactivity Trailblazer funding and its associated projects, as well as the WorkWell Vanguard programme, for the 2026/2027 financial year. The proposed model of funding is included in the table in para 2.10.

6.2 GMCA has indicated that the funding allocation is intended to maintain delivery of the current programme portfolio throughout this transitional year, pending Greater Manchester's move to the new Investment Strategy (IS) funding model. Acceptance of this funding will ensure continuity of service without requiring additional Council resources and will mitigate the financial risk of programme disruption during the transition period.

6.3 Agreeing to operate within the proposed model will also provide Officers with the necessary time and capacity to work with GMCA on the design and implementation of the IS framework. This will support financial planning, enable clearer forecasting for future years, and ensure Oldham is fully prepared to deliver employment and skills support under the new IS arrangements. This approach minimises the risk of unfunded pressures emerging and protects residents from any service interruptions linked to the funding model change.

6.4 As part of this funding offer, GMCA has confirmed it will no longer directly fund the Education, Work and Skills Co-ordinator post previously funded for the last two years. GMCA's expectation is that Local Authorities fund the post from within their IS allocation. The proposal in this report is that the cost of this post (£52,670) is apportioned across the three funding streams on a proportional basis. This approach avoids creating an unfunded budget pressure for the Council.

(Catherine Dunkerley – Accountant)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Acceptance of the funding is lawful provided that the Council enters into and complies with the associated grant funding agreement. The agreement should be reviewed to ensure clarlity on the permitted use of the funds, reporting obligations, clawback provisions, any subsidy control considerations prior to execution.

7.2 The proposed use of part of the allocation to fund the Education, Work and Skills Co-ordinator post is permissible, provided this is consistent with the grant conditions. HR should be consulted so that any appointment is made on a fixed term basis aligned to the funding period and to ensure it does not create employment liabilities beyond that period unless further funding is secured.

(Pamela Nsofor – Solicitor)

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 There are no concerns with accepting grant money into the Council. Once grant money has been received by the Council then it becomes Council money, so how that is utilised is subject to the Council's internal requirements such as the CPR's. If the money is awarded to providers as a grant, then there are no procurement implications.

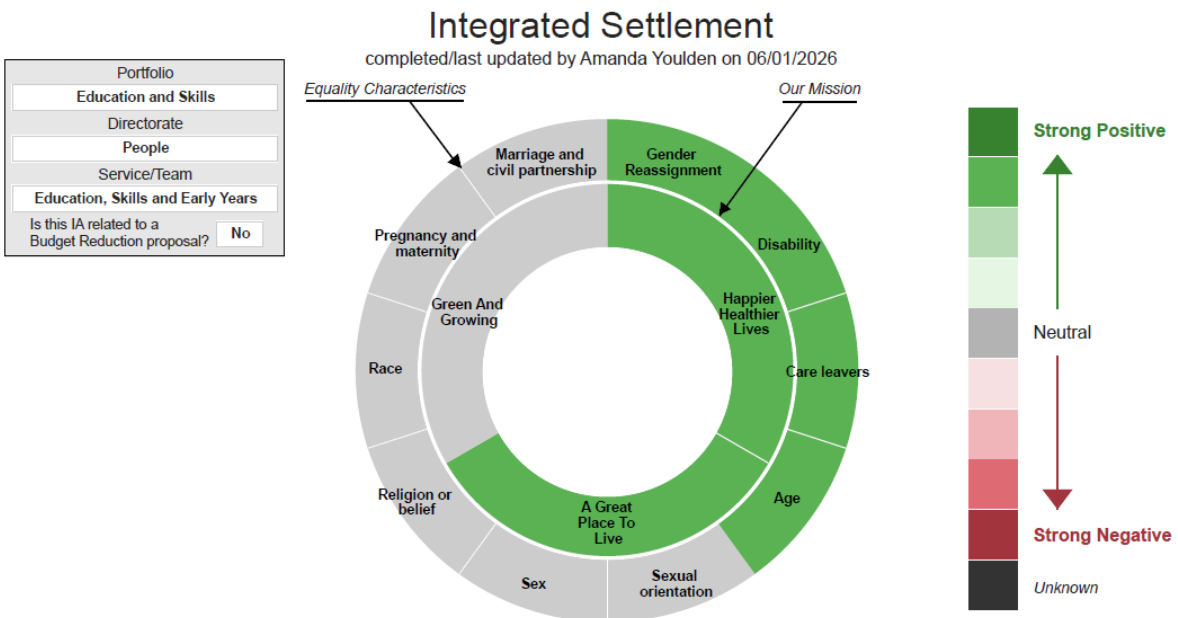
8.2 However, Subsidy Control may need to be considered. A grant does not require the grantee to deliver any services or goods and therefore does not constitute a contract for services. If a contract is required then spend would need to be compliant with the CPR's. The Business Unit should seek support and guidance from CPU for any spend over £30k (inc. VAT) that is not issued as a grant.

8.3 The TSSS contract was awarded for 7 years (3+2+2) under PCR2015 starting April 2025 with a value of £3,111,300, so in theory up to £1.55m could be added over the life of the contract and remain below 50% modification. Modifications would be governed by PCR2015.

(James England, Procurement Manager)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1



10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 CYP-02-26

12 Background Papers

12.1 N/A

13 Appendices

13.1 Cabinet Report accepting original UKSPF NEET funding.

CommitteeReport
UKSPF NEET August

13.2 Cabinet Report accepting extension of NEET funding.

Additional UKSPF
Skills Funding Alloc

13.3 Cabinet Report accepting Year 1 Economic Inactivity Trailblazer funding

DWP Trailblazer
Cabinet Report - 16t

13.4 Cabinet Report accepting WorkWell Vanguard funding

Greater Manchester
WorkWell Partnersh

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Report to CABINET

Special Education Needs (SEN) Travel Assistance Service – DPS Contract Extension

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member for Education, Early Years and Skills

Officer Contact: Matt Bulmer, Director of Education, Early Years and Skills

Report Author: Stuart Edwards, SEND Travel Assistance Manager

Email: stuart.edwards@oldham.gov.uk

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

The current Special Educational Needs Transport Services Dynamic Purchasing System was awarded for a period of 5 years from 1 September 2022 until 31 August 2027. This report seeks to extend d the current Special Educational Needs Transport Service DPS Contract from August 2027 until 23 February 2029. This forms part of the transition from the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 under which the DPS was awarded to the new Procurement Act 23 and can only be up to the permitted/advertised value of £17.5m.

Executive Summary

The report details the tender allocation process completed in February 2022 (routes commenced in September 2022). It also outlines the current provision of Home to School Transport, provided by the SEN Travel Assistance Team

Recommendations

Cabinet is required to authorise the extension to the current Special Educational Needs Transport Service Contract.

Cabinet 23rd March 2026

Special Education Needs (SEN) Travel Assistance Service – Contract Extension

1 **Background**

1.1 The SEN Travel Assistance Team currently provide home to school & college transport for a total of approximately 750-800 children and young people attending between 50-60 schools/colleges both within and outside the borough of Oldham (In 2022 this figure was approx. 600-650). The transport required includes mini-buses, tail lift/ramp vehicles, saloon cars, Eurocabs and Hackney Carriage vehicles provided by a mixture of Public Service Vehicles ("PSV's), Private / Public Hire.

It is the Local Authority's statutory function to provide travel assistance to those children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities or mobility issues that are eligible according to the SEN Travel Assistance Policy (March 2025). The transport service operates over 190 school days as determined by the School Holidays Calendar and considering other occasional days determined by individual schools governing bodies. All pupils with SEN are provided with free travel assistance, in accordance with the Council's current Travel Assistance Policy (March 2025), IPSEA Legal guidance and the Education Act 1996.

The provision of transport is determined by the needs of the individual pupil. Those with severe and complex health, physical or educational needs can be transported by either individual taxis or adapted vehicles. Children or young people with less severe needs ordinarily travel via a multi-passenger minibus/PSV vehicle.

The SEN Travel Assistance Policy aims to ensure that all pupils eligible to access transport, will receive the appropriate provision which meets their needs. When assigning the appropriate provision to be provided, the Transport Moderation panel consistently applies the following principles:

- The aim of the service is to support parents, not absolve them of their responsibility to ensure their child attends school on time with regular attendance.
- The SEN Transport team ensures all arrangements put in place shall be cost-effective, so the Authority receives value for money.

- Wherever possible, the provision provided will look to build and promote independence, to help prepare children and young people for later life.
- The health, safety and well-being of the children and young people will remain paramount.

2 Current Position

2.1 The dynamic purchasing system (DPS) is used for procuring and awarding routes which are issued as mini competitions and accessed by suppliers via the Chest. Both a quality assurance score and price check are used to ensure that operators offer value for money for the local authority.
There are currently 24 contractors providing specialist vehicles and qualified drivers to undertake the service. All contractors submitted competitive pricing based on transport being operational for 38 weeks of the year.

The DPS was procured and awarded in 2022 on a 5-year basis with no **extension** period. The initial contract period started on 1st September 2022 and will end on 31st August 2027; the subsequent call off contracts also follow the same duration.

The estimated costs associated with awarding the initial 5-year contract was £17,500,000. During the extension period a full-service review will take place with the intention of re-procuring the DPS in advance of a new contract from 24 February 2029. The maximum cost will be £4.1m for the 2025/26 academic year. This is as of 01.09.25 and based on 156 routes operating 190 days

All tender submissions must be submitted via the chest and evaluated by both Procurement and Transport. The current number of routes as of 5th September 2025, the Council has been able to award is 156.This is a reduction of 60 routes compared to September 2024 (216 routes) mainly due to a Post-16 policy change and the increased amount of Personal Travel Budgets (PTB's) being offered to parents/carers. 255 parent/carers receiving a PTB compared to less than 50 in 2022.

In accordance with the Council's CPRs and Procurement Regulations, Oldham Council will put out to tender, routes for home to school transport for children and young adults under the existing DPS. The procurement and full tender process for the award of a new framework for these services will need to begin in 2028 in order that the contract is awarded and can commence as of 24 February 2029.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1**: To agree to apply the proposed extension to the current DPS which has and continues to work well in terms of a compliant solution for the requirements which are needed both ad-hoc and as a larger project in advance of the start of a new academic year.

Option 2: That the extension is not approved. If the DPS were to expire as of its original planned expiry date, our procurement team advise there is no alternative type of framework which will be as well suited to the requirements due to the changes in Procurement Regulations applying from February 2025. These are further described in the procurement comments below. Once expired,

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1, It is recommended that the option to extend the current DPS for SEND Transport is agreed.

5 Consultation

5.1 Consultation with the Commercial Procurement Unit (Angela Porter/Jasmin Banks-Lee) SEND Senior Management Team (Paula Green – Head of SEND & Inclusion) (Katie Charlton – Assistant Director SEND & Inclusion) and (Stuart Edwards – SEND Travel Assistance Manager).

Consultation at DMT on 9th September 2025.

Consultation at SMT on 22nd September 2025.

Portfolio Holder, Cllr Mohon Ali fully briefed and has had sight of the full report.

6 Financial Implications Suggestion TBC

The preferred option is Option 1, to award an extension to the current DPS for SEND transport, from the current expiry on 31st August 2027 to 23rd February 29, this being the maximum permitted end date for the transition of DPS contracts to 'Dynamic Markets', this is seen as the most pragmatic approach to the impending changes, the Service is proposing to keep the service specification as is.

The 2025/26 budget for Contract Hire of Vehicles. (R33020 37113) is £5,825k, against which at month 6 the service is showing a provisional pressure of £70k, a more accurate forecast for the remainder of the financial year will be available for month 7 when all the Autum Term routes have been procured and billed. The provision of home to school transport is kept under constant review form both an operational and financial perspective in an effort to minimise cost and maximise value for money and there is potential for changes to service provision and entitlement before the commencement of the contract extension in September 2027.

Victoria Hayes Senior Accountant

7 Legal Implications

7.1

The report notes that the extension of the DPS complies with the relevant Regulations and is a permitted modification under those provisions. The report author/SRO must ensure that each award going forward is preceded by a DDR or Cabinet Report at that time to authorise the spend and that all relevant notices are issued/published. The report author has confirmed continued compliance with the Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.

Rebecca Boyle – Corporate Group Solicitor

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 Under the Procurement Act 23, Dynamic Purchasing Systems are replaced by 'Dynamic Markets', and these will not allow for below threshold awards (rounds of competition) which will continue to be required for the Special Education Needs (SEN) Travel Assistance Service where there are 'only' below threshold awards. These is widely recognised by Local Government and Cabinet Office as a barrier for services such as SEN Transport.

DPS contracts established under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 will continue to operate under those Regulations until the end of the transitional period on 23 February 2029, provided they do not expire before this date. Given the current DPS expires 31 March 2025, the most pragmatic approach to these upcoming changes will be to extend the existing DPS to the end of the transition period. The service is seeking to keep the service specification as is.

As per regulation 32(27) the Council, as the Contracting Authority, was required to specify the validity period for the DPS in the call for competition. The validity period specified was 5 years. There was no scope for extension.

Regulation 34(28) allows for the period of validity to be changed without terminating the DPS during the life of the original validity period provided the Council submits a notice of the kind used initially for the call-off competition for the DPS.

This means that, subject to approval being obtained to extend the term, all that is required is to issue a new contract notice.

The guidance on Transitional and Savings arrangements provides at paras 19 & 20:

19. The transitional and saving regulations set out that any dynamic purchasing system and qualification system established under the previous legislation must come to an end as set out when they were established, or by 23rd February 2029 (four years after the new regime comes into effect), whichever is earlier. Any contract awarded under such an arrangement will continue until it comes to an end and be managed by the previous legislation (even if the dynamic purchasing system or qualification system has terminated prior to that point).

20. The regulations restrict the ability to extend a dynamic purchasing system or qualification system awarded under the previous legislation (see, for example, as might arise under PCR regulation 34(28)) by providing that any dynamic purchasing system or qualification system extended after the Act comes into force can only be extended in the first twelve months after the Act comes into force and cannot be extended beyond 23rd February 2029.

The Act came into force on 24 February 2025 and so this extension falls within the above period. The Procurement Act 2023 Commencement No.3 Regulations make clear via Regulation 5, that a modification to an existing DPS let under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 can be made, up until 23 February 2026. Any DPS let under the PCR must expire by 23 February 2029.

Regulation 72(1)(e) of the PCR justifies the extension to the DPS as the criteria have been met. The extension has not rendered the DPS materially different in character, the admission of candidates has not changed, the economic balance between parties has not shifted, and the scope of the DPS has not been extended.

The extension to the DPS must continue to follow the prescribed process set out within it.

No direct awards are permitted under the DPS, a competitive round of tender is a mandatory requirement for each award. This along with the ability to add new suppliers at any time is why a DPS is more flexible and still allows current value for money tests.

Jasmin Banks-Lee, Head of Commercial Procurement Unit

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

9.1 No

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 EDS-01-26

12 **Background Papers**

12.1 Education Act (1996)

IPSEA Legal Guidance/SEND Code of Practice

Travel Assistance Policy: for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access education | Oldham Council

13 **Appendices**

13.1 None

Report to CABINET

High Needs Provision in Mainstream Settings Capital Works (Brian Clarke Academy & Blue Coat School)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Officer Contact: Paul Tinsley (Director of Education, Early Years and Skills)

Report Author: Jason Hudson (Schools Capital Project Manager)

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

This report seeks cabinet approval for 2 capital projects that will offer additional places and enhance provision for pupils with additional needs who are based within the Cranmer Trust

It also seeks approval for the allocation of funding from the HNPCA and Basic Need Grant towards the schemes

Executive Summary

This report relates to 2 projects that will enhance existing provision and provide additional provision for pupils with additional needs. These proposals are now developed sufficiently for costs and proposals to be placed before Cabinet for a final decision.

These projects will create a total of 50 new places in mainstream secondary schools for children with additional needs

Currently the Local Authority has around £2.7m of Basic Need funding and £7.1m of High Needs Capital Allocation Funding. It is proposed that where projects will generate additional places these projects are funded from the HNPCA Grant provision

These developments reinforce Oldham's commitment to an inclusive system where specialist support is available earlier, within mainstream settings, reducing escalation of need and delivering better long-term outcomes for children and young people. This aligns directly with the government's vision that schools should be inclusive by design, with dedicated inclusion bases forming a core component of the future school estate.

Project Outlines and Recommendation

PROJECT ONE - Brian Clarke C of E Academy

Brian Clarke C of E Academy is an inclusive, co-educational, Church of England secondary school situated in Oldham Town Centre. The school caters to pupils aged 11–16. The existing capacity of

the school is eight forms of entry (8FE) equating to 1,200 pupils. As part of the Cranmer Education Trust, this academy is committed to inclusive education and already demonstrates strong SEND practice (Ofsted June 2025) and is a school of choice for families where children have SEND.

This proposal seeks funding to establish an Autism Education Resource Base (ERB). The ERB will address the increasing need for specialist, inclusive support for secondary students with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) in the borough. The base will provide a structured, nurturing environment within a mainstream secondary setting, enabling students with autism to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally while accessing a high quality, inclusive education close to home

This project proposal aims to deliver a new 2 storey extension which will include a dining extension and a **25 place Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)**, without major alterations to the existing building. The new RP will sit above an enlarged dining area and provide two classrooms, group and sensory spaces, staff areas, and necessary non net spaces.

The total cost of this project is estimated at £2.6m. It is proposed that **£1.5m** of this project is funded from the LA High Needs grant provision, the remaining costs will be funded elsewhere by the Cranmer Trust.

Attached: 5896 - RIBA Stage 2 Feasibility Report dated November 2025 (revision P01)

PROJECT TWO – Blue Coat School

Blue Coat School is an inclusive, co-educational, Church of England secondary school situated in Oldham Town Centre. The school caters to pupils aged 11–18. The existing capacity of the school is eight forms of entry (8FE) equating to 1,692 pupils, of which, the number on roll in the sixth form is 434. As part of the Cranmer Education Trust, the academy is committed to inclusive education and already demonstrates outstanding SEND practice as evidenced by Ofsted and also by the positive outcomes young people with SEND achieve year on year. The school already fully integrates the largest cohort of young people with EHCPs across all Oldham secondary schools into a fully inclusive and diverse curriculum. Therefore, the school is well positioned to develop a specialist ERB that is fully integrated with the life of the school.

This project proposal seeks funding to establish a Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) base (ERB). The ERB will address the increasing need for specialist, inclusive support for secondary students with SLCN in the borough. The base will provide a structured, nurturing environment within a mainstream secondary setting, enabling students with SLCN to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally while accessing a high quality, inclusive education close to home.

This project proposal aims to replace the existing ‘Toothill Block’ and deliver a new 2 storey stand-alone building which will include mainstream teaching areas and a **25 place Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)**. The new RP will provide classrooms, small SEN group area, staff areas, and necessary non-net spaces.

The total cost of this project is estimated at £3.2m. It is proposed that **£1.5m** of this project is funded from the LA High Needs grant provision, the remaining costs will be funded elsewhere by the Cranmer Trust.

Attached: 5895 - RIBA Stage 2 Feasibility Report v4.. dated February 2026

1 Background

1.1 Demand for resource based provision in secondary schools has risen substantially in recent years. The option recommended in this report provides an opportunity for the Council to provide funding to enhance SEND provision in line with its Corporate Priorities, to provide a great start and skills for life. The proposed provision at Brian Clarke and Blue Coat directly supports this national agenda by developing high-quality inclusion bases within mainstream settings.

1.2 In line with the government's 2026 Schools White Paper *Every Child Achieving and Thriving*, Oldham is committed to ensuring that children who have previously been sidelined are included and able to thrive within their mainstream communities. The White Paper sets out a national ambition to shift experiences "from sidelined to included" and ensure that all children can access high quality provision that meets their needs earlier and more effectively. This commitment is further reinforced by the government's 10-year plan to revitalise schools and colleges, which expects every secondary school to have an 'inclusion base', a safe, dedicated space enabling targeted support that bridges mainstream and specialist provision.

2 Procurement Implications

2.1 There are no procurement implications arising from the report.

3 Risk Assessments

3.1 The Council will require confirmation that academies have appropriate insurance in place before releasing funds for the works.

4 Current Position

4.1 The LA has a statutory obligation to create suitable school places for all children, including those with SEN and EHCPs. It is an ambition of the LA's SEND and Inclusion Strategy to increase places in mainstream settings for children with additional needs. This enables children to have their needs met within an inclusive education offer, leading to better outcomes and reducing reliance on costly independent provision outside the borough.

4.2 To ensure the long term sustainability of these inclusion bases and maintain effective control over admissions and associated costs, the Local Authority will establish clear Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the Cranmer Education Trust. The SLAs will set out admissions criteria, placement processes, expected outcomes and financial responsibilities, enabling consistent oversight of demand and ensuring placements remain appropriate and cost effective. This approach aligns with the national expectation that every secondary school will develop an 'inclusion base' as part of the 10 year plan to strengthen inclusive provision and improve outcomes for children and young people. Establishing robust SLAs will ensure Oldham delivers high quality, sustainable provision that supports our ambition for all children to thrive in mainstream settings wherever possible.

4.3 Oldham is ambitious for all children and young people, and we are determined to secure better outcomes through earlier, more effective support within mainstream schools. The creation of these inclusion bases strengthens local capacity, enabling children with complex needs to access tailored intervention while remaining part of their school community. This approach is aligned with national reform, which emphasises inclusive

education as the foundation for improving life chances and increasing engagement in school. By expanding high-quality, specialist support within mainstream settings, the council reduces reliance on costly independent placements, ensuring more children can have their needs met close to home

5 Options/Alternatives

5.1 Option 1: Approve the above capital investment for the projects listed above to deliver the ambitions of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027.

5.2 Option 2: Do not approve the projects and risk not fulfilling the above strategy.

6 Preferred Option

6.1 Option 1.

7 Consultation

7.1 All Primary and Secondary schools including all MATS (Multi Academy Trusts) that operate in Oldham.

8 Financial Implications (Capital)

8.1 The cost of works for both schools is circa £5.8m and the Council will fund up to a maximum £1.5m for each school by way of a grant agreement. This will be a charge to the Educational Capital Programme which will be funded from the Basic Needs and/or HNPCA Grant during 2026/27 and 2027/28. Both projects are part of an Academy Trust and as such can reclaim their own VAT, therefore any repayments to the school will be paid net of VAT. Only irrecoverable VAT will be funded by the grant payments.
As the works will be commissioned directly by the schools, there will be a need for a grant agreement to detail the amount of funding awarded and the drawdown arrangements as the scheme progresses. Release of funding will be in interim periods

The cost breakdown analysis of both schemes has been included in the Appendix Document RIBA Stage 2

Paula Buckley – Finance Manager

8.2 **Financial Implications – (Resources)**

The revenue costs for the proposed Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRP's) at Blue Coat and Brian Clarke Schools will be funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant effective from when the 2 units are operational. The High Needs Block covers funding to support provision for pupils and students with SEND who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in a range of provision including special schools, mainstream schools, alternative provision, and independent specialist provision. The funding also contributes towards council centrally retained expenditure for High Needs.

The opening of the SRP's, creating 50 additional places would result in £847k of required revenue funding per annum from the High Needs Block, split between base and high needs top up funding will in the first instance increase the pressure on the block which, pre any mitigation from the recently announced High Needs Sustainability Grant is currently forecast to be overspent by £32,919k at the end of 2026/27. This would be offset, in part, by savings in other areas of the High Needs Block where the pupils may be currently accessing funding.

Vicky Gibbons - Senior Accountant

9 Legal Implications

9.1 The proposal will benefit the students at the schools and further demonstrate the ongoing commitment by the Council to the education of the children of the Borough with particular emphasis upon the most vulnerable children in the borough.

Alex Bougatef - Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

9.2 S1 of the Localism Act 2021 give Local Authorities a general power of competence to do anything which an individual may do for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in their area.

9.3 The Council must be satisfied it can meet the objectives and terms and conditions and milestones of the funding imposed by the funding authority including any obligation to provide match funding and to monitor, keep any necessary records and file any necessary returns. Officers must also check the terms do not conflict with other funding conditions for the scheme/s or project/property already in place and ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and obtain any necessary Environmental Assessments.

9.4 Any works, services and goods procured by or on behalf of the Council must be procured in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and all other relevant regulations including, where applicable, the Financial Procedure Rules and Land and Property Protocol. Officers must work with legal colleagues to approve and formalise the terms of any grant agreement or MOU in conjunction with Finance and Audit colleagues.

9.5 The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and Project Manager must ensure that Subsidy Control is considered in consultation with Legal Services and that all relevant assessments are made and recorded, all relevant notices are published, and all relevant regulations and legislation is complied with to the satisfaction of the Section 151 Officer and in compliance with the Financial Procedure Rules of the Council. External advice may be needed to support these activities which will be a cost to the Project. A grant can amount to a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Therefore, a subsidy control analysis of the grant funding and what it will be used for is essential before payment of the grant. This process will be undertaken by the Project Team led by the SRO with support and input from Legal Services, Finance and other relevant officers.

9.6 In awarding any grants or passporting grant monies it is incumbent on the Council to consider the Subsidy Control regime and to comply with the relevant provisions. In the event that any grant is determined to be a subsidy, details regarding the same must be published within three months of award for all subsidies in excess of £100,000 and the Report Author and SRO will need to liaise with Finance and Audit colleagues in this regard.

9.7 The Transparency obligations of the Council must be complied with together with any Framework and procurement related obligations.

9.8 The terms of any proposed MOU/Grant Agreement must be reviewed and agreed by the SRO along with legal and finance colleagues. Provisions of note and/or provisions with associated risk should be highlighted to officers for consideration.

9.9 If any grant funds are to be spent on supplies, works or services, the Council must undertake any commissioning activity in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, incorporating relevant national procurement legislation.

9.10 The Report Author has confirmed compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules.

Rebecca Boyle – Corporate Group Solicitor

10 Equality Impact Assessment, including implications for Children and Young People

10.1 There are no negative implications for vulnerable groups or children and young people.

11 Key Decision

11.1 Yes

12 Key Decision Reference

12.1 EDS-02-26

13 Background Papers

13.1 SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027

14 Appendices

14.1 5896 - RIBA Stage 2 Feasibility Report dated November 2025 (revision P01) - BCA
5895 - RIBA Stage 2 Feasibility Report v4 dated February 2026 – BCS

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Report to CABINET

Tier 2 Provision for Vulnerable Children Capital Works (Kingsland)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mohon Ali, (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Officer Contact: Paul Tinsley (Director of Education, Early Years and Skills)

Report Author: Jason Hudson (Schools Capital Project Manager)
Emmett Patel (Kingsland School Headteacher)
Paula Green (Head of SEND and Inclusion)

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision
There is a requirement for further educational provision and services to meet the needs of highly vulnerable children and young people across Oldham, who experience significant difficulty in accessing mainstream education without specialist support, and therefore, have substantially poorer outcomes in comparison to those less vulnerable. Their difficulties in accessing mainstream education are a direct result of their challenging lives and Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities (SEND), with their primary areas of need often being Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Communication and Interaction (including speech and language difficulties).

Along with the clear moral, ethical and social imperative for better supporting our most vulnerable children and young people, the Department for Education (DfE) have published the SEND & Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan: *Right Support, Right Place, Right Time* (2023) that specifies tiers of provision that should be in place in Local Authorities nationally. There is a requirement to ensure that all of the tiers of provision and support suggested by the DfE that are needed within Oldham are available.

Project Outlines and Recommendations
In line with the SEND & AP Green Paper, the recommendation is for implementation of tier 2 support and provision for secondary aged children, commissioned from and provided by Kingsland School.

The project proposal is to replace a single storey derelict modular building (former Limehurst Youth Centre) with a new 2 storey modular building providing classrooms, practical workshops, meeting rooms, kitchen, staff areas, storage and w.c's for 36 pupils

The total cost of this project is estimated to be in the region of £1,237,500 (a total of **£1,361,250** when including 10% contingency). It is proposed that this project is funded by the LA Basic Need and/or HNPCA Grant.

Tier 2 Provision for vulnerable children

1 **Background**

1.1 Following the consultation of the SEND & Alternative Provision (AP) Green Paper (2022), several concerning themes emerged around the SEND & AP system including poor and inconsistent outcomes for many children and young people accessing AP. In response, the DfE have published the SEND & Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan. Relating to Alternative Provision, the DfE have discussed an AP system with a three-tiered approach: targeted early support within mainstream school (tier 1), time-limited intensive placements in an alternative provision setting (tier 2); and longer-term placements to support a return to mainstream or a suitable post-16 destination (tier 3)

1.2 This development also directly supports the strengthened national inclusion agenda set out in the 2026 White Paper Every Child Achieving and Thriving. The White Paper places a clear emphasis on shifting the system "from sidelined to included," ensuring that children with additional needs are supported earlier, remain connected to their mainstream school communities, and experience broader, more inclusive learning opportunities. By establishing a high-quality Tier 2 provision that enables short-term, time-limited interventions and reintegration support, this project aligns with the government's ambition to build a more consistent and inclusive SEND system, reducing exclusions through proactive support and ensuring vulnerable pupils receive the right help in the right place at the right time

1.3 This is all within the context of statistics recently published by the Department for Education showing that in the last academic year there has been an unprecedented increase in suspension and permanent exclusion nationally; the highest since records began in 2006.

1.4 Permanent exclusion and suspension data in Oldham is below. In line with regional and national data, rates of suspension and permanent exclusion in secondary schools in Oldham have increased at an unprecedented rate.

Year	Permanent Exclusions	Number of incidents of suspensions	Number of pupils suspended
21/22	43	2120	937
22/23	67	2872	1182
23/24	88	3921	1475

1.5 In the academic year 23/24, Kingsland School worked closely with the LA and funded two support services around exclusion and suspension in Secondary Schools in Oldham. These are known as the Secondary Outreach Service and the Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce. This has led to a reduction in exclusion and suspension, however exclusion and suspensions number remain high, with schools reporting that further Registered Alternative Provision is required

1.6 In addition, Oldham LA SEND Team is currently spending £1.2 million per year on externally provided Alternative Provision (AP). This funding comes directly from the high needs block of the DSG.

2 **Current Position**

2.1 In Oldham currently there is a tier 1 preventative service limited to primary aged children (Kingsland Primary Outreach Service) and a tier 3 school provision for secondary aged children and young people (Kingsland School's Pupil Referral Unit).

The current provision and support that is in the borough does not meet the requirements of the tiered approach set out in the SEND & AP Improvement Plan. Oldham's current SEND and Inclusion strategy, and Sufficiency Strategy both include the development of the 3 tiers of provision suggested by the DfE.

There is no Tier 2 provision for primary or secondary aged pupils unless unregistered Alternative Provision (AP) is commissioned from external providers

Oldham's tier 3 provision at Kingsland School's PRU has become overcrowded at its singular site with an increasingly unsustainable population. In addition, highly vulnerable children and young people who are permanently excluded within our borough are often more likely to be involved in community issues relating to serious violence and criminality. This leads to pupils at the PRU not always being able to access the full offer of provision and support at Kingsland School's PRU due to grave safety concerns relating to some children and young people being based at the same site at the same time. Additionally, this affects pupils' chances of reintegrating into mainstream settings following a placement of intensive support, as the tier 3 model within the SEND & AP Improvement Plan suggests.

To meet the requirements of the SEND & AP Improvement Plan, Oldham requires a tier 2 service that offers time-limited intensive placements in an alternative provision setting.

2.2 This will ensure greater early identification of SEND to reduce permanent exclusion and increase inclusion within the mainstream schools in the borough, informing better outcomes for more children and young peoples' lives. Earlier identification of additional needs at SEND support will also contribute to less Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being required, leading to better value within the SEND system which is currently leading to financial difficulty and unsustainability in many Local Authorities nationally.

2.3 Consultation with secondary schools in Oldham shows significant demand for tier 2 short term intensive placement in alternative provision settings to ensure better outcomes for their vulnerable children and young people and to enable them to stay in mainstream schools.

Suspension and exclusion data over the past several years indicates that the national picture around late intervention is prevalent within Oldham. Local secondary schools report that they have many pupils who would benefit from early identification and tier 2 provision due to the complexity of their additional needs and the presentation of their difficulties within mainstream settings. Further to this, schools report that they experience difficulty with children and young people who move into borough as 'difficult transfers' with a history of difficulty in school and suspension. Of the 13 local mainstream schools who responded to research by Kingsland School around Pupils at Risk of Exclusion (PARE). The PARE panel oversaw an average of 4 cases per week, which is **approximately 156 children and young people in Oldham identified as being at high risk of exclusion during the academic year 2024/25.**

Schools report that the PARE figures are representative of children and young people whose needs and presentation would be best met through a tier 2 intervention approach, whereby they could access short term placements that focus on building a plan and package of support around a child or young person, before reintegrating them to their mainstream school (of which they would remain dual registered throughout placement)

with advice and strategies given to schools to better meet their needs. Further evidence that schools require access to tier 2 placements is found in their use of unregistered Alternative Provision. Local secondary schools report that they are spending between **£20,000 and £550,000** per year on short term AP placements with unregistered providers, with a median average of **£100,000** per year. Of the 13 schools consulted, a total of 12 unregistered providers were identified as being commissioned by schools with running costs of **£150 - £285** per pupil, per day, with one provider charging **£120** per pupil per day if a certain number of places were commissioned at once.

Local headteachers have indicated that there is difficulty with the high cost for their pupils to access AP placements currently, but that there is significant demand for them in meeting the needs of pupils and reducing their risk of exclusion. A further issue reported by some schools is confidence around the use of unregistered providers of AP due to the difference in standards with regards to Ofsted. Kingsland is a state-maintained Ofsted rated good school under the same Ofsted framework applied to any mainstream school.

2.4 Kingsland School would be able to offer a tier 2 'Step Out' provision for children and young people to access short term placements. These placements would be for 6-12 weeks with a total of 36 children and young people able to access placement at the same time at a suitable site in Limeside (Currently a disused former youth center known as Limehurst).

Schools would be able to block purchase places or purchase them when needed when there is capacity in the provision. Schools would complete a referral form for support that would aid information sharing around the difficulties the child or young person has been experiencing and would therefore indicate the types of support that Step Out could offer. Each case would be met with a flexible, bespoke and individualised approach that followed a strong graduated response. The support on offer would include but not be limited to: SEND support plans, therapeutic work, support with regulation, trauma informed care and support plans, core subject work (ensuring pupils don't fall behind academically due to placement) and an engaging and wide range of vocational courses with qualifications. All the support that would be on offer has been designed in consultation with the 13 mainstream secondary schools involved in the AP research conducted by Kingsland School. Pupils would be dual registered and good contact with their schools would be encouraged through visits and review meetings. An individualised reintegration package would be offered at the end of placement that would include support for the pupils as well as their mainstream school.

The placements would be for pupils identified as being at risk of exclusion, pupils experiencing difficulty in school particularly around SEMH, as well as pupils with EHCP plans identified as requiring support. This would include children and young people who have EHCPs with Education Other Than A School (EOTAS) named as placement in their plans. This would also include (where appropriate) children and young people who move into the borough under the 'difficult transfer' category, as their schools could refer them into the service for placement if there was evidence of suspension, a presentation of challenging behaviors, risk of exclusion or additional needs around SEMH.

Kingsland School is uniquely placed to offer tier 2 placements in comparison to other alternative providers, as it not only has the experience, skills and specialism, but it is a registered and state maintained school. This contrasts with other local providers who are either fee paying independent special schools, or unregistered private providers. Kingsland School differs in that all its provision and services come under the current Ofsted framework that is applicable to all of the mainstream schools locally. As a state maintained school, Kingsland also does not generate any form of profit and therefore any charge to schools for services would be at cost to continue the tier 2 offer. Schools can have greater confidence that their pupils are accessing provision through a registered

school as well as benefitting from a more cost effective approach. This could lead to schools having more notional SEND funding available for their pupils and therefore contribute to saving within the local SEND system. Further cost saving implications for the SEND system include earlier identification of need and therefore, less likelihood of EHCPs being needed. As well as the Local Authority being able to commission high quality, short and longer term placements within the Step Out provision where appropriate for children and young people who have EHCPs (including EOTAS) at a greatly reduced cost in comparison to independent special schools and unregistered AP providers, leading to better value and resource allocation within the SEND system.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1; suitable site in Limeside (Currently a disused former youth center known as Limehurst). The cost implications for building works to make them suitable for the provision are as follows: TBC (but can be solely funded via the SEND Capital Provision Funding).

Kingsland 'Step Out' Provision would need to generate income for the costs incurred for staffing the buildings identified. A reasonable cost for schools of **£90** per pupil per day will generate **£615,600** income if the provision runs at full capacity across the year (38 weeks). If the provision only ran at 50% capacity across the year this would generate **£307,800,** which would still be cost effective for the purposes of the provision costs. Any additional income generated would fund the 'top up' element and fund further tier 1 and 2 provision in consultation with Oldham Local Authority.

Base funding would be required for 36 places to ensure sustainability of the provision and the employment of initial staff to start the provision. The base funding costs would be in line with how Additional Resource Provision is funded via the DSG and would cost £10,000 per place. Totaling £360,000. This would positively impact on the £1.2 million high needs spend that is currently funding LA commissioned unregistered AP that comes at a highly increased cost.

3.2 Option 2; To agree to the capital costs of part remodeling the building at the Limehurst site with SEND Capital Provision Funding, however, solely rely on income generation for the staffing costs.

3.3 Option 3; As 3.1 but with a lower base funding element to allow for a minimum staffing level for a fully functioning Tier 2 provision that can still provide quality and ensure sustainability. This would be calculated by availability of surplus DSG in the LA budget (estimated at 50% of base funding in 3.1 - £180,000).

This would lead to risks around not meeting the requirements of the SEND & AP Improvement Plan in that the tier 2 provision would not be strong and robust enough to meet the needs of secondary schools due to capacity. This would lead to a further need for tier 3 places being required in an already overcrowded PRU. There is also then a significant risk that there continues to be a lack of earlier identification of the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

There is a very imminent and high risk that Kingsland School's PRU would become completely unsustainable due to rising levels of exclusions and an already overcrowded school. This places Oldham Local Authorities AP at significant health and safety risks, as well as significant risk with Ofsted.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1

Nationally suspension and permanent exclusion are at the highest rates since records began. It is very often that the most vulnerable children, young people and families are affected by this. Furthermore, many minority groups continue to be overrepresented in AP settings that cannot offer the level of educational opportunity that mainstream settings can. The SEND & AP Green Paper highlighted many issues concerning the current SEND and AP system. Historically, support has often been too reactive and not proactive enough with early enough identification. The DfE have been very clear about the 3 tiers of support needed in Local Authorities nationally to redress the concerns highlighted in the Green Paper and are highly likely to become statutory under the coming White Paper. Further to the moral, ethical and social imperative to improve outcomes for more children and young people, option 1 gives Oldham the opportunity to offer the tier 2 approach that is an integral part of **'a vision for a society where every child and young person can succeed'** (DfE, SEND & AP Improvement Plan 2023).

5 Consultation

5.1 All Primary and Secondary schools including all MATS (Multi Academy Trusts) that operate in Oldham.

6 Financial Implications (Capital)

6.1 The cost of the associated works including a contingency of 10% is £1,361,250 and will be a charge to the educational capital programme 2025/26, which will be funded from the Basic Needs and/or HNPCA Grant. Any unspent budget will be returned to the provision budget. This school is OBC owned and as such can reclaim their own VAT

The cost breakdown analysis of the scheme has been included in the Appendix Document: Limehurst – 2 Storey BUDGET COSTS

Paula Buckley – Finance Manager

6.2 Financial Implications – (Resources)

This project will be funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The High Needs Block covers funding to support provision for pupils and students with SEND who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in a range of provision including special schools, mainstream schools, alternative provision, and independent specialist provision. The funding also contributes towards council centrally retained expenditure for High Needs.

Vicky Gibbons – Senior Accountant

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The proposal will benefit the students at the schools and further demonstrate the ongoing commitment by the Council to the education of the children of the Borough with particular emphasis upon the most vulnerable children in the borough.

Alex Bougatef - Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

7.2 Any contracts for the supply of works, goods or services must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and all relevant legislation/ regulations. All land transactions will need to comply with the Land and Property Protocol. All financial transactions must comply with the Financial Procedure Rules.

7.3 The report author has confirmed continued compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules, Financial Procedure Rules and Land and Property Protocol.

7.4 Legal issues and risks must continue to be reported, managed and mitigated through the usual finance and audit processes of the Council.

7.5 The Council must be satisfied it can meet the objectives and terms and conditions and milestones of funding imposed by the funding authority including any obligation to provide match funding and to monitor, keep any necessary records and file any necessary returns. Officers must also check the terms and do not conflict with other funding conditions for the scheme/s or project/property already in place. Officers are to work with legal, finance and audit colleagues to approve and finalise the terms of any grant agreement required and must comply with the terms of any consents given regarding the reallocation of grant funding.

Rebecca Boyle - Corporate Group Solicitor

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

8.1 There are no negative implications for vulnerable groups or children and young people.

9 Key Decision

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision Reference

11.1 EDS-03-26

12 Background Papers

12.1 SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027

13 Appendices

13.1 Limehurst – 2 Storey BUDGET COST

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Report to CABINET

Proposal to Undertake Statutory Consultation on the Establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)

Portfolio Holder: Cllr A Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Growth

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Executive Director for Place (Deputy Chief Executive, Place)

Report Author: Matt Bulmer, Project Director for Sportstown and Northern Roots

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

To enable Oldham Council to undertake the required statutory consultation on the proposed establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation, in order to test public and stakeholder support for a governance model intended to accelerate delivery of the Borough's regeneration programme and Live Well ambitions, before any final decision is taken on formal designation.

Executive Summary

Cabinet is asked to approve the commencement of formal statutory consultation on the proposed establishment of an **Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)**.

The MDC would be a statutory body, designated by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, operating within a defined Red Line Boundary (Mayoral Development Area), focused on accelerating delivery of Oldham's regeneration and development programme, including:

- SportsTown (Health, Sport Science & Innovation Campus)
- Town Centre regeneration (including Town Living Partnership sites)
- Cultural & Creative Quarter heritage assets
- Minewater Heat Network and Incubator
- Northern Roots (Phase 2)
- Strategic brownfield residential opportunities

The proposed MDC would support the delivery of:

- The Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) 2025
- Pride, Progress, Partnership: The Oldham Plan 2024–2030
- The Community Regeneration Partnership
- Oldham's Live Well ambitions

Cabinet approval is sought to:

- Approve commencement of a six-week statutory consultation

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Approve the commencement of formal statutory consultation on the proposal to establish an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation.
- Note that following consultation, a further report will be brought to Cabinet to consider the outcome and determine whether to support the Mayor of Greater Manchester in formally requesting designation from the Secretary of State.

Proposal to Undertake Statutory Consultation on the Establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)

1 Background

1.1 Oldham has secured over £100m of public sector investment in regeneration across the Town Centre and wider intervention areas. The development pipeline spans four intervention areas:

- SportsTown
- Town Centre
- Town Centre Adjacent Sites
- Northern Roots

1.2 Despite significant progress, delivery challenges remain, including:

- Land assembly complexity
- Funding gaps
- Market confidence
- Fragmented governance
- Infrastructure coordination
- Heritage asset viability

1.3 An options appraisal considered a range of delivery vehicles to address these challenges, including:

- Strategic Partnership
- Mayoral Development Zone
- Mayoral Development Corporation
- Other statutory and non-statutory models

1.5 The preferred option identified is a Mayoral Development Corporation, due to its statutory powers, governance clarity, and ability to accelerate regeneration across a defined geography

2 The Proposed Oldham MDC

2.1 Vision: to establish Oldham as Greater Manchester's first Live Well Regeneration Pilot, delivering place-based regeneration aligned to:

- Sport
- Health
- Education and Skills
- Housing
- Connectivity
- Energy transition

2.2 Red Line Boundary: The boundary has been informed by site location, land ownership and delivery alignment. The proposed boundary includes key regeneration sites across:

- SportsTown
- Town Centre core

- Cultural Quarter
- Eastern Edge / Mumps
- Northern Roots

2.3 Powers Proposed. The Council would retain plan-making and development management functions. The MDC would:

- Retain OMBC as Local Planning Authority (no transfer of development management powers)
- Have land assembly and CPO powers
- Have power to acquire, hold and dispose of land
- Hold and spend funds
- Provide discretionary business rates relief
- Undertake infrastructure delivery

3. Governance

3.1 As set out in Appendix A, the proposed structure comprises:

- Independent Chair
- Board (including Council Leader and Executive Member for Regeneration)
- Non-Executive Directors
- Executive Team (including MDC Project Director)
- Delivery Team

3.2 A Shadow Board would be established during 2026 pending formal designation.

4 Options/Alternatives Considered

4.1 A range of delivery vehicle options has been considered through a structured options appraisal process. These included:

Option A – Do Nothing / Continue with Existing Arrangements

Advantages:

- No additional governance structure
- No additional revenue cost for a new statutory body
- Retains full Council control

Disadvantages:

- Fragmented programme oversight
- Slower land assembly and infrastructure coordination
- Reduced ability to leverage external capital at scale
- Limited ability to create a single “front door” for investors
- Risk of reduced delivery pace across complex, multi-site pipeline

This option does not address the delivery challenges identified in the Business Plan, including land assembly, investor confidence, programme coordination and delivery acceleration

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Option B – Strategic Partnership Expansion

Expand the existing Town Living Partnership model into a broader Strategic Partnership structure.

Advantages:

- Builds on existing partnership model
- Potential access to private sector finance and expertise
- Less complex statutory route

Disadvantages:

- Primarily suited to defined development packages rather than a multi-sector regeneration geography
- Limited statutory powers (no standalone CPO powers)
- Would not provide the same convening power across health, sport, energy and housing
- Less visible signal of long-term commitment to market

The scale and complexity of the development pipeline extends beyond this partnership model.

Option C – Mayoral Development Zone (Non-Statutory)

A Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ) is a non-statutory designation supported by the Mayor.

Advantages:

- Lower complexity to establish
- May assist with branding and coordination

Disadvantages:

- No statutory powers
- Limited land assembly capability
- Reduced ability to accelerate infrastructure
- Does not materially change delivery tools available

This option would not alter the Council's statutory powers or provide additional delivery leverage.

Option E – Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) [preferred option]

An MDC is a statutory corporation designated by the Mayor.

It would:

- Operate within a defined Mayoral Development Area
- Hold land assembly and CPO powers
- Hold and deploy capital and revenue funding
- Provide business rates incentives
- Coordinate infrastructure and regeneration activity
- Convene cross-sector partners

This is best aligned to the scale and ambition of Oldham's regeneration programme

5. Preferred Option

5.1 The preferred option is to consult on the establishment of an Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (Option E)

5.2 This option is preferred because it:

- Provides statutory land assembly and CPO powers to support delivery at pace;
- Creates a unified governance structure across sport, health, housing, energy and town centre regeneration;
- Signals long-term commitment to market and institutional investors;
- Enables coordinated infrastructure delivery;
- Supports the positioning of Oldham as Greater Manchester's first Live Well Regeneration Pilot;
- Retains the Council as Local Planning Authority (development management and plan-making functions remain with OMBC)

5.3 The MDC model is proportionate to the scale of Oldham's development pipeline and reflects the commitment already secured from GMCA in principle to explore this route.

5.4 Consultation does not commit the Council to establishment but enables residents, businesses and stakeholders to formally comment before a final decision is made.

6 Consultation

6.1 As noted above, the designation of Mayoral Development Corporations is governed in Greater Manchester by the Localism Act 2011 Part 8, Chapter 2, as modified by the Schedule to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017 ("The Act").

6.2 This provides that the Mayor may designate a Mayoral development area only if consultation has been concluded in accordance with the Act. The proposed consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Act, which stipulates the following statutory consultees:

- Members of the GMCA;
- MPs whose parliamentary constituency contains part of the proposed area
- Each district council whose areas are within the proposed boundary (in this case Oldham); and
- Any other person whom the Mayor considers it appropriate to consult.

6.3 For the Oldham area, similar to the process for other MDC's in Greater Manchester, the consultation is proposed to be extended to all residents and businesses within the red line, and Council Members in the district for the proposed MDC area.

6.4 Accordingly, it is proposed that the consultation will also be publicly accessible through the GM Consult engagement platform, providing information about the proposal and appropriate supporting materials which will run for six weeks. The consultation materials will be prepared by Oldham Council and GMCA officers and hosted on the GM Consult website.

6.5 The name and boundary of the proposed MDC will be included as part of the consultation, as follows: Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation. If approved, it is proposed that statutory consultation will open during spring/summer 2026.

6.6 At the end of the consultation, if the Mayor and Council wishes to proceed, and designate the area as an MDC, the Mayor will notify the Secretary of State, who will then make the Order to establish the MDC.

6.7 Following consultation, Cabinet will receive a further report setting out:

- Summary of responses
- Recommended amendments (if any)
- Whether to support formal designation request

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The costs associated with the consultation will predominantly be staff time for which there is existing provision and the development of the proposals for which there is an existing commission.

7.2 Should the consultation result in a decision to develop the MDC there will need to be consideration of how the Shadow Board and the Board would be funded. Revenue costs have currently been estimated to be approximately £660k per annum. There are various options available that could potentially finance the Boards including the below:

- GMCA revenue support
- Oldham Council resource realignment
- Pipeline support funding
- Private sector leverage
- Homes England and Government funding streams

7.3 At this stage, the exact funding mix and the potential requirement for the Council to provide funding has not yet been determined. Should the proposals develop further work would need to be undertaken to determine the exact structure of the Shadow Boards/Boards and determine the resourcing requirements. There is no current identified additional funding within the Council's current revenue budget/Medium Term Financial Plan.

(James Postle)

8. Legal Implications

8.1 An MDC is established under:

- Localism Act 2011
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2017

8.2 The Mayor of Greater Manchester must:

- Undertake public consultation
- Consider responses
- Notify the Secretary of State
- Secure Parliamentary approval via Establishment Order

8.3 The Council remains Local Planning Authority.

9. Procurement Implications

9.1 None at this stage.

10 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will follow should the MDC proceed post-consultation.

11 **Key Decision**

11.1 Yes

12 **Key Decision Reference**

12.1 EDS-14-25

13 **Appendices:**

1: Proposed boundary

2.Options appraisal

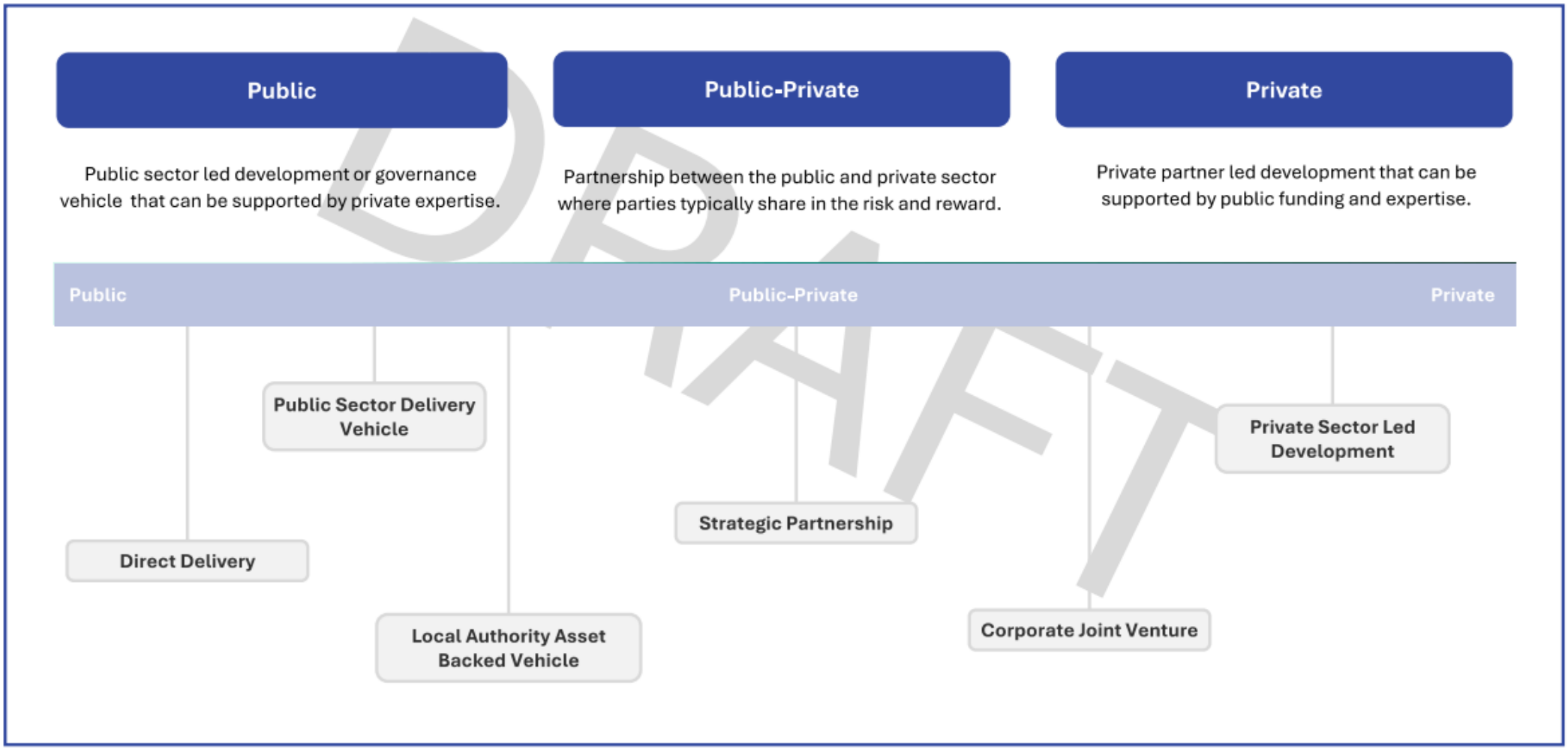
Appendix 1: Proposed boundary



Appendix 2:Options analysis

Options Analysis | Delivery Vehicle Options

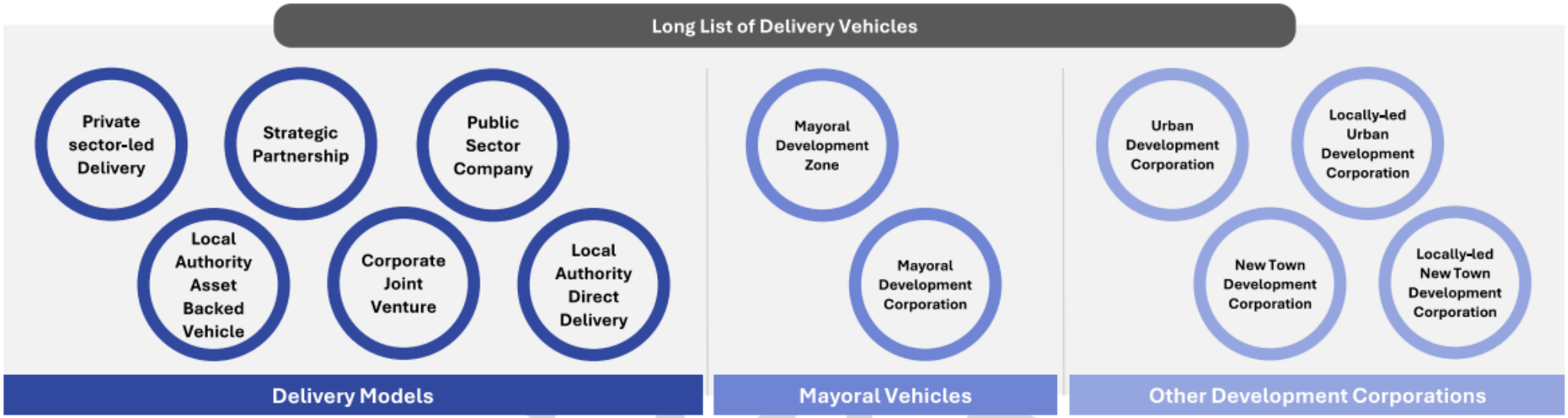
A range of Delivery Vehicles have been considered as part of the options assessment. This includes, public sector led vehicles, as well as public-private partnerships and private sector vehicles. The full Options Appraisal is set out in **Appendix D**.



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Options Analysis | Delivery Vehicle Options Long List & Short List (1)

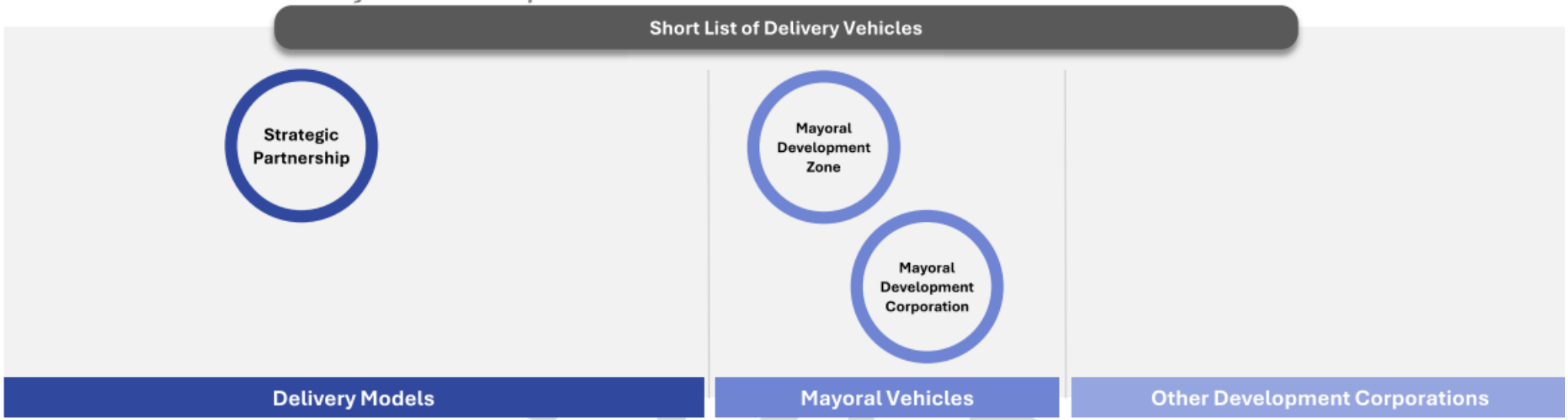
The long list of Delivery Vehicle Options has been assessed against the objectives and requirements.



Discounted Options
Delivery Models (excl. Strategic Partnership): Non-statutory bodies that lack the powers and authority to fully enable delivery across Oldham. The Oldham development programme comprises of multiple sites and schemes across different sectors (i.e. sport and health). Delivery Models are typically deployed for individual site delivery or smaller packages of sites. The exception to this is a Strategic Partnership which could be established to support early phase delivery and expanded over time (i.e. the Town Living Partnership). Strategic Partnerships have been shortlisted with all other Delivery Models discounted at this stage.
Urban Development Corporation (UDC): Statutory bodies set up for the purpose of regenerating a specific designated area which is known as the Urban Development Area ("UDA"). The UDC and the Board is established by the Secretary of State ("SoS"). A locally developed proposal, established by the GM Mayor, is considered more appropriate for Oldham given its local and GMS significance.
New Town Development Corporation (NTDC): An NTDC is focused on securing the layout and delivery of a new town. There is no political aspiration to establish a New Town in Oldham and so NTDC has been discounted.
Locally-led New Town Development Corporation (LLNTDC): The governance arrangements for an LLNTDC differs to an NTDC. LLNTDCs are designated by the SoS but managed by an "Oversight Authority", which then appoints Members. This option has also been discounted as there is no political aspiration to establish a LLNTDC in Oldham.
Locally-led Urban Development Corporation (LLUDC): The LURA 2023 makes provision for the designation of a new type of Locally-led UDC mode with the appropriate powers to support transformational regeneration and growth overseen by local authorities, rather that the SoS. At the time of drafting this proposal, LURA had received Royal Assent. However, the release of legislation is pending and so the powers required to establish an LLUDC are not yet exercisable.

Options Analysis | Delivery Vehicle Options Long List & Short List (2)

A short list of Delivery Vehicle Options was then assessed and an MDC identified as the recommended Delivery Vehicle Option for Oldham.



Short List

Strategic Partnership: A Strategic Partnership is a collaborative agreement between two or more parties, combining complementary resources and expertise to achieve a shared goal (i.e. the Town Living Partnership). OMBC and other public sector bodies, such as the GMCA, would come together to create a consortium that is public sector owned but draws in private sector finance and delivery expertise. This route has been explored for Oldham, and there could be an option to expand on the existing partnership with Muse in the future. However, this option has been discounted given the scale and complexities associated with delivery of the broader Oldham development pipeline beyond the Town Centre residential sites.

Mayoral Development Zone (MDZ): A non-statutory designated zone which is supported by the Mayor to deliver regeneration. MDZs enable a focused, collaborative approach to development with appropriate governance to accelerate and unlock delivery.

Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC): A Statutory Body, empowered by legislation and typically public sector led/funded with the ability to deliver accelerated regeneration through powers conferred to the vehicle via specific laws. An MDC is in line with the defined requirements, strategic vision and objectives for a Delivery Vehicle for Oldham. Through its powers, an MDC can unlock barriers to delivery across Oldham and support investment into the area whilst also support case-making for future investment beyond existence of the MDC's operational period.

Preferred Option

Mayoral Development Corporation ("MDC") is the preferred Delivery Vehicle Option.

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Report to CABINET

Housing Allocations Scheme 2026

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr Elaine Taylor, Cabinet Member for Decent Homes

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive for Place

Report Author: Neil Consterdine, Director of Communities

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision
The purpose of the report is to seek approval to amend the existing social housing Allocations Scheme to ensure the Council is compliant with legislation requirements and making the best use of social housing stock in the borough.

Recommendations
It is recommended that:

1) The suggested amendments to the Allocations Scheme are approved.

2) Approval is given to begin re-registering existing Housing Register applicants under the requirements of the new scheme once the service's system provider has undertaken any required system changes.

3) That approval is given to delay full implementation of the new scheme by up to 12 months of the date of this decision in the event the service's software provider requires this time to deliver the necessary system changes.

4) That approval is given to recruit a Right Sizing Officer who will co-ordinate a right sizing scheme on behalf of all social housing providers on the Common Allocation Framework. This post will be funded via a contribution from each social housing provider taking part.

4) That a delegated power is given to the Director of Communities in terms of amending the annual lettings plan following consultation with social housing providers that are part of the Common Allocation's Framework.

Housing Allocations Scheme 2026

1 Background

1.1 All local housing authorities in England are required to maintain an allocations scheme, pursuant to S.166A of the Housing Act 1996. This is regardless of whether or not the authority owns the stock in its area or, as in the case of OMBC, forms part of a wider CAF in which several different social landlords apply the same allocations policy.

1.2 Subject to certain statutory requirements governing rules of eligibility (such as immigration status) and priority (Reasonable Preference'), it is for the Council to determine who qualifies for social housing in its area and what degree of priority to award to qualifying applicants based on their circumstances.

1.3 Although some minor amendments to OMBC's current Policy were made in 2021, the most recent major changes to the Policy were made in 2019. These changes resulted in the closure of the previous 'open' (i.e. first come first served) register- which was available to applicants with no identified housing need- and the introduction of a new priority banding system. This resulted in approximately 18,000 people not in housing need being removed from the register.

1.4 In 2019-20, the first year following the most recent major policy changes, OMBC's housing register comprised 5,421 applications. Today the figure is 6488. Due to rising demand and contracted supply of social housing availability, most people currently on the housing register will never be rehoused by OMBC. There is a need to review who the council will house in the context of rising homelessness and strained supply of homes.

2. OUTLINE OF PROPOSED CHANGES

2.1 **A summary of the main proposed changes is as follows:**

- The Working Xtra scheme is removed from the proposed new scheme. Applicants will no longer receive greater priority due to working, caring or volunteering in the OMBC area. People who are contributing to the community in this way will not be subject to local residency requirements and so will still be able to access the register- but with no additional priority beyond this. The current scheme has resulted in a high proportion of lets to applicants in the top two bands being made to people who meet these requirements. Often that means we struggle to re-house people with high levels of need who for many reasons are unable to work, particularly homeless households. In addition, partners have expressed concern that, in the current climate, Working Xtra priority has at times been awarded to households who are not in paid employment, which has further reduced the effectiveness of the scheme in meeting its original objectives.

  The outcome of the public consultation showed a mixed response to this proposal. A total of 41.6% of respondents agreed with the removal of the Working Xtra scheme, 16.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 41.7% disagreed

  .

- People who own a share of a property in the UK or abroad will be disqualified. Due to their being limited resource, and the increase in customers with a Housing Need. Homeownership is treated as a housing asset with exceptions. Partners agreed that allowing homeowners onto the register could be perceived as unfair to those who are renting privately, living in temporary accommodation, or have no housing assets. By prioritising applicants without property, the scheme aims to focus resources on those with the greatest housing need.

  The outcome of the public consultation showed strong support for this approach: 75% of respondents agreed with the policy, 16.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 8.3% disagreed.

- More restrictive income and capital thresholds- people with savings in excess of the DWP threshold for Universal Credit entitlement will receive the lowest priority, as will people with net household income of over £60,000 (£35,00 for those without children). This amount is widely used as it is a nationally recognized measure of financial means; it indicates that a household has resources to secure or sustain housing.

  Partners generally support this approach as it allows the council and its partners to allocate a very scarce resource responsibly, meet statutory duties, and maintain sustainable communities.

  The outcome of the public consultation showed strong support: 75% of respondents agreed with this approach, and 25% neither agreed nor disagreed.

- Downsizing incentives- this will involve a commitment within the policy to provide practical support to those who want to move from larger properties (thus freeing up a home for a family in need), including financial incentive. This will improve the council's KPI in this regard, with only one downsizing tenant recorded in Q1 of 2024/25. Larger homes (3-4 bedrooms) are in the shortest supply and highest demand. Many are occupied by households who no longer need space. Downsizing frees up family homes. This has a much bigger impact than building new larger homes.

  The partners have agreed in principle to co-fund a Right-Sizing Officer, who will be hosted by the Council and will coordinate the scheme on behalf of the partnership. Future plans include exploring additional incentives to support the effectiveness of the right-sizing scheme.

  The public consultation showed strong support for this proposal, with 66.7% of respondents agreeing, 16.7% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 16.7% disagreeing.

- Creation of a 'homeless at home' priority category which will enable the council to perform its duty to accommodate some homeless households at no cost, where it is appropriate to do so. This will assist in the reduction of the use of temporary accommodation. This has had a massive financial strain on the council and nationally councils are under pressure to reduce families in temporary accommodation.

The outcome of the public consultation showed moderate support for this proposal, with 58.3% of respondents agreeing, 25% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 16.7% disagreeing.

- Creation of 'continuing duty' category whereby applicants who were previously homeless and the council's duty to accommodate were discharged with a private sector offer will be permitted to rejoin the Housing Register. This will promote speedier homelessness resolutions, reduce demand for temporary accommodation and increase the availability of social housing by incentivizing people to accept private rented sector offers. This is so the system is fairer, more realistic, and better at preventing repeated homelessness. We have found that many households remain vulnerable to becoming homeless again, even though the legal duty has technically ended. Partners agreed with this approach.

- Introduction of an annual lettings plan which details the proportion of lets per annum to be let to each category of person on the housing register. This will enable officers to restrict lets of housing to those in strategically important groups (such as those in temporary accommodation) and to control the lettings outcome when there is a need to do so. This will also reduce the likelihood of having to make major policy changes in the future in order to adapt to changing local factors. Due to fewer and fewer homes becoming available to let, this means those who are in need but in lower bands have little or no prospect of ever receiving an offer. This penalizes people such as those who are not homeless but need an extra bedroom due to out growing their home, those who are likely to become homeless but are not yet in temporary accommodation.

  The public consultation showed strong support for this proposal, with 75% of respondents agreeing and 25% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

- Applicants in emergency housing conditions will not be permitted to 'compete' with others in the bidding process, instead the urgency will be addressed through a commitment to make one direct offer of accommodation, in order to more speedily resolve acute housing need. This is to ensure the quickest possible move to ensure safety and means that they are not competing against others with equally high priority (such as downsizers) in the bidding system. Public consultation 66.7% agreed, 33.3% neither agreed or disagreed.

- Clarification of who may be included in an application- in particular this addresses situations where individuals state they have shared parenting roles, safeguarding against dishonest applications or permitting a greater housing need (and longer wait) for people than required.

2.2 **The following aspects of the current policy are not proposed to change:**

- The policy will still operate as a Choice Based Lettings system whereby applicants will be able to bid for properties they are interested in rather than be directly allocated properties they may not be as per a nomination agreement.

- There are no changes to local connection qualifying criteria.

- There are no significant changes to the banding structure; those in the most acute need will be considered before all others in descending order of priority.

3 Current Position

3.1 OMBC's newly adopted Corporate Plan includes a commitment to 'tackle the housing crisis affecting Oldham's residents'.

3.2 In 2019 there were approximately 100 households owed the main housing duty (i.e. statutorily homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless) using temporary accommodation in the borough. As of November 2025, the figure is 505.

3.3 The cost of accommodating homeless households is expected to contribute significantly to the overall Council's budget pressure with an estimated total cost of c£5m for temporary accommodation costs 25/26.

3.4 Various factors are attributable to the rise in homelessness which is replicated in most regions of the UK. Locally, Oldham has experienced the highest proportional rise in private sector rental costs in the GM area. The private rented sector has therefore become unaffordable and inaccessible for many low-income households.

3.5 A related issue is that rising mortgage interest rates have made home ownership unviable for low income households living in social housing who might be interested in buying on the open market. Buy-to-let landlords are having to reduce their portfolios (consequently evicting the tenant using the S.21 'no-fault' notice) or increase the rent charged.

3.6 Rising housing market costs and lack of mobility in the social rented sector reduces the recycling of social housing which become homes available to let. In 2018-19 CAF partners in Oldham let 1,718 properties to applicants from OMBC's housing register. In 2024-25 this figure was 808.

3.7 For these reasons there is a need for the council to evaluate whom it should be housing within the increasing limitations of the stock available to it with the objective being to improve the authority's homelessness prevention and relief outcomes and the continuation of promoting sustainable communities. The proposed new policy is the result of this exercise.

4 Options/Alternatives

4.1 Option 1- Approve the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy.

4.2 Option 2- Do not approve.

5. Preferred Option

5.1 To endorse Option 1 – approve the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy. The Council has given a commitment in its newly adopted Corporate Plan to "tackle the housing crisis affecting Oldham's residents". One of the key policy levers at the council's disposal in this regard is its housing Allocations Scheme. Failing to amend the scheme given the context outlined in this report would constitute a questionable use of its service to residents and bring no tangible benefit.

5.2 By endorsing Option 1 and approving the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy the Council and its partners would be making best use of social housing stock in the borough, be more focused on homelessness prevention by utilizing the Allocation's Policy as a tangible tool to secure social housing for residents in most housing need.

6 Consultation

6.1 Between July and October, a series of consultations took place with partners, staff, Members, and the public regarding the proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Policy.

6.2. Partner Consultation took place in July. Draft proposals were circulated to key partners Social Landlords and Oldham PFI. Several consultation events followed to discuss and explore the proposed changes in detail. Between July and October Oldham hosted several consultation events. Feedback was positive, and an Allocation Working Group was established to support further development of the proposals. This working group consists of operational service leads from the social housing landlords of the Common Allocation Framework.

6.3 Some concerns were raised regarding the removal of the 'Working Extra' preference. The Council presented data demonstrating that the number of applicants on the Housing Register currently in paid employment is very low, which helped contextualise the proposed change to remove the working extra priority.

6.4 Three staff consultation events were held during August Staff were invited to submit comments, concerns and suggestions. Feedback from staff was overwhelmingly positive, with no significant issues highlighted and overall consent for the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy.

6.5 An elected Member briefings was held in October. Members were briefed on the proposals and invited to share their views.

6.6 A public consultation document was also issued during this period. We worked with Comms to ensure the documents was published online. The document was also sent to All Members Briefing email for feedback.

6.7 Public feedback was low as suspected and there was a mixed response in terms of feedback which broadly split into thirds with 33% agreeing with the proposals, 33% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals and 33% disagreed with the proposals.

6.8 There has been very little disagreement to the proposed changes on all platforms. This is why we wish to move forward with this.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The proposed Right Sizing Officer post is expected to cost in the region of £50k per annum. The cost is to be split amongst 12 contributors, so the cost to the Council would be c£4k. This can be contained within existing Strategic Housing budgets. There are also additional costs associated with downsizing incentives, the proposal being that £1,500 is paid toward in each claim, with an additional £750 paid toward the cost of removals, flooring or white goods. The total impact will depend upon the level of take up, and will be an additional pressure on the Strategic Housing budget.

(Mike Roberts, Finance Manager).

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The council, as a housing authority, must maintain an allocations scheme pursuant to S.166A of the Housing Act 1996. The scheme must give reasonable preference to particular vulnerable groups within the scheme. It is important that the scheme is up to date and accurate, and that it is followed. Failure to have an accurate scheme or failure to adhere to the scheme would likely lead to the Council being deemed to be acting unlawful and individuals being able to bring a Judicial Review against the Council. This would of course lead to unnecessary costs but also reputational harm to the Council.

It is important that the Council fully consider its Public Sector Equality Act Duty failure to consider how the scheme will impact those with protected characteristics such as a disability could in itself be a breach of the relevant section of the Equality Act

The list of associated legislation and regulations considered in undertaking the drafting of the proposed new scheme is included in appendices. (Alex Bougatef – Director Of Legal Services)

9. Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes- see Impact Assessment Tool at appendix 2

10. Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11. Key Decision Reference

11.1 HL-08-25

12 Background Papers

12.1 None.

13 Appendices

I. The final draft Allocations Scheme 2026
II. Impact Assessment Tool

Signed _____ Cabinet Member (specify whom)	Dated _____
Signed _____ Executive Director/Deputy	Dated _____

Chief Executive	

Oldham Council Allocations scheme

February 2026

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Introduction

- All local housing authorities in England are required to maintain an allocations scheme, pursuant to S.166A of the Housing Act 1996 (the Act). This is regardless of whether or not the authority owns the stock in its area or, as in the case of OMBC, forms part of a wider Common Allocations Framework (CAF) in which several different social landlords apply the same allocations policy.

- This scheme has been developed in line with relevant legislation and statutory guidance and sets out the criteria which will be used to allocate social housing, and the process to be followed, under Part Vi of the Housing Act 1996. The accommodation this scheme applies to includes homes managed by members of the CAF; homes managed under PFI contracts for the council and other homes owned by Registered Providers with whom the council has a nominations agreement. The relevant legislation and guidance taken into account in adopting this scheme is contained in **Appendix 6.**

- There is no statutory requirement for the council to adopt a Housing Needs Register- or list of applicants- who have applied and have been accepted for rehousing under the scheme. However, the council has decided to operate a Housing Needs Register in the interests of fairness to applicants and the efficacy of operating the scheme.

- This scheme does not apply to certain categories of lets to social housing including assignment by way of mutual exchange; statutory succession, transfers of tenancy by Court order and internal transfers of tenants by a social landlord under the terms of their own lettings procedures by utilising their retained proportion of voids (if any). However, Registered Providers will be able to use the council's website to advertise properties with a priority to the allocating landlord. All social housing tenants in the borough may apply to join the Housing Needs Register and will be accepted providing they meet the eligibility and qualification criteria detailed in this scheme.

- This scheme also does not apply to other lets of housing administered by the council, such as units of temporary accommodation to homeless households, lets of assured shorthold tenancies by way of discharging a duty under Part VII of the Act, lets to gypsy/traveller plots, lets of commercial premises or lets of any home with non-secure tenure.

Aims of the scheme

- As there is a continued substantial demand for rented housing across Oldham, this scheme seeks to achieve a balance between enabling the council to fulfil its statutory duty to give reasonable preference to those in urgent need of housing, to allow fair access to all eligible housing applicants and also to promote more sustainable communities by, for example, allowing access to the Housing Needs Register to people with an established link to Oldham through work, volunteering, caring or residency.

- The scheme aims to provide:

    - A scheme that meets all legislative requirements.
    - Best use of our social housing stock to meet the needs of those in the most acute housing situations, particularly those who are homeless and in priority need; those at risk of violence or abuse and those with serious health conditions.
    - Assurance the Housing Needs Register accurately records housing needs in the borough.
    - A pathway into social housing for those with an established link to the community through residency, caring, working or volunteering.
    - Voids are let efficiently and in the minimum amount of time
    - Create and support sustainable neighbourhoods and communities
    - Choice to applicants balanced against the shortage of social housing.
    - A scheme that ensures that no group or individual is discriminated against as a result of this policy, to promote equal opportunities and have due regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Statement of Choice

- Applicants who have been accepted to join the Housing Needs Register will be able to exercise choice in regards to their housing. They will be able to express interest in properties by placing bids for available homes they qualify for. This is known as a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. The vast majority of applicants will be able to place bids for suitable homes they want in areas of their preference using the council's CBL website. There are only a very few applicants who will have bids placed for them by officers or be direct matched to available properties. The council believes this provides a fairer scheme for applicants and is a more efficient use of council resources compared with a scheme which requires officers to direct match all available properties to applicants.

Common Allocations Framework

- A Common Allocations Framework (CAF) is in place in Oldham. The Registered Providers who are members of the framework allocate the majority of the homes they have available through Oldham Council's website. The partners of the CAF share this scheme for the majority of lettings.
- The CAF comprises the majority of Registered Providers operating in Oldham, who work together to develop, implement and review the approach to allocations in the borough.
- A list of the all the registered providers who are members of the Framework can be found at Appendix 7.

Amendments

- This allocations scheme will be subject to review on an annual basis. Amendments to the scheme will be approved by the Council's Director of

Communities and changes recorded in the chart at the beginning of this document. If significant policy changes are required the Council will undertake statutory consultation with key stakeholders including Registered Providers, Councillors and customers.

Eligibility and qualification

- To be eligible for an allocation of housing under this scheme, all applicants must meet the following criteria:
  a. Be habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (aside from individuals described in regulation 6(2)(g),(l),(m),(n),(o) or (r) of the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(England) Regulations 2006)
  b. Not subject to immigration control or in a class of person proscribed by the Secretary of State

- To qualify under the scheme, an applicant must:
  a. Be at least 16 years old and have income sufficient to meet their housing costs
  b. Have a **local connection** to the Oldham area
  c. Have **capital** below the defined threshold
  d. Not be guilty of **serious unacceptable behaviour,** including poor conduct during a previous tenancy and acts of housing related fraud
  e. Be in a statutory **Reasonable Preference** or **Additional Preference group** or have a **locally identified housing need**
- To be accepted onto the Housing Needs Register, all applicants must meet both the eligibility and qualification criteria described above.
- The council will not accept applications from eligible applicants who do not meet the requirements of paragraph 14(e). Applicants in this situation will be assessed as ‘adequately housed’ and will not be able to access the Housing Needs Register.

- Certain eligible and qualifying applicants for reasons of past conduct, being intentionally homeless or having income above the defined threshold will receive reduced preference and placed into band 4.

Process to be followed (application)

- The council requires all applicants to apply through its website. Officers will be on hand to provide practical assistance to those who may encounter difficulties applying online for any reason. This may be by means of telephone assistance or by appointment at the Housing Options office.
- Applicants will have the opportunity to submit supporting documents via their online application portal. Applicants may also submit documents by providing them at the Housing Options office.
- All applicants will be required to submit proof of identification, NINO, bank statements (capital), proof of income and a 5 year address history.
- Applicants may submit an application without the required proofs but will be notified electronically through their application portal if there is further information to provide.
- If any information is not provided within 30 days the application will be closed and any new application will be assessed from the date of the new application
- Once all required information has been provided the council will issue its decision letter within 10 working days. The assessment will decide:
  a. Whether the applicant is *eligible* to apply for social housing under this scheme
  b. Whether the applicant *qualifies* under the scheme and, if so, what degree of priority they require
- All applicants must be both eligible for an offer of social housing and qualify under the scheme in order to be accepted onto the Housing Needs Register
- The decision letter will inform the applicant whether or not they have been accepted onto the Housing Needs Register. If they have not been accepted the letter will state the reasons for this. If they have been accepted the letter will inform the applicant of their:

a. Priority group (band) and their priority date
b. The type and size of property they are eligible to place bids for

- The decision letter will provide instructions on how to request a review of the decision if the applicant believes the decision is wrong (see: **reviews**)

Changes in circumstances

- All applicants are required to inform the council of any change in the circumstances relevant to their application. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Birth of a child
  - Household member leaving home
  - New person joining household
  - Move to alternative accommodation
  - Improvement or deterioration in medical condition.
- Applicants must inform the council within 4 weeks of the change having occurred.
- The council will also require all applicants to complete an annual review. This will ensure all applications are up to date and take into account relevant circumstances at all times. Applicants will be notified of their annual review date at least 4 weeks in advance.
- If an applicant fails to complete their annual review the application will be suspended. If the applicant fails to provide the requested information within 4 weeks the application will be cancelled.
- If an applicant informs the council of a relevant change in circumstances more than 4 weeks after the change occurred, the council will amend the priority date to the date on which the information was provided unless there are mitigating circumstances explaining why the information could not have been provided sooner.
- Any change in circumstances will be assessed in-line with this scheme. This means that following re-assessment, the applicant's priority may increase, reduce or they may no longer qualify under the scheme.

Process to be followed (advertising & letting)

- A landlord who is part of the CAF or who has a nominations agreement with the council will place an advert of an available property to let on the council's CBL website. The landlord may decide to place the advert prior to the property being ready to let, to ensure there is minimal turnaround between the previous tenant vacating and the new tenancy starting.
- The landlord will detail relevant property features and stipulate any particular requirements in its advert text. For example, if the property is adapted to the needs of a disabled person priority may be given to applicants who have a need for a property of this type.
- The council will decide whether there are any applicants on the Housing Needs Register who may require **direct matching**. If there is a potentially suitable applicant who is eligible for direct matching to the property, the council will inform the landlord of the applicant's details.
- If there are no potentially suitable applicants for direct matching the council will decide whether the advert needs to stipulate that the property will have priority for a certain group(s) in order to contribute to meeting its Lettings Plan priorities.
- Properties may be advertised at any time. Each listed property will have a closing date within which the customers will need to register their bids. Usually, properties will be advertised for a minimum of 3 working days.
- Applicants who are suspended due to being under offer to another property or because further information is required to assess their circumstances will not be able to bid.
- Once the bidding period ends, the CBL system will sort all bids in order of their priority banding group to create a shortlist. If there are any stipulations added to the advert, the system will sort applicants by banding group and stipulation. For example: if a level access property was advertised with a priority for applicants with an assessed medical need for such accommodation, applicants who meet this priority will be considered first in band order. If the advert states that priority will be given to those in a

particular Reasonable Preference group, those applicants will be considered first.

- Shortlists will be ordered by banding group, with applicants bidding from the emergency band being considered first, then band 1, and so on. When a shortlist produces applicants from the same band, both of whose' circumstances meet any particular advert requirements, priority will be given to the person with the earliest band date. If the dates are the same, priority will be given to the applicant who was registered on the scheme the earliest. If those dates are the same, the priority will be given to the applicant who placed their bid first.
- The relevant landlord will initiate contact with the successful bidder to discuss and make arrangements for the tenancy allocation process.
- If the landlord determines that the person at the top of the list is unable to be a tenant of the property for any reason, the landlord will notify the council of the reasons for this. The landlord will then make contact with the applicant next on the shortlist. This process will continue until the shortlist is exhausted.
- If no suitable tenants can be sourced from the shortlist the landlord will be able to re-advertise the property. If this does not produce a suitable tenant then the council will be able to direct match the property to an applicant from the Housing Needs Register.
- Registered Providers who are not part of the CAF and who do not have a nominations agreement with the council are welcome to place adverts of properties on Oldham's CBL website. The landlord should make contact with the Housing Options service to discuss the process and any fees which may apply.

Refusals

- If, at any stage, the applicant refuses an offer of accommodation the council considers was reasonable, the application will initially be downgraded to Band 4 for 12 months. After the 12 months their application will be not automatically re-instated but an assessment of their housing need will be

carried out and they will be awarded a priority based on their circumstance at that time of the new assessment. If the applicant refuses another offer of accommodation, the application will be cancelled.

- Factors the council will consider in determining whether an offer was reasonable include:
  - Whether the information provided in the property advert enabled the applicant to make an informed choice to place a bid
  - Whether the location of the property increases the risk of violence, abuse or intimidation
  - Whether the applicant, due to circumstances beyond their control, cannot take up the offer of accommodation.

Decision makers

- Officers within the council's Housing Options service will make all decisions pertaining to the administration of this scheme. The table below details which officers will be responsible for decision making:

Decision (on)	**Officer responsible (minimum level)**
Eligibility, qualification and priority to be awarded; whether to stipulate priority in advert to meet Lettings Plan targets	Allocations Officer
Requests for review	Independent Allocation Officer
Direct match	Housing Register and Customer Support Manager (HRCSM)
Sensitive let	Housing Register and Customer Support Manager (HRCSM) in conjunction with relevant landlord
Exceptions to Policy	Head of Housing Needs
Local Lettings Policy	Housing Register and Customer Support Manager (HRCSM)/ Head of Housing Needs in conjunction

	with relevant landlord and elected portfolio holder
Amendments to the allocation scheme	Deputy Chief Executive

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Local connection to Oldham

- An applicant will have established a local connection to Oldham if they meet either of the following criteria:
  a. They meet the definition of local connection defined in S.199 of the Housing Act 1996
  b. They are any of the following:
     - In paid work in Oldham
     - in a work-related training placement in Oldham
     - volunteering in Oldham for a minimum of 16 hours/month with a constituted tenants/residents organisation; a registered charity or not for profit organisation. The qualifying person must have been carrying out volunteering activity for at least 6 months and be able to verify this.
     - Performing a caring role for a vulnerable person who lives in Oldham
     - currently serving in the regular forces or who were serving in the regular forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing
     - bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
     - existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service

- have been determined as being owed the full homelessness duty by the council under section 193 (2).
- High risk victims of Domestic Abuse who are subject to MARAC and who need to move to Oldham as part of an agreed safety plan
- Applicants who are social housing tenants in another area of England who need to move because they work in the Oldham MBC area or need to take up an offer of employment in the area should refer to paragraph 139 of this scheme.

Income & capital threshold

- The council considers that applicants who own a share (in whole or in part) in a home in the UK or abroad either outright or with a mortgage are generally not to be treated as in a category of housing need and so applications from people in these circumstances will be disqualified.
- An exception to this rule would be where an applicant falls into one of the emergency groups detailed in the banding scheme and whose equity in the property is not reasonably likely to be able to secure a purchase of a suitable home on the open market.
- Applicants who have savings in excess of £16,000 (or £10,000 for applicants who have not included children to be rehoused) will receive reduced preference and placed into band 4. The council considers it likely that such applicants would be able to secure a suitable home under the terms of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy in the private rented sector in the borough. The council also considers the threshold of £16,000 to be reasonable as it is consistent with the threshold set by central government regarding entitlement to Universal Credit.
- The council will take into account previous disposals of assets or capital when determining whether to disqualify applicants for these reasons. If, for example, an applicant has made a large recent purchase(s) of non-essential items which brings their savings below the threshold, or transferred cash or assets to others, then the council may treat these actions as having not occurred.
- Irrespective of their current housing need, applicants with children included on the application whose total net household income is above £60,000 per

annum (and applicants without children whose net household income is above £35,000 per annum) will receive reduced preference and placed into band 4.

- The council at all times reserves the right to investigate and verify the circumstances of applicants. If the applicant is unable to account for their capital or income, the council will disqualify the application. If false information is provided or information material to the assessment is concealed by an applicant, the council will disqualify the application and consider taking enforcement action.

Serious unacceptable behaviour, deliberately worsening housing conditions and fraud

- A person will not qualify under this scheme if:
    - s/he or a member of the household is considered to be guilty of serious unacceptable behaviour, and
    - at the time of the application or offer of housing, they are still deemed to be unsuitable to be a tenant by reason of that behaviour.

- Unacceptable behaviour can include (but is not limited to):

- Owing significant **housing related debt** (either former or current tenancy). Includes: rent arrears and rechargeable repairs where there is no agreement to repay; or an agreement has not been adhered to
- Failing to comply with a current or past tenancy agreement with a council, Registered Provider or private landlord, which led to the landlord seeking or obtaining a possession order
- Conviction for illegal or immoral purposes
- Causing nuisance and annoyance to neighbours or visitors
- Committing certain criminal offences in or near the home and still posing a threat to neighbours or the community
- Being violent towards a partner or members of the family
- Allowing the condition of the property to deteriorate
- Allowing any furniture provided by the landlord to deteriorate due to ill treatment

- Obtaining a tenancy by deception, for example, by giving false information
- Paying money to illegally obtain a tenancy
- Losing accommodation provided in connection with employment due to conduct making it inappropriate for the person to reside there
- Abandoning a previous tenancy
- Misusing prescribed or illegal substances unless there is evidence to show that the applicant is adhering to a drug reduction programme and the support provider confirms this
- Behaving in a threatening manner.

- The council will also consider during its assessment whether the applicant has:
- Deliberately worsened their housing conditions
- Provided fraudulent information or withholds information in connection with their application.
- Examples of deliberately worsening housing conditions include: moving out of, or altering, accommodation which would have been reasonable to continue occupying; committing actions to unnecessarily overcrowd the household.
- Under section 171 of the Housing Act 1996, it is a criminal offence when an applicant knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false in a material particular, or knowingly withholds information which the authority have reasonably requested him to give in connection with the allocation of housing. An offence is also committed if the applicant allows a third party to provide false information on his or her behalf or at his or her instigation.
- If the council decides that an applicant (or person acting on their behalf) has given false information or withheld information, it will disqualify the application and consider taking legal advice with a view to prosecution.
- The council reserves the right to suspend an application if there is a suspicion any aspect of it may be fraudulent, pending an investigation into the circumstances.

- If the council or landlord determines a tenancy was granted as a result of false information, the landlord may seek possession of the property under Ground 5 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985.
- In making a decision to disqualify an applicant, the council will judge the situation on a case-by-case basis. Factors it will consider can include: The relevance of any convictions and whether they are spent or unspent; the severity of the behaviour; the likelihood of it repeating and any compliance with any rehabilitation requirements or willingness to repay housing related debt, etc.
- If an applicant is disqualified for any reason the council will write to the applicant to inform them of the decision and the grounds for it. The letter will provide instructions for how to request a review of the decision if they disagree with it. A disqualified applicant can reapply to the Housing Needs Register in the future if they can evidence there has been a significant improvement in their behaviour. Examples of evidence signifying improvement:
    - Proof of repayment of arrears or rechargeable repairs; adherence to repayment plans
    - Evidence of compliance with a rehabilitation programme
    - Letter of support from a professionally qualified person with knowledge of the applicant's case- e.g. a Probation Officer or Social Worker

Reasonable Preference

- Part Vi of the Housing Act 1996, amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires local authorities to give *Reasonable Preference* – or priority- to the following categories of applicant:
    A- People who are homeless
    B- People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are

occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)

C- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions

D- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to disability) and:

E- People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or others)

- There is no requirement to give equal weight to applicants within the Reasonable Preference (RP) criteria; the council can decide to give applicants within certain RP groups greater priority than those in other RP groups. The council may also decide to give other classes of qualifying applicants greater or equal priority to those in statutory RP groups, so long as the priority to those applicants does not dominate the scheme at the expense of those within RP groups.
- The council defines its own indicators of need within the *insanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing* and *medical or welfare* RP groups. Appendix 1 details how the council will determine whether an applicant meets one of these criteria.

Additional Preference

- The council must give Additional Preference (AP) to certain classes of applicants from the Armed Forces community who fall within one of the RP groups and have urgent housing needs, being:
    - former members of the Armed Forces
    - serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
    - bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner

- serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

- The Council will also give AP to other eligible, qualifying applicants who need to move due to:
  - Life threatening illness or sudden disability
  - Those who are homeless and require urgent re-housing as a result of violence or threats of violence
- The council will place any eligible, qualifying applicant whom it assesses as having Additional Preference into the highest priority banding group providing they meet the definition outlined in the table in paragraph 107.
- In cases of applicants who present as statutorily overcrowded- i.e. those who live in accommodation which contravenes the room and or space standards detailed in the Housing Act 1985- the council will investigate the circumstances which gave rise to the overcrowding. This may involve a referral to the council's environmental health service to consider enforcement action and an assessment of the situation under the council's Part VII homelessness duties.
- Where the household can remain in severely overcrowded conditions until such a time as a suitable Part VI offer is available, the council will consider whether the household separately meets the urgent medical/welfare criteria detailed in the banding table.

Locally identified housing need

- The council will also permit other eligible and qualifying applicants not in a statutory RP or AP group to join the Housing Needs Register where to do so will contribute to the council's wider housing and corporate objectives. This includes:

  - Applicants who are under-occupying social housing
  - Applicants not utilising adapted social housing

- Applicants who remain in accommodation which was obtained by having voluntarily agreed to a previously owed prevention or relief duty being ended by provision of privately rented accommodation
- Applicants who wish to provide fostering services to the council and require a secure home of an appropriate size
- Oldham council care leavers who would benefit from secure social housing

- Applicants who are eligible and qualifying must be in either one of the Reasonable Preference, Additional Preference or Locally Identified Housing Need groups detailed above in order to receive a priority band.
- Applicants who are eligible and qualifying but are not assessed as having Reasonable Preference, Additional Preference or a locally identified housing need will be placed into group 4 and will only be able to place bids for properties which have been readvertised due to the original shortlist having being exhausted.

PROVISIONS RELATING TO ALL ALLOCATIONS

Property size eligibility

- The government's Bedroom Standard will be used to assess the property size appropriate for the household. Applicants will only be considered for accommodation with a suitable number of bedrooms or bed spaces for their household.
- The council will award an additional bedroom(s) to applicants who have a household member(s) who, for reasons of medical, welfare or disability absolutely requires a bedroom of their own, or who has a registered carer who needs to provide overnight care or requires an additional room for medical/disability related equipment.
- The council will also award an additional bedroom to applicants who are approved foster carers, or who are applying to adopt a child, but cannot do so because their current property has been deemed too small for the

addition of a child into the household. The council's Children's Services department will support applications on this basis.

- Properties advertised will vary in overall size and will therefore have a specified number of bedspaces. Households will be matched to properties which meet or exceed their established need. For example, a three-bedroom property will have either 4, 5 or 6 bedspaces. A household of 5 people will be made offers of three-bedroom accommodation with either 5 or 6 bedspaces; studio flats are only suitable for 1 person and so will be allocated to single people and not couples.
- The council will permit some applicants with more than one RP category to make bids for properties which are one bedroom or 1 bedspace smaller than their assessed bedroom need providing: this does not result in a statutory overcrowding situation; the allocation results in an overall improvement in housing conditions and the landlord nominated to agrees.
- The council will permit all applicants who are downsizing from 3 bedroom (or larger) social housing to bid for properties of up to two bedrooms in size (see: **Downsizers**). The applicant will need to demonstrate they can afford to pay the rent on a 2 bedroom property and the landlord nominated to must agree to the property being under-occupied. The council must receive the resulting vacancy from the landlord.
- Under-occupancy by applicants who are not downsizing from larger social housing can be permitted to a maximum of 1 bedroom. This will be considered on rare occasions where there are no suitable bidders requiring a property of that size and applicants would be subject to an affordability assessment.

Property type eligibility

- Applicants who are accepted onto the Housing Needs Register will be advised of the property size and type they are able to be offered.
- Most applicants will be able to place bids for any property type (e.g. flats, houses, bungalows).

- Some applicants will not be offered certain types of property. For example: an applicant who requires level access accommodation due to disability will not usually be made offers of properties above the ground floor with no lift.
- Where a property is adapted for use by a disabled person, preference will be given to applicants with the highest priority whose needs best match the facilities of the particular property. For example: a property with level access will usually be allocated to an applicant who requires use of such a property. Where a particular property has been purpose-built or specially adapted, the council in consultation with the Community Occupational Therapist may make a direct match or bid specifically on behalf of applicants whose needs can be best met by the property.
- Houses will be offered in preference to households with children aged 16 and under unless the applicant has a specific medical/welfare/disability related reason for a home of that size.

Who may be included in an application

- The council will require all applicants and household members included on an application to have a need to live together and demonstrate a long-term commitment to the home.
- The need to live together is defined as:
    - A requirement to give or receive care in the home- e.g. parents and children; carers of another adult household member
    - Longstanding family arrangements- e.g. where children of an applicant have reached aged 18 years but remain living in the family home
- Long-term commitment to the home is defined as:
    - All household members included on an application will have lived together for at least 12 months at the date of application
    - All household members must genuinely live in the application address as their only or principal home and have no other accommodation it would be reasonable for them to occupy.

- The council will verify the need to live together and long term-commitment to the home by requiring the applicant to produce evidence. This may include, but is not limited to:
    - Proof of Child Benefit award
    - Proof of Carer's Allowance
    - Child Arrangement Order
    - Current and previous tenancy agreements and records
    - Current and previous Housing Benefit, Council Tax and DWP records
    - School registration details
    - NHS records (such as GP registration address details)
- In cases of shared custody of children, the council will require evidence that the child resides at the application address more than half of nights in a calendar year.
- Children will only be listed on one housing application at any one time.
- Where an applicant has included a child previously rehoused by the council when in the care of another, the council will not include the child in the application. This is unless it is necessary to provide the child with a new home due to safeguarding reasons, or matters arising from family court proceedings brought by the council. Rehousing that child in a new household will be supported by the council's Children's Services department.
- In all cases, children must have lived at the application address for 12 months at the point of application. The exceptions are: newly born and newly fostered/adopted children and those need to move due to safeguarding/child protection reasons.

Applications from and allocations to board members, staff members and councillors

- In order to ensure the council is seen to treat all applicants fairly, the application form will ask the applicant to identify whether they or a household member is a:

    - Elected member of Oldham Council
    - Employee or board member of the council or any registered provider operating in Oldham
    - Family member of any of the above
- Family members are defined as anyone who shared a legal or blood bond. Legal bonds include marriages, civil partnerships, adoptions, and guardianships. Blood bonds exist between individuals who are directly related through a common ancestor. This includes both close and distant relatives such as siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.
- Applications to the Housing Needs Register from those who meet the criteria above and who have Reasonable Preference will be assessed in the normal way, but registration, eligibility, qualification, and the assessment of Reasonable Preference will require the approval of two senior officers employed by the council.
- Any allocation of accommodation to those with or without Reasonable Preference will require the joint approval from a senior officer of the relevant Registered Provider and the relevant Director of the council.

Applicants in prison or on remand

- Applicants already registered on the Housing Needs Register, who are then sent to prison or placed on remand, will be able to remain on the Register, but their application will be suspended. They will be advised to contact the Housing Options service with confirmation of the date of their release from custody or remand to enable their records to be updated. Applicants can actively bid for properties up to 56 days before their release.
- Applicants who wish to apply to join the Housing Needs Register from a prison or remand centre may do so. If the applicant is eligible and qualifies to join the scheme, their application will remain suspended until the date of their release is established. 56 days before the expected release date the application will be approved to bid for homes and may be made offers of accommodation.

- If an applicant will be homeless or threatened with homelessness on their release from custody or remand, they can request an interview with the Housing Options service.

Sustainability risk assessment

- A Sustainability Risk Assessment will be used to determine if an applicant has the skills and financial means required to manage a tenancy. This may include an affordability assessment. The risk assessment may be carried out before a firm offer of accommodation is made. It is the responsibility of the Landlord offering the tenancy to undertake such checks. The applicant will not be charged for this assessment.
- If the applicant is considered to be medium or high risk, this does not necessarily deem them unsuitable for housing. Tenancies may be offered subject to specific conditions, such as the requirement to engage in tenancy support either from the Landlord or partner agencies. All conditions are subject to Landlord discretion.
- In extreme cases applicants may be classed as unsuitable and deemed too high risk to sustain a tenancy. In these cases the reason for the unsuitability will be explained and the applicant will have the right to request a review of the decision by the Landlord.

Applicants requiring support

- If an applicant has been assessed as needing support to sustain a tenancy and such support is not in place, has been declined or cannot be arranged before the proposed tenancy commencement date, an offer of accommodation will be held until such support is in place. If this cannot happen in a reasonable timeframe the council in conjunction with the relevant landlord will consider making an offer to another applicant. The council will consider whether to direct match another property to the applicant at the point they have support in place.
- **Management Discretion Priority**

Management Discretion Priority may be awarded at the discretion of the housing authority in exceptional circumstances where the standard allocation criteria do not adequately address the needs of a household. This priority is intended for cases involving urgent risk to health or safety, severe medical or welfare needs, safeguarding concerns, or other circumstances deemed exceptional by the authority. Allocation under Management Discretion is not automatic and requires approval by an authorised officer or panel, supported by appropriate evidence.

THE BANDS

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Direct Match only	
CBL	
Band 1 **Emergency (additional preference) & Exceptional group**	
Category	**Definition**
1. Emergency- medical & welfare	Includes: applicants living in accommodation which poses an imminent & unavoidable risk of serious harm who have no other reasonable housing options; applicants who, due to sudden illness or disability are permanently unable to access the home or basic facilities within it (e.g. a toilet) and adaption is not feasible; former members of the Armed Forces who have urgent housing needs; serving or former members of the Armed Forces suffering from a serious injury attributable to their service; bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner; serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.
2. Emergency- violence, abuse, intimidation	Applies to: - social housing tenants in Oldham whose landlord requires the tenant to move for this reason and are unable to accommodate from

	within their retained proportion of voids. The resulting vacancy will be returned to OMBC - High Risk victims of domestic abuse who are subject to MARAC as part of an agreed safety plan.
3. Emergency- Prohibition Order	Criteria is a notice served by OMBC under S.20 Housing Act 2004 and conditions at the property must present an imminent threat of serious injury to the occupant(s) or be life-threatening.
4. Compulsory Purchase/Decant	Applies to social housing tenants in Oldham whose landlord requires them to move due to estate regeneration*, or because a decision has been taken to permanently dispose of the property they live in. The relevant landlord must be a CAF member or have a nominations agreement with OMBC. * A special lettings plan may be agreed between the landlord and OMBC which allows the tenant to take part in choice based lettings. In this case a new category in one of the groups below will be created.
5. Management Discretion	An exceptional housing priority awarded at the discretion of the housing authority for urgent risk, severe medical or welfare needs, or other extraordinary circumstances, outside the normal allocation criteria.
6. Oldham Care Leavers	Young people leaving care who, due to their needs, require an offer of social housing.
7. Giving up 3+ bedroom social housing	Applies to social housing tenants in Oldham where the resulting vacancy will be returned to OMBC.
8. Giving up extensively adapted social housing	Applies to social housing tenants in Oldham where the resulting vacancy will be returned to OMBC. In the main this refers to fully wheelchair accessible accommodation that is no

	longer required by the tenant/occupier.
Band 2 **Reasonable Preference and locally identified housing need- upper**	
Category	Description
1. Main Housing Duty	Applicants who are homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless (s.193(2))
2. Homeless at home	Applicants who have received notification that the council has met either the s.188 or s193(2) duty to accommodate because the applicant elected to remain in their present accommodation on a temporary basis
3. Prevention duty (priority need)	Those owed the S.195(2) duty who have children, are pregnant or would likely be found to be in a Priority Need group due to vulnerability
4. Giving up 2 bedroom social housing	A social housing tenant in the borough who is giving up 2 bedroom accommodation to move to a smaller property, and the resulting vacancy will be given to OMBC
5. Giving up adapted or ground floor social housing	A social housing tenant in the borough who is giving up a ground floor property to move to a higher floor, or who is giving up a home with adaptations (such as a level access shower) to move to a non-adapted property on at least the first floor
6. Supported Accommodation Move-on	Applicants who live in accommodation that is intended to provide short-term housing and support and where the support provider confirms the applicant has satisfactorily completed a programme of intensive housing-related support and is ready to move into independent living. This includes young people leaving care (from outside of the borough) who, due to their needs, require an offer of social housing.
7. Applicants who have more than one reasonable preference category	Applicants who qualify under at least two of the criteria from band 2, categories 3-6.
Band 3	

Reasonable Preference and locally identified housing need- lower	
Category	Description
1. Prevention duty	Includes: Those who are owed the homelessness prevention duty S.195(2) but who are not placed in band 2, category 3
2. Those who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII of the Housing Act 1996)	Includes: the initial relief duty owed to all eligible persons who are homeless (189B[2]); rough sleepers; those who have no accommodation, those who have accommodation but it would not be reasonable to occupy; those who have accommodation but cannot secure access or, in the case of movable structures has no lawful place to keep it
3. Overcrowded, insanitary or otherwise unsatisfactory	Applicants occupying insanitary, overcrowded or unsatisfactory housing conditions. For a list of criteria, see appendix 1.
4. Medical, welfare inc. disability	Applicants who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds related to a disability. For a list of criteria, see appendix 2.
5. Hardship	Applicants who need to move to a certain locality in the borough of Oldham where failure to meet that need would hardship to themselves or others.
6. Category 1 Hazard	Applicants living in a private rented tenancy in the borough whose situation, despite intervention from the council's environmental health team, is unlikely to be resolved within 6 months
7. Continuing duty	Applicants to whom the council previously owed a prevention or relief duty under Part VII who voluntarily agreed to the duty being ended by provision of private rented accommodation, remain living in that accommodation and wish to reapply to the housing register. This is regardless of whether they otherwise would be considered 'adequately housed' (Band 4)

Band 4 Reduced Preference	
Category	**Description**
1. Refusal penalty	Applicants who refuse one offer of accommodation and the council was satisfied the offer was reasonable- will be placed into this band for 12 months. If another offer is refused at any time, applicant will be disqualified.
2. Housing related debt	Applicant owes housing related debt to OMBC or CAF landlord but no agreement in place to pay this or payment plan not being adhered to
3. Intentionally homeless	When the council has made a decision at any time under its Part VII obligations that the applicant is homeless intentionally; includes those who are in priority need
4. Unacceptable behaviour	Applicants previously in a higher band found to have committed behaviour making them unsuitable to be a tenant will be placed into this band for 12 months and consideration will be made to removing them from the housing register
5. Income threshold	Eligible & qualifying applicants from any reasonable or additional preference category whose household income is above the defined threshold

- Applicants in the emergency band, groups will have their circumstances reviewed after 4 months of their band date award. If the applicant has not moved, the council will consider whether their emergency status is still necessary. If there has been an improvement in circumstances the applicant will either be placed into the band they previously occupied, or, removed from the Housing Needs Register if they no longer qualify.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Lettings Plan

To assist the council in monitoring performance against its corporate objectives, including its homelessness reduction goals, the council will produce an annual

lettings plan. The plan will detail approximately how many properties it expects to receive for advert each year by size and type and which categories of applicants within each banding category it anticipates will fill those property vacancies. (See exhibit 1)

- The council believes the banding system provides an appropriate balance between prioritising people in statutory Reasonable Preference groups and making the best use of our limited stock in the borough in line with its strategic objectives.
- There may be times when the council decides it needs to give greater weight to certain categories of applicants to help achieve this balance. This means that the council may decide to advertise certain vacancies with a priority to applicants from one (or more) of the categories listed in the banding table. If, for example, the council has an unsustainable number of families living in temporary accommodation, it may indicate in certain property adverts that bids will be considered first from applicants in band one, categories one, two or three before others..
- The lettings plan will be reviewed annually or as required and can be viewed at appendix 4.

Downsizers

- The council considers that in order to make best use of the social housing stock available in the borough it should take all reasonable steps to encourage under-occupied homes to be made available to families who require them.
- The council will incentivise and support those who are living in social housing of at least three bedrooms to move to a smaller home should they wish.
- Applicants downsizing from three bedroom or larger accommodation will be permitted to bid for properties with two bedrooms, even if they are a single person or a couple with no children living with them.

- The council will provide a cash amount per bedroom given up to those who accept an offer of a property, payable upon their tenancy at a new home starting.
- The council will also offer other financial support to those who are downsizing from three bedrooms to assist with their move. This will include payment of removals fees and cash/vouchers for essential items such as flooring or white goods.
- The council will also offer practical support to downsizers who require it and an officer will be on hand to assist in bidding or being direct matched for suitable new homes; arranging removals and acting as a point of contact throughout the downsizing process.
- The cash value of incentives and support will be reviewed periodically. At the date of commencement of this scheme, the amount per bedroom given up shall be up to £1,500 with an up to additional £750 towards removals, flooring or white goods.
- Rightsizing (See exhibit 2)

Local lettings policies (LLP)

- Registered providers, including members of the Oldham CAF, may request LLPs for certain neighbourhoods to address specific local issues and/or to help to build sustainable communities in the case of new-build homes. Properties which are subject to a LLP will have additional criteria applied in relation to the applicants who are eligible to apply for the property.
- The Council will make the decision about whether to implement a LLP in consultation with the relevant landlord. Any decision to implement a LLP will consider the implications for equal opportunities and the need for the council's scheme overall to meet the allocation needs of those owed a Reasonable Preference. LLPs will be subject to review initiated by the council. The review will consider whether the policy is still relevant and effective.
- The Council reserves the right to apply any criteria to LLPs whilst meeting the statutory duty for Reasonable Preference.

- Any request for a LLP must include the following information:
  - The period of time for which the LLP will be operational
  - Extent of area affected by the LLP
  - Aims and objectives of the LLP
  - Suitability of the eligibility criteria
  - Details of the selection process and any additional selection criteria
  - Consultation on the proposed LLP
  - An equality impact assessment
  - Details of how the properties will be advertised and how applications will be verified
  - Monitoring and review process
  - Any additional considerations

Offers to homeless applicants

- For cases for whom the council has accepted a full homeless duty under sections 193 (2) or 195 (2) the council may decide to make a direct match which will fully end its Part 7 homelessness duty.
- The Council may exercise the powers granted by s.148 of the Localism Act 2011 to end the homelessness duty by making an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector, without requiring the applicant's agreement.
- Where an applicant owed a full homelessness duty successfully bids for accommodation, or is direct matched to a property, the offer will be the applicant's final offer and will end the council's homelessness duty if it is a suitable offer and is refused.
- An applicant will be required to leave any temporary accommodation they occupy and make their own accommodation arrangements.
- An applicant will continue to have a right of review under the homelessness legislation as to the suitability of the accommodation offered. Therefore homeless applicants are strongly advised to accept the offer that has been made even if they intend to challenge its suitability.

Young people leaving care

- The council wants to ensure that young people leaving the care of Oldham Council are helped to access secure and suitable long-term housing. Care leavers are awarded Reasonable Preference in this category in line with protocols between Oldham Council's Housing and Children's Services. Applicants must be a former relevant child as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2002.
- The criteria for an award of Reasonable Preference include:
    - A care leaver is ready to move to independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living
    - They possess the life skills necessary to manage a tenancy, including managing a rent account
    - They need at least a medium-term support package
    - The support needs have been assessed and the support package is in place
    - The applicant's vulnerability is such that a private rented sector offer would through its short term, potentially insecure nature have a detrimental effect on their vulnerability
- Care leavers who have lower levels of need or who do not have a support package will be expected to be assisted by Children's Services and the Housing Options service to move on to private rented accommodation.

Older people's housing

- Applicants for older people's housing must be:
    - Aged at least 55 or 60 years (depending on the property concerned) or;
    - Have a need for supported accommodation due to vulnerability or disability.
- Older people's housing will be specifically marked when a property is advertised and clearly indicate the support service charges that are applicable.

Extra Care Housing

- Applicants who express an interest in Extra Care housing- social housing schemes for older people which provide onsite care and support- will be allocated following an assessment of their medical and social care needs. The assessment will be conducted via a panel which will include a representatives of: The Allocations service, the commissioned onsite care provider, the relevant landlord, the Adult Social Care service (e.g. the applicant's social worker) and the Adult Social Care Commissioning service. The Extra Care Housing Assessment and Allocation Guidance is appended.
- The application process, eligibility and qualification criteria detailed in this scheme applies to applicants to Extra Care housing. However the council will not normally advertise vacancies in its Choice Based lettings system.
- Instead, the council will direct match applicants to vacancies of the area and property type of their choice. Consideration will be given to the onsite commissioned care provider's ability to meet the needs of the applicant in the relevant scheme prior to making an offer of accommodation.
- Where there is more than one applicant potentially suitable for the property, it will be offered to the person who has been in the highest band the longest with consideration also being given to their care and support needs identified via Adult Social Care. Where there is more than one potentially suitable applicant for a vacancy, priority will be given to any applicant who would have either Additional Preference or any of the emergency/exceptional categories under the banding scheme. Applicants with reasonable preference or other locally identified housing need will be considered next in turn of qualification date.

The Right to Move

- Subject to the Allocations of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015, the council will not apply local residency criteria to social housing tenants in other areas of England who need to move because they work in or need to take up work in Oldham.

- The council will accept out of area applicants on this basis providing they can demonstrate: They need to move; the ‘work’ is neither short term or marginal in nature and not ancillary to work in another district. Work must be remunerated (i.e. not voluntary work).
- In determining whether the applicant needs to move and whether the work is short term or marginal or ancillary to work in another district, the council will consider the Secretary of State’s recommendations outlined in the Statutory Guidance accompanying the Regulations at paragraphs 16-34.
- Applicants must at a minimum meet the criteria for the Hardship Reasonable Preference Category before the council will agree to dispense with the Local Connection qualification criteria detailed in this scheme.
- Applicants accepted on the basis of the Right to Move Regulations will not be permitted to bid through the CBL system. Instead, the council will set aside a maximum of 10 direct lets per annum. If an applicant refuses an offer, the council will cancel the application.

Serious offenders and applicants who present risk

- It is sometimes necessary to provide housing in a managed way which will minimise the risk to the community and allow supervision of the individual to be maintained. This may also apply to individuals currently living in the community who are considered to pose a risk to themselves and/or others, although they have not been convicted of an offence.
- The council will work with the police and probation services to assess and manage risk and will apply special arrangements where cases are referred through the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPA); any protocol with probation services or during day-to-day case management conducted between the Housing service and Adult Social Care or Health teams. Officers will attend case conferences with the police, probation, adult social care and health professionals to attempt to agree a planned and managed relocation pathway.
- This may result in restrictions being placed on the choice of property or area that is open to an applicant or may result in a direct offer of suitable

accommodation being made to an applicant at the point where they have sufficient priority under the scheme to receive such an offer.

Direct matching

- The council intends that the vast majority of its lettings under this scheme will arise from bids placed through Choice Based Lettings. However the council reserves the right to make direct offers at any time, for any reason to ensure it is able to meet the requirements of households and the council's corporate objectives. All applicants being considered for Extra Care Housing will be made a direct offer.
- Direct matches will, wherever possible, be considered prior to a property being advertised publicly. However in exceptional cases, the council may withdraw an advert to enable a direct match.
- Examples of when the council may consider a direct match to an applicant include, but are not limited to:

- Those who are in the emergency/exceptional categories (Band 1)
- To aid wider case management objectives- e.g. hospital discharge, MAPPA or MARAC cases
- To support timely move-on from supported or temporary housing
- To facilitate an emergency move for people at very high risk
- To make a final offer of accommodation under Part VII
- The allocation would benefit from being officer-led to ensure best use of stock. This can include officers creating 'allocation chains' to enable the resolution of the greatest level of housing need arising from a single initial vacancy
- Where either the property has unusual characteristics or the household has unusual need and CBL cannot easily facilitate an appropriate lettings outcome
- All applicants accepted to the Housing Needs Register on the basis of the Right to Move Regulations will be made one direct offer.

- To ensure the council continues to treat applicants equitably, the use of direct matching will be monitored. Authorisation for a direct match will be required from the officer identified in the chart in paragraph 47.

Exceptions to policy

- In order to be equitable in its treatment of applicants the council will adhere to the requirements of this policy in administering the scheme. On occasion there will be exceptional circumstances which necessitate a housing register/allocation decision being made outside of this scheme under management discretion.
- The officer(s) identified in the chart in paragraph 47 will be responsible for deciding any matters which cannot be resolved within policy. It is not intended that this discretion will be exercised in anything other than the most exceptional cases, such as an applicant who presents with unique or unusual circumstances which are not expressly or implicitly addressed in this scheme.
- In making a decision to exercise discretion, the decision maker will weigh the applicant's level of housing need against the overall aims of the scheme and the council's continued ability to act equitably towards all applicants.
- The use of exceptions to policy will be recorded and monitored to ensure the ongoing efficacy of the scheme.

Reviews

- An applicant has the right to request information pertaining to any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to, or has been, taken in respect of whether to allocate housing accommodation to them.
- An applicant has the right to request a review of any decision arising from matters considered in paragraph 154 and also the right to request a review of any decision taken as to whether they are ineligible for reasons of immigration control, or whether they qualify to join the scheme.

- To exercise their right to review, an applicant must request this in writing within 21 days from the date they were notified of the decision. An applicant may nominate a representative to make the request if they wish.
- An applicant (or their representative) should set out the reasons for requesting the review including why they disagree with the original decision and submit any evidence in support of their request.
- Upon receipt of a request for review, the council will acknowledge this request in writing and inform the applicant that their request will be considered by an officer in the Housing Options department. The reviewing officer will be at least one level senior to the person who made the original decision.
- An applicant may request to submit verbal representations. The reviewing officer will consider on a case-by-case basis whether this is necessary.
- The reviewing officer will complete their review and notify the applicant of their decision within 8 weeks. If the request is particularly complex, or if the applicant has submitted various pieces of information for consideration, the council may extend this deadline and will notify the applicant of this.
- The reviewing officer will inform the applicant of their decision in writing and set out the reasons for the decision. If the decision is to uphold an adverse decision, the reviewing officer will, where possible, provide housing options advice relevant to the applicant's circumstances.
- The decision notification shall state that if the applicant remains dissatisfied then they proceed to the second stage of the complaints process and the notification will explain the process for requesting this. When this stage results in a final response, applicants may then consider submitting a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). Applicants will usually have 12 months from the date of the final decision to log a case with the LGSCO.

Data protection

- The council will not divulge to any member of the public that a person is an applicant for social housing without the applicant's consent.
- All information held by the council relating to a person's application is subject to the General Data Protection Regulations. The council will seek the express consent of applicants to share personal information about them or any member of their household.
- Applicants have the right to request information held about them but submitting a Subject Access Request and receive a copy of information held on any computer or paper file. A reasonable charge may be levied for this.
- In certain circumstances and irrespective of whether consent has been obtained, relevant information may be shared about an applicant or their household member. This may include:
    - For the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime and fraud
    - In accordance with the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988 (section 115)
    - Where there is a serious threat to the applicant or a third party, including staff or contractors
    - Where information is relevant to the management or support duties of the proposed landlord or support organisation to ensure the health and safety of the applicant, a member of their household or a member of staff.

Appendix 1

Reasonable Preference category C: indicators of overcrowded, insanitary or otherwise unsatisfactory housing conditions

Overcrowding

Overcrowding will be assessed by comparing a household's bedroom entitlement against the bedrooms which are available to them in their current accommodation. A bedsit is considered to have one bedroom and one bed space. In cases where an applicant lives in accommodation with two living rooms, the council may determine that this room is available as sleeping accommodation.

Enquiries will be necessary to establish the reasons for and likely duration of any overcrowding before any priority banding status is awarded.

The council will apply the Bedroom Standard in determining how many bedrooms a household will be entitled to. A bedroom will be allocated to:

- A person living together with another as husband and wife (whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex)
- All persons over the age of 21, who are not cohabiting
- Two children, whether of the same sex or not), aged less than 10 years
- Two persons of the same sex aged 10 to 20 years
- Two persons of the same sex where one person is aged between 10 years and 20 years and the other is aged less than 10 years
- Any person aged under 21 years in any case where he or she cannot be paired with another occupier of the dwelling so as to fall in one of the above categories

The bedroom requirement will be increased if any person within an applicant's household has a confirmed reason which absolutely necessitates their having a separate bedroom and their current accommodation is not adequate, e.g. if a bedroom is required for a registered carer who does not live permanently at the applicant's address but who stays overnight on a regular basis, or if an applicant needs a 'sterile room' for ongoing medical treatment, such as dialysis, or if the size and amount of prescribed equipment required due to their medical condition would not allow for reasonable use of 1 bedroom.

Applicants will only be considered for properties which meet their specific housing need, in terms of property size. The number of actual bed spaces required will be compared with those in a property to ensure that households are only considered for accommodation that meets their established housing need. For example, a three-bedroom property may have either 4, 5 or 6 bed spaces. Applicants who have a need for a property of this size will not be

allocated a three-bedroom property with fewer bedspaces than their need. Studio flats are considered to have one bedspace and are only suitable for a single person household.

Insanitary or otherwise unsatisfactory accommodation

Property condition

The fact that an applicant may be living in a property which is unfit for human habitation, e.g. by having inadequate ventilation or lighting, a lack of an inside WC or cooking facilities, having pest control issues, etc does not automatically mean that the authority must accept a duty to assist them under the Housing Act 1996 Part VI.

Before any priority banding is awarded to reflect the poor condition of an applicant's property, enquiries will be necessary to establish if the applicant has explored all reasonable avenues to effect essential repairs or improvements, e.g. by contacting the landlord responsible for maintaining the property with a view to getting repairs completed.

Private Sector Enforcement Officers will advise both applicants and the Housing Options Team on the specific options available to a household living in unsatisfactory conditions.

The award of a banding priority can only be made after consultation and liaison with a Private Sector Enforcement Officer to ensure a consistent approach. The Private Sector Enforcement Officer will make recommendations regarding priority.

Lacks exclusive use of facilities

The council considers that any eligible and qualifying applicant who lacks their own exclusive use of facilities in their present accommodation are living in unsatisfactory accommodation and will be considered in Reasonable Preference category C for the purposes of this scheme. Mostly this applies to: people living in shared accommodation such as HMOs; lodgers; people living with relatives or friends and those who are 'NFA' or 'sofa surfing' as they have

no housing. It does not apply to applicants who hold any tenancy (either solely or jointly) of a self-contained property; nor does it apply to the co-habiting spouse or partner of any person who holds any such tenancy, nor does it apply to applicants who own- in whole or in part- any property in the UK or abroad.

High-rise with children

The council may award Reasonable Preference to applicants living above the 4th floor with children aged 16 and younger. Each case will be reviewed individually, taking into account the landlord's current policy of children living at height.

Applicants seeking Older Person's housing

The council considers that any eligible and qualifying applicant who is at least 55 years of age and wishes to move to age-designated housing (either with or without onsite support) and who currently does not live in accommodation of this type is living in unsatisfactory housing for the purposes of this scheme and will be considered to be in Reasonable Preference category C.

Appendix 2

Reasonable Preference Category D: applicants who need to move on medical grounds, including grounds relating to a disability

In considering whether an applicant requires a move on grounds relating to health or disability, the council considers that all of the government's following suggested indicators of criteria relating to Reasonable Preference category D may apply:

- a mental illness or disorder
- a physical or learning disability
- chronic or progressive medical conditions (e.g. MS, HIV/AIDS)
- infirmity due to old age
- the need to give or receive care
- the need to recover from the effects of violence or threats of violence, or physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- ability to fend for self restricted for other reasons
- young people at risk
- people with behavioural difficulties
- need for adapted housing and/or extra facilities, bedroom or bathroom
- need for improved heating (on medical grounds)
- need for sheltered housing (on medical grounds)
- need for ground floor accommodation (on medical grounds)
- need to be near friends/relatives or medical facility on medical grounds
- need to move following hospitalisation or long term care

The presence alone of any particular medical condition or set of circumstances does not guarantee an award of Reasonable Preference on medical, welfare or disability grounds. The council will assess whether the current accommodation is causing, exacerbating or hindering recovery from the situation. The council will also consider whether it would instead be reasonable to stay in the current accommodation. For example: by providing adaptations to meet the access needs of a disabled person; by assisting with provision of care in the home or transport to receive care; in the case of of victims of anti-social behaviour by taking relevant tenancy enforcement and police action against the perpetrators.

Appendix 3

Reasonable Preference category E: Hardship grounds

An award of Reasonable Preference Category E will be made where the applicant demonstrates that they:

- need to move to a particular locality within the Oldham MBC area to give or receive care; access specialised medical treatment or to take up an employment, education or training opportunity
- will be caused hardship if they are prevented from moving on these grounds

In determining whether to make an award for this reason, the council will consider the availability of transport links and the applicant's ability to utilise them as well as the means of the applicant's carer (if applicable) to travel to them to provide support. It will also consider whether appropriate support is available closer to the applicant's current home. In the case of employment, the council considers that work (or job offers) of a permanent nature of at least 16 hours per week to be employment relevant to this section. In the case of education or training opportunities, it will consider whether similar opportunities are available closer to the applicant's current home.

An award of Reasonable Preference E is not intended to apply to applicants who have needs in common with others, e.g.: those who wish to move closer to a child's school. That is unless there are particular overriding factors applying to the person which are not shared in common with others. In all cases, the council will require evidence that the applicant will be caused genuine hardship by not being able to move; e.g. evidence of the applicant's (or carer's) current income and expenditure.

Appendix 4- Lettings plan 2026-2027

To assist the council in achieving its corporate objectives, including its homelessness reduction goals, the council will produced a lettings plan. The plan details the proportion of vacancies it anticipates will go to each category of applicant over a one-year period through Choice Based Lettings (CBL), by property size.

The council believes the anticipated proportion of lets by category in the table will adequately address a wide range of housing need in the borough. However, many factors can influence lettings performance and who ultimately is allocated a particular property through CBL. Therefore, if the council believes its lettings plan targets are not being met, it will restrict bidding to- or prioritise- certain applicants for some vacancies. E.g., if there is a rise in homelessness, the council is not achieving its proportion of lets to homeless households, or it requires greater move-on opportunities for people ready to leave supported accommodation it may consider applicants from band 2, category 1 and/or category 2, etc, before all other bidders.

EXAMPLE:

Band & category	OP accom	1bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
All Band 1	**10%**	**12.5%**	**12.5%**	**12.5%**	**12.5%**
Band 2 cat 1	**2.5%**	**17.5%**	**30%**	**37.5%**	**37.5%**
Band 2 cat 2	**1%**	**5%**	**30%**	**37.5%**	**37.5%**
Band 2 cat 3-7	**25%**	**25%**	**10%**	**5%**	**5%**
Band 3 cat 1-3	**30%**	**12.5%**	**7.5%**	**5%**	**5%**
Band 3 cat 4-6	**25%**	**15%**	**5%**	**1%**	**1%**
Band 3 cat 7	**5%**	**12.5%**	**5%**	**1%**	**1%**

All Band 4	**<5%**	**<1%**	**<1%**	**<1%**	**<1%**
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The plan will be reviewed annually or as required through regular monitoring of lettings and housing needs data and will be agreed with the relevant Director and portfolio holder. The plan will be developed in conjunction with the Common Allocation Framework Providers.

Appendix 5

Extra Care Housing

Assessment and Allocation Guidance October 2023



ECH Procedure and Guidance Oct 2023 (

APPENDIX 6

LIST OF LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The following statues, statutory guidance and regulations have been considered in drafting this scheme:

- Section 17 Childrens Act 1989
- The 1996 Housing Act (Part VI) as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002
- The Housing Act 1996 (Part VII) as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance for Local Housing Authorities in England (MHCLG 2012, as amended) including:
- Providing social housing for local people (December 2024)
- Right to Move and social housing allocations (March 2015)
- Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse (January 2022)
- Improving access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces (December 2024)
- The Allocation of Housing (qualification criteria for Armed Forces Personnel) (England) Regulations 2012 and supplementary statutory guidance December 2013
- Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- Allocation of housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations
- Homeless Strategy 2021 (OMBC)
- Tenancy Strategy 2015 (OMBC)

APPENDIX 7

LIST OF COMMON ALLOCATIONS FRAMEWORK (CAF) MEMBERS

Provider	Address	Telephone	Website
Oldham Council	Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham OL1 1UT	0161 770 3000	www.oldham.gov.uk
First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO)	22 Union Street Oldham OL1 1BE	0161 393 7117	www.fcho.co.uk
Guinness Northern Counties	3 Argyle Parade Darnhill, Heywood Rochdale OL10 3RY	0845 605 9000	www.ncha.co.uk
Onwards	Quay Plaza 2 1st floor – Lowry Mall Salford Quays Salford M50 3AH	0345 620 1120	www.onwards.co.uk
Regenda	St Chad's Centre Limegreen Parade Oldham OL8 3HH	0344 736 0066	www.regenda.org.uk
ForHousing	2 Fircroft Road Fitton Hill Oldham OL8 2QN	0300 123 5522	www.fourhousing.co.uk
Housing 21	Housing 21 Units 403 / 404 Chambers Business Centre Chapel Road Hollinwood	0345 604 4447	www.housing21.co.uk

	Oldham OL8 4QQ		
Great Places	119 Union Street Oldham OL1 1TE	0161 484 3242	www.greatplaces.org.uk

[END]

IA TITLE

Allocation Policy Review

IA OWNER

Tahra Amir

IA REFERENCE

$di3brqym

PORTFOLIO

Building a Better Oldham

DIRECTORATE

People

SERVICE

Communities

BUDGET REDUCTION?

No

STATUS

Complete

COMPLETION DATE

12-Feb-2026

Group	Category
Equality Characteristic 1	Age
Equality Characteristic 2	Disability
Equality Characteristic 3	Gender Reassignment
Equality Characteristic 4	Marriage and civil partnership
Equality Characteristic 5	Pregnancy and maternity
Equality Characteristic 6	Race
Equality Characteristic 7	Religion or belief
Equality Characteristic 8	Sex
Equality Characteristic 9	Sexual orientation
Equality Characteristic 10	Care leavers
Corporate Priority 1	Green And Growing
Corporate Priority 2	A Great Place To Live
Corporate Priority 3	Happier Healthier Lives

Impact	Likelihood	Duration	Overall Impact Score
Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8
Moderate Positive	Possible	Long Term	2
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0
Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8

Required comment
g would enable our aging community to
uld be proactive in assisting this cohort
homes being offered to the right people
upport this cohort in sustaining a home
unities by creating quality long term lets

Columns to the right only require completion where indicated.

For any category where there is a Negative Impact
Mandatory
Optional

For any category where there is a Strong Positive Impact, but Likelihood is Possible
Mandatory
Optional

What action can be taken to mitigate the potential negative impacts?	Actions	Owners	Timescales

If the negative impacts can't be mitigated, why should the project/decision proceed?	What action can be taken to increase the likelihood that positive impacts are realised?

Action	Owner	Timescale

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Report to CABINET

Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive - Place

Report Author: Lauren Hargreaves, Strategic Planning and Information
Ext. 3843

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

To approve the publication of Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024 - 2025.

Executive Summary

As required under the 2019 revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations the Council has prepared an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for the monitoring period 2024 – 2025. The IFS provides a summary of the financial contributions the Council has secured through Section 106 (s106) agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through Section 278 (s278) agreements. The IFS is attached at Appendix one.

Recommendations

It is recommended to approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024 - 2025 for publication.

Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25

1 Background

1.1 As required under the 2019 revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations the Council has prepared an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for the monitoring period 2024 – 2025. The IFS provides a summary of the financial contributions the Council has secured through Section 106 (s106) agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through Section 278 (s278) agreements. This includes Unilateral Undertakings[1].

1.2 Oldham's IFS 2024 - 2025 is attached at Appendix one.

1.3 The information included in the IFS will be updated annually and published on the Council's website. This will ensure the most up to date information on the amount of developer contributions received from new developments, and where these monies have been spent, is readily available to members of the public and other interested parties.

2 Current Position

2.1 In summary, the IFS sets out:

- The total amount of money received through s106 during 2024/25 is £532,077.19 (including interest).
- In total there are £3,263,668.71 s106 receipts which have been received but have not been allocated[2] – of this £3,156,158.94 (including interest accrued) was received before the reporting year (prior to 2024/25).
- A total of seven agreements were signed during 2024 – 2025. The commuted sums negotiated during the year have a combined value of £688,020.
- One of the agreements (no.487) also included an obligation to pay a further affordable housing contribution if the profit on the development exceeds 20% of the total development sales value. The viability review to determine this is to commence no later than the occupation of the 23rd dwelling.

[1] A unilateral undertaking is a type of planning obligation entered into by a person with an interest in the land *without* the local planning authority being a party to it. It is made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is legally binding, and runs with the land (Planning Obligations Planning Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations).

[2] As applicable to the monitoring year of 2024/25. S106 funds are received and allocated throughout the year, and as such some of this may now be allocated or even spent.

- One of the agreements (no.489) was non-financial and agreed that "the Owners [of the dwelling] covenant with the Council not to cause or permit the Extension to be Occupied as a Separate Dwelling".

- Non-monetary contributions secured during the reported year:

    - The total number of affordable housing units: two homes (to be sold/ rented as discounted market sales housing).
    - The number of school places and category of school: none.

- The total amount of s106 expenditure for the reported year (including transferring it to another department to spend) is £685,258.15.

- A total of £951,999.93 of s106 receipts are allocated for infrastructure projects (and/ or maintenance) but are unspent (as of 31 March 2025). Of this, £55,784.22 was allocated in 2024/25 (but has not been spent during 2024/25).

- It is important to note that there is often a lag of time between receipt and expenditure of s106 contributions. This is because funds have to be allocated to particular schemes which may take time to deliver, and/or are allocated for maintenance of infrastructure over a long period of time, meaning expenditure is spread over a number of years.

- The amount of s106 spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, was nil.

- The Council does not currently charge for the monitoring of s106 fees, therefore the amount of s106 received/ spent in respect of monitoring is nil.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1 – To approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2024 - 2025 for publication on the Council's website and send it to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

(Advantages – approving the IFS meets the requirements of the regulations and is transparent). (Disadvantages – there are no disadvantages to approving the IFS.)

3.2 Option 2 – To not approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2024 – 2025 and not publish it on the Council's website and not send it to MHCLG.

(Advantages – there are no advantages in not approving the IFS.) (Disadvantages – not approving the IFS would result in us not meeting the regulations.)

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1 – To approve the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2024 - 2025 for publication on the Council's website and send it to MHCLG.

5 Consultation

5.1 N/A. The report is reporting s106 agreements made and is made available for the public to view.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-2025 will be published on the Council Website. Therefore, no additional revenue costs will be charged to the service.

The S106 figures mentioned in the report have been checked and verified.

(Mohammed Hussain)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Under Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2019), in each calendar year the Council must publish an annual infrastructure funding statement which comprises specified details about planning obligations entered into during the reported year. The statement may also include summary details of any funding or provision of infrastructure which is to be provided through a section 278 Highways Act agreement which was entered into during the reported year. The Council must publish each annual infrastructure funding statement on its website. (A Evans)

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 None. (S Kapoor- Commercial Procurement Unit)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes, please see appendix two - Oldham Impact Assessment for the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25.

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 RBO-03-26

12 Background Papers

12.1 There are no background papers for this report.

13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix one: Oldham's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25 (including appendix tables 1-3).
13.2 Appendix two: Oldham Impact Assessment for the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25.

Oldham Local Plan

Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024-25

March 2026

Oldham Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides a summary of financial contributions for 2024-25 that the Council has secured through Section 106 (s106) agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through section 278 (s278) agreements. This includes Unilateral Undertakings[1].

1.2 In summary, the report provides:

- an overview of s106 agreements;
- details of the Council's internal process relating to s106 contributions;
- the s106 contributions paid to the Council in the 2024/25 monitoring period;
- s106 contributions estimated for future years; and
- projects delivered in the borough via s106 agreements in the 2024/25 monitoring period.

1.3 The information included in the report will be updated annually and published on the Council's website[2]. This will ensure the most up to date information on the amount of developer contributions received from new developments, and where these monies have been spent, is readily available to members of the public and other interested parties.

1.4 The report does not include information on the infrastructure delivered on-site as part of new developments in the borough.

1.5 Please note that data on developer contributions should be treated with caution because it represents a given point in time and can be subject to change. However, the data reported within this document is the most robust available at the time of publication.

Section 106 Planning Obligations

1.6 Under Section 106 (s106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 a Local Planning Authority (LPA) can seek planning obligations when it is considered that a development will have negative impacts that cannot be dealt with through conditions on the planning permission.

1.7 For example, new residential developments place additional pressure on existing social, physical and economic infrastructure in the surrounding area. Planning obligations aim to balance this extra pressure with improvements to the surrounding area to ensure that a development makes a positive contribution to the local area.

1.8 The obligations may be provided by the developers "in kind" – that is, where the developer builds, or provides directly, the matters necessary to fulfil the obligation.

[1] A unilateral undertaking is a type of planning obligation entered into by a person with an interest in the land *without* the local planning authority being a party to it. It is made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is legally binding, and runs with the land (Planning Obligations Planning Guidance: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations).

[2] Available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/3154/infrastructure_funding_statement

This might be to build a certain number of affordable homes on-site, for example. Alternatively, planning obligations can be met in the form of financial payments to the Council to provide off-site infrastructure works or contributions towards providing affordable housing elsewhere in the borough. In some cases, it can be a combination of both on-site provision and off-site financial contributions.

1.9 The Council cannot ask for contributions via section 106 planning obligations in certain circumstances. With regards to affordable housing, national planning guidance stipulates that planning obligations for affordable housing should only be sought for residential developments that are major developments.

1.10 For residential development, major development is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more.

1.11 Planning obligations should also not be sought from any development consisting only of the construction of a residential annex or extension to an existing home[3].

The Council's S106 process for securing off-site financial contributions

1.12 Where it is determined that on-site infrastructure and/or affordable housing required by a particular policy is not appropriate, the Council will request from developers a financial contribution to meet these needs outside of the development site through a s106 obligation.

1.13 Oldham's current Local Plan – the Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document[4] (Joint DPD) will inform the planning obligations sought for new development. In addition to individual plan policies relating to different types of infrastructure (examples provided below), Policy 25 'Developer Contributions' of the Local Plan sets out the policy and process for securing s106 planning obligations.

1.14 In addition, relevant policies within the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (PfE)[5] also set out policy relating to infrastructure and planning obligations, including policies within:

- the housing chapter (JP-H2 and JP-H3);
- the sustainable and resilient places chapter (JP-S1 to JP-S6);
- the places for people chapter (JP-P1 to JP-P7);
- the connected places chapter (JP-C1 to JP-C8);

[3] As set out in Planning Practice Guidance 2019 Paragraph 023: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations

[4] The Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Joint DPD) (2012): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/978/joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies_development_plan_documents_dpds

[5] The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD)[5], is a strategic plan that covers nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts - Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The Plan took effect and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the nine PfE authorities on 21 March 2024.

- Chapter 11 – Oldham Strategic Allocations (allocation policies for housing and employment development containing infrastructure requirements);
- JP-D1 (Infrastructure Implementation); and
- JP-D2 (Developer Contributions).

1.15 The financial contribution requirement for off-site green infrastructure provision and maintenance (including open space, sport and recreation) is in line with Oldham's Local Plan Policy 23, and is informed, where appropriate, by the Open Space Study (2022)[6] and Oldham's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2025)[7], which provides evidence on open space, sport and recreation needs. The Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper (2025)[8] provides further information on this policy also.

1.16 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory from 12 February 2024 for major developments and 2 April 2024 for minor developments[9]. This requires developments, unless exempt, to meet a minimum of 10% BNG. Where this cannot be achieved in full on-site the developer is required to find off-site solutions to achieve the target. This presents opportunities across the borough to enhance biodiversity.

1.17 Policy 10 of the Local Plan sets the tariff for affordable housing contributions and should be read alongside affordable housing and developer contribution policy in NPPF. The Housing Delivery Interim Planning Position Paper (2025)[10] provides further information on this policy also.

1.18 Policy 2 'Communities' which includes education and skills provision, (and Policy 25 'Developer Contributions') of the Local Plan set out the basis for seeking to secure new and/or improved education facilities and provision through S106 developer contributions. Developer contributions towards education provision, such as school places, will be gathered in line with national regulations. The Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper (2021)[11] provides further information.

1.19 Contributions toward required highway works as a result of new development is agreed on a case-by-case basis, evidenced by an assessment of the impact the development will have on the local highways and mitigation works required to minimise this impact.

1.20 Once the s106 has been signed, it is an obligation, but it will only be realised if the planning permission is implemented and reaches the trigger point for payment, such as commencement or prior to occupation of a set number of homes. When the

[6] Oldham Open Space Study (2022): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2184/open_space_study_documents_2022
[7] Oldham Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2025): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence/3270/playing_pitch_and_outdoor_sports_strategy_2025
[8] Open Space Interim Planning Position Paper (2025): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201234/interim_planning_position_papers
[9] BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
[10] Housing Delivery Interim Planning Position Paper (2025): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201234/interim_planning_position_papers
[11] Education Contributions Interim Planning Position Paper (2021): https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201234/interim_planning_position_papers

planning permission is granted, the s106 obligation is registered as a land charge which stays with the land, obligating any future owners until the terms are met.

2. S106 Contributions Summary

2.1 The total amount of money received through s106 during 2024/25 is £532,077.19 (including interest).

2.2 In total there are £3,263,668.78 s106 receipts (including interest) which have been received but have not been allocated[12] – of this £3,156,158.94 (including interest acrued) was received before the reporting year (prior to 2024/25).

2.3 A total of seven agreements were signed during 2024 – 2025. The commuted sums negotiated during the year have a combined value of £688,020 (see table 1 for details).

2.4 One of the agreements (no.487) also included an obligation to pay a further affordable housing contribution if the profit on the development exceeds 20% of the total development sales value. The viability review to determine this is to commence not later than the occupation of the 23rd dwelling.

2.5 One of the agreements (no.489) was non-financial and agreed that "the Owners [of the dwelling] covenant with the Council not to cause or permit the Extension to be Occupied as a Separate Dwelling".

2.6 Non-monetary contributions secured during the reported year:

- The total number of affordable housing units: 2 units (to be sold/ rented as discounted market sales housing).
- The number of school places and category of school: none

2.7 The total amount of s106 expenditure for the reported year (including transferring it to another department to spend) is £685,258.15 the schemes are listed in table 2 below.

2.8 A total of £951,999.93 of s106 receipts are allocated for infrastructure projects (and/ or maintenance) but are unspent (as of 31 March 2025). Of this, £55,784.22 was allocated in 2024/25 (but has not been spent during 2024/25). Further details of the items of infrastructure and the amount of money allocated to each item are set out in table 3 below.

2.9 It is important to note that there is often a lag of time between receipt and expenditure of s106 contributions, as funds have to be allocated to particular schemes which may take time to deliver, and/or are allocated for maintenance of infrastructure over a long period of time, meaning expenditure is spread over a number of years.

2.10 The amount of s106 spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, was nil.

2.11 The Council does not currently charge for the monitoring of s106 fees, therefore the amount of s106 received/ spent in respect of monitoring is nil.

2.12 Tables 1, 2 and 3 (below) are also available as csv files on the Council's website.

[12] As applicable to the monitoring year of 2024/25. S106 funds are received and allocated throughout the year, and as such some of this may now be allocated or even spent.

Table 1: Section 106 agreements signed 2024/25

S106 Reference Number	Planning Application Number	Location of Development	Date S106 Signed	S106 Description	Amount Due
487	347760	Land at Bottom Field Farm, Medlock Road, Failsworth M35 9UA	16/05/2024	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £300,000 to be used for the provision of affordable housing within the Borough of Oldham: £150,000 not later than the occupation of the 13th dwelling and £150,000 not later than the occupation of the 23rd dwelling. Interest due of late payment. No expiry once paid. There is also an obligation to pay a further affordable housing contribution if the profit on the development exceeds 20% of the total development sales value. The viability review to determine this is to commence not later than the occupation of the 23rd dwelling.	£300,000*
488	351515	Land adjacent to The Grapes, 161 St John St, Lees	08/08/2024	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £12,900 for the provision of 43 trees to be planted off site within the Borough of Oldham on or before the commencement of development.	£12,900
489	352438	68 Suffolk Street, Werneth, Oldham, OL9 7DH	17/10/2024	The Owners covenant with the Council not to cause or permit the Extension to be Occupied as a Separate Dwelling	N/a**
490	350819	2 Bridge Street, Oldham, OL1 1EA	01/02/2025	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £61,220.04 as a contribution towards the reinstatement and improvement of public open space at George Square Oldham. The Council must spend or allocate the commuted sum within 5 years from the date payment is made. The landowner is also required to provide 2 one bedroom apartments identified on the Affordable Housing Plan at Appendix 1 which are subject to restrictions detailed in the First Schedule including that the apartments must not be sold at more than 70% of their open market value or (if applicable) not rented at more than 70% of the local market	£61,220.04

S106 Reference Number	Planning Application Number	Location of Development	Date S106 Signed	S106 Description	Amount Due
				rent for similar properties in the Borough of Oldham.	
491	352533	36 Delph Road, Denshaw, OL3 5RY	24/10/2024	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay the Council a commuted sum of £2,400 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.	£2,400
494	346949	Land adjacent to 11 Willow Court, Holt Lane, Failsworth, M35 0HH	20/03/2025	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £1,500 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.	£1,500
495	353689	Foxdenton Lane/ Broadway R3, Chadderton, Oldham	10/03/2025	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay £310,000 to the Council to fund the provision of primary school places within a 2-mile radius of the site in the following instalments: £155,000 prior to Occupation of 50% of the Dwellings on Phase R3; £155,000 prior to Occupation of 75% of the Dwellings on Phase R3.	£310,000
Total					**£688,020**

*See paragraph 2.4 above.
**See paragraph 2.5 above.

Table 2: Section 106 spent 2024/25

S106 Reference Number	Site Description	Planning Application Number	Scheme Details	Amount Spent	Date Spent
113	Land off St. Phillips Drive, Royton	28527 & 29364	For maintenance of public open space following transfer for minimum of 12 years from 2011/12	£287.92	13/05/2024
143	Land at Refuge Street, former Osram's recreational ground	42855 & 48264	Future maintenance following improvements to Land at Refuge Street for the next ten years	£1,216.00	13/05/2024
144	Land off Rosebay Close (development off High Barn Road, Royton)	43101	Ongoing maintenance of public open space transferred to the Council from 2011/12 onwards	£3,000.00	13/05/2024
155	Village Manor, Uppermill	45361	Annual maintenance of exercise equipment and surface	£1,670.00	13/05/2024
198	Lees Park, Kingsley Drive	45254	Maintenance of Lees Park play scheme	£518.00	13/05/2024
200	St Mary's Churchyard, Oldham	49296	Ongoing future maintenance of Environmental improvements to St Mary's Churchyard, Oldham from 2011/12 onwards	£286.65	13/05/2024
204	Limeside Park	45636	Maintenance of MUGA in Limeside Park from 2011/12 onwards	£245.25	13/05/2024
212	Oldham Edge, Oldham	50446	Maintenance of Oldham Edge Playbuilder scheme for 12 years commencing in 2011/12	£550.85	13/05/2024
215	Manor House, Manor Road	45486	Maintenance of on-site public open space from 2017/18 onwards for 12 years	£1,028.00	13/05/2024
226	Incline Green Park, Incline Road, Hollinwood	51348	Maintenance for a minimum of 12 years from 2012/13 of the play area at Cardigan Road, Hollinwood	£2,600.00	13/05/2024
265	Werneth Park	52229 & 53570 & 54331	Maintenance of outdoor gym equipment and associated landscape works	£4,412.00	13/05/2024
277	Land off Lime Lane, Failsworth	38036	Ongoing maintenance of public open space following land transfer (from 2011/12 onwards)	£413.09	13/05/2024
292	Shaw Memorial Gardens, Westway, Shaw	48976 & 55434	Ongoing maintenance of Shaw Memorial Gardens	£500.00	13/05/2024

S106 Reference Number	Site Description	Planning Application Number	Scheme Details	Amount Spent	Date Spent
299	St Mary's estate - Near Poppy Road, former Jesperson Way	57455	Maintenance of onsite public open space	£4,000.00	13/05/2024
300	Moston Brook	54021	Maintenance of improvements at Moston Brook from 15/16 onwards for approximately 12 years	£543.80	13/05/2024
301	Cardigan Road play area, Hollinwood	57174	Maintenance of refurbished PC Armitage Memorial Garden from 2018/19 onwards for approximately 12 years	£850.00	13/05/2024
325	On site public open space at Borough Mill, off Nield Street	58539	Maintenance of onsite play facilities and public open space at Borough Mill	£2,500.00	13/05/2024
333	Widdop Street, Oldham	59478	Maintenance of improvements to Widdop Street Play Area	£900.00	13/05/2024
340	Ladhill Bridge, Ladhill Lane, Greenfield	58938	Maintenance and sinking fund for illuminated signs at Ladhill Bridge	£100.00	13/05/2024
344	Churchill Playing Fields, Greenfield	332927	Maintenance for 10 years at least of exercise equipment and surface/access improvements	£3,388.00	13/05/2024
345	Land at the former Lumb Mill, Huddersfield Road, Delph S106	59208 & 59225	Implementation of Woodland management plan (annual maintenance) from 2018 onwards @ £2,440 per annum	£2,440.00	13/05/2024
350	Land at Spencer Street Oldham	59206	Maintenance of onsite public open space and play area transferred to Council	£7,000.00	13/05/2024
351	Moor Street Play Area	333310	Enhancement to Moor Street play area and works to woodland (plus commitment to ongoing maintenance)	£1,450.00	13/05/2024
369	Land at Westwood Park	332891	Maintenance of play equipment, bespoke play wall feature and associated landscaping for ten years at £3,500 per annum. Maintenance of new Multi Use Games Area fencing, surface, etc, general site maintenance at £3,500 per annum for 10 years plus any interest accrued. Maintenance of lighting at £800 per annum.	£7,800.00	13/05/2024

S106 Reference Number	Site Description	Planning Application Number	Scheme Details	Amount Spent	Date Spent
377	Salmon Fields, Royton Linear Path	58425	Salmon fields path / infrastructure improvements and signage installation plus ongoing future maintenance	£1,000.00	13/05/2024
385	Waterhead Park	336585	Play space resurfacing works and landscaping work at Waterhead park.	£2,500.00	13/05/2024
389	Land at Failsworth Mill, Ashton Road West, Failsworth	337967	Clearance and improvements to the tow path surface where damage has occurred to maintain good accessibility and to carry out additional environmental and greenspace improvements to enhance the biodiversity of the stretch of canal/tow path, and to encourage increased use of the route supporting active travel & reducing local journeys by car.	£8,307.50	16/04/2025
405	Keb Lane	340354	Annual tree planting	£2,000.00	13/05/2024
416	Hawk Mill	26894	Ongoing maintenance of POS for 2019/20 onwards @ £1000 per annum	£1,000.00	13/05/2024
427	Stamford Drive/Woodhouse Park Playspace	34055	Improvements to Stamford Drive/Woodhouse Park Playspace, plus ongoing future maintenance	£279.33	13/05/2024
432	Stamford Drive/Woodhouse Park Playspace	343302	Improvements to Stamford Drive/Woodhouse Park Playspace, plus ongoing future maintenance	£3,666.00	13/05/2024
441	Moss Hey Street Shaw	344572	The improvement to the open space provision at Memorial Gardens, Shaw	£19,772.76	31/03/2025
450	Phase R5 & R6 Foxdenton Strategic Site, Broadway Green, Chadderton	345659	Provision of high needs primary school place provision in three schools	£449,033.00	31/03/2025
483	Phase 4, Foxdenton / Broadway Green	351514	Provision of high needs primary school place provision in three schools	£150,000.00	31/03/2025
Total				**£685,258.15**	

Table 3: Section 106 allocated but not spent 2024/25

S106 Reference Number	Location of Development	Planning application number	Details of Spend	Amount allocated to scheme	Amount allocated to maintenance	Date Allocated
73	Newport St	39261	Relining of school entrance markings at Hulme Kindergarten School	£1,897.95		03/09/2015
143	Former Cape Mill, Shaw	42855	Annual maintenance of public open space		£8,396.55	01/04/2015
144	Land off High Barn Road, Royton	43101	Annual maintenance of public open space		£24,783.59	01/04/2011
155	Village Manor, Uppermill	45361	Annual maintenance of exercise equipment and surface		£15,161.78	27/10/2022
183	Oldham Road/Hirons Lane	46020	Sinking fund for Grotton play area		£12,446.41	04/09/2006
196	Coverhill Road Grotton	40896	Sinking fund for Grotton play area		£12,377.33	04/09/2006
215	Manor House, Manor Road	45486	Annual maintenance of public open space		£6,247.44	01/04/2015
226	Byron St, Cardigan Rd, Hollins Rd	51348	Annual maintenance of play area		£3,717.43	19/03/2012
238	Land and Fields New Rd Chadderton - Gem Mill	50951	Sinking fund for Coalshaw Green MUGA		£21,511.03	11/12/2015
265	Suthers Street, Werneth	52229	Maintenance of outdoor gym equipment		£64,813.32	07/10/2002
292	Land at Roundabout Tyres Crompton Way - Lyon Mill	48976 & 55434	Annual maintenance of public open space		£2,524.39	06/03/2012
299	Land at St Mary's Way Oldham	57455	Annual maintenance of public open space		£96,154.43	03/11/2014
300	52-56 Old Road Failsworth	54021	Annual maintenance of public open space		£2,121.72	21/07/2014
301	Land at Byron Street, Hollinwood	57174	Sinking fund for play area and annual maintenance of public open space		£36,990.92	19/03/2012
305	Land at Barry Street/Huddersfield Road, Oldham	57950	Implementation and maintenance of prohibition of waiting area	£2,254.50		15/08/2013
319	Crompton Hall, Buckstones Road, Shaw, OL2 8LS	59220	Woodland tree planting and maintenance		£2,910.73	08/03/2013
325	Developer Land at Borough Mill, Neild Street Oldham	58539	Annual maintenance of POS and play area; and sinking fund for play area.		£38,343.21	04/01/2018
328	Land adj to 9 Duke Street, Oldham	331465	Highway relining scheme at land adjacent to 9 Duke Street Failsworth		£378.92	2015/16

S106 Reference Number	Location of Development	Planning application number	Details of Spend	Amount allocated to scheme	Amount allocated to maintenance	Date Allocated
333	Land adjacent to Madina Mosque, Stansfield Street	59478	Annual maintenance of play area		£5,005.24	06/05/2015
340	Land at Former Greenfield Bowling Club	58938	Annual maintenance of illuminated signs		£68.72	11/04/2016
344	Land at 62-70 Oldham Road, Grasscroft	332927	Annual maintenance of trim trail		£30,761.15	27/10/2022
345	Former Lumb Mill, Huddersfield Rd	59208 & 59225	Annual maintenance of woodland		£12,250.31	20/03/2017
350	Land at Spencer Street Oldham	59206	Annual maintenance of on-site Play area and POS		£50,746.72	01/07/2021
351	Land off Kings Road Shaw	333310	Annual maintenance of Moor Street play area and works to woodland		£18,392.46	08/08/2023
369	Land at Westwood Park	332891	Annual maintenance of play park and MUGA		£69,430.17	12/12/2017
377	Land at Leonard Way, Salmon Fields	58425	Path infrastructure improvements and signage	£13,275.04		26/06/2023
385	580 Ripponden Road	226585	Maintenance of surfacing, play space and landscaping at Waterhead Park		£29,577.91	08/08/2023
389	Land at Failsworth Mill, Ashton Road West, Failsworth	337967	Clearance and improvements to the tow path surface where damage has occurred to maintain good accessibility and to carry out additional environmental and greenspace improvements to enhance the biodiversity of the stretch of canal/tow path, and to encourage increased use of the route supporting active travel & reducing local journeys by car.	£26,595.72		18/06/2024
395	Land at former Rose Mill, Rose St Chadderton	338634	New Community changing facility at Granby Street playing fields	£229,896.86		14/07/2021
405	Keb Lane	340354	Annual tree planting		£4,328.09	21/09/2023
416	Hawk Mill	26894	Annual maintenance of public open space		£5,888.49	01/04/2019

S106 Reference Number	Location of Development	Planning application number	Details of Spend	Amount allocated to scheme	Amount allocated to maintenance	Date Allocated
427	Land at 165 Medlock Road, Failsworth	34055	Stamford Drive Play area refurb and future maintenance		£4,248.59	28/04/2023
432	Land rear of dog and Partridge PH Woodhouses	343302	Stamford Drive Play area refurb and future maintenance		£53,110.38	28/04/2023
441	Moss Hey Street, Shaw	344572	The improvement to the open space at the Memorial Gardens, Shaw		£16,203.93	
460	Land at Former Royton Health Centre, Rochdale Road, Royton	346744	Public open space and infrastructure improvement works at Royton Park - including Path Improvement, Wall Improvements, Informal Play, biodiversity & interpretation, Bowling Green Signage, Play Improvements	£29,188.50		23/12/2024
Total				**£303,108.57**	**£648,891.36**	

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Report to CABINET

Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024-25

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive - Place

Report Author: Reuben Passi, Graduate Planning Office (Policy)
Email: Reuben.passi@oldham.gov.uk

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision
To approve the publication of the Oldham's Monitoring Report (AMR) and 2024 - 2025.

Executive Summary
Under Regulation 34 and 35 of The Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 local planning authorities must make monitoring information available for inspection as soon as possible after the information becomes available. The Monitoring Report covers the previous financial year that is 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. In terms of housing land supply, the Monitoring Report presents the position as of 1 April 2025.

Oldham's Monitoring Report is attached as Appendix 1.

In line with the Regulations the Monitoring Report provides details on whether the Council is meeting the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for preparing the various Local Plan documents. Performance is monitored against the LDS that was in place at the start of the monitoring period. The Monitoring Report also monitors a range of planning indicators, such as housing, employment and biodiversity, which seek to assess the effectiveness of the Council's land-use planning policies, and whether they are

achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development. This is our 21st Monitoring Report.

This year's AMR also includes the Places for Everyone (PfE) Monitoring Report at Appendix 2. PfE is the strategic spatial plan for nine Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), and as such sets out a collective planning policy framework across the nine PfE local authorities. PfE was adopted with effect from 21 March 2024.

The PfE Plan forms part of the nine Local Authority development plans and is used to assess individual planning applications. Local plans need to be consistent with it and neighbourhood plans need to be in general conformity with the plan's strategic policies. The monitoring framework for PfE is set out in Tables 12.1 to 12.7 of PfE. The monitoring report assesses the performance of the PfE against the indicators and policy outcomes in the monitoring framework. This is the second PfE Monitoring Report.

Recommendations

It is recommended to approve the Monitoring Report 2024 - 2025 for publication.

Cabinet 23rd March 2026

Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024-25

1 Background

1.1 Under Regulation 34 and 35 of The Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 local planning authorities must make monitoring information available for inspection as soon as possible after the information becomes available, through the publication of the authorities' Monitoring Report. This Monitoring Report covers the previous financial year that is 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. In terms of housing land supply, the Monitoring Report presents the position as of 1 April 2025.

1.2 Oldham's Monitoring Report is attached at Appendix 1.

1.3 In line with the Regulations the Monitoring Report provides details on whether the Council is meeting the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the various Local Plan documents. Performance is monitored against the LDS that was in place at the start of the monitoring period. The Monitoring Report also monitors a range of planning indicators, such as housing, employment and biodiversity, which seek to assess the effectiveness of the Council's land-use planning policies, and whether they are achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development. This is our 21st Monitoring Report.

1.5 This year's AMR includes the Places for Everyone (PfE) Monitoring Report as an appendix. PfE is the strategic spatial plan for nine Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), and as such sets out a collective planning policy framework across the nine PfE local authorities. The PfE was adopted with effect from 21 March 2024.

1.6 The PfE Plan forms part of the nine Local Authority development plans and is used to assess individual planning applications. Local plans need to be consistent with it and neighbourhood plans need to be in general conformity with the plan's strategic policies. The monitoring framework for PfE is set out in Tables 12.1 to 12.7 of PfE. The monitoring report assesses the performance of the PfE against the indicators and policy outcomes in the monitoring framework.

2 Current Position

2.1 The key indicator results from Oldham's AMR this year are as follows:

Employment

- 8,782 sqm of industrial and commercial floorspace was completed.
- The total amount of employment land available for industrial and commercial use (Use Classes Order Eg) i), B2 and B8) as at 31 March 2025 was 90.83 ha. The total consists of 23.44 ha of saved UDP Business and Industry allocations, 16.89 ha of sites that are

not allocations but have planning permission for employment use and are either unimplemented or under construction and 50.50 ha of land allocated for employment within Places for Everyone.

Housing

- Places for Everyone (PfE) was adopted on 21 March 2024. PfE sets out Oldham's housing requirement for 2022 to 2039 (the PfE plan period). Policy JP-H1 identifies a stepped housing requirement (minimum) for Oldham of 404 homes per year for 2022-2025, 680 homes per year for 2025-2030, and 772 homes per year for 2030-2039. This equates to an annual average of 680 new homes per year.
- The housing requirement of 404 homes per year applies to the assessment of housing delivery for 2024/25 – the base year for this monitoring report – in line with the PfE stepped housing requirement.
- As per paragraph 72 of the current NPPF, local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if: (a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and (b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded. PfE is less than five years old (being adopted on 21 March 2024) and identified a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded. Further information on the PfE housing requirement is set out with JP-H1 of PfE.
- As of 1 April 2024, the Borough's five-year housing land supply contains sufficient land to accommodate 3,520 dwellings before taking into account the clearance allowance. This equates to a 5.6-year supply of deliverable housing land.
- An update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) demonstrates that there is a housing land supply of 12,364 dwellings.
- In 2024/25 there were 578 net housing completions.
- 67% of completions during 2024/25 took place on previously developed land. A further 138 dwellings or 24% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on mixed sites which contain both previously developed and greenfield land. Therefore, 91% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on PDL or mixed sites. The number of dwellings completed on previously developed land is lower than the target however, greenfield sites accounted for only 9% (55 homes) of all homes (578 homes) completed during 2024/25, which is an improvement on the previous year (20%). Despite this, brownfield and mixed sites still make up the majority of sites within the housing land supply.

Heritage

- In 2024/25, there were nine entries in the Borough on the Historic England at Risk Register and this does not include any Scheduled Monuments. This represents 1.6% of all assets in the Borough (555), which is consistent with previous years.

Biodiversity

- In 2024/25, there was an update to the Borough's Sites of Biological Importance in October 2024 which was approved in December 2025 to include a new SBI at Boardman's Edge (Grade B), resulting in a net gain of 5.8 ha for areas of biodiversity importance. This is an improvement from the previous year where there was a net loss of -0.5 ha.

Air Quality

- The level of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particle Matter is slightly lower than last year and well below the target. The number of days where pollution was moderate or higher is also slightly lower than last year.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1 – To approve the Council's Monitoring Report 2024 - 2025 for publication.
(Advantages – approving the Monitoring Report will help with implementing and reviewing our local planning policies, whilst also being transparent and meeting the requirements of the regulations).
(Disadvantages – there are no disadvantages to approving the Monitoring Report.)

3.2 Option 2 – To not approve the Council's Monitoring Report 2024 – 2025.
(Advantages – there are no advantages in not approving the Monitoring Report and)
(Disadvantages – not approving the Monitoring Report could result in less certainty and confidence in developments coming forward and would result in us not meeting the regulations.)

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1 – To approve the Council's Monitoring Report 2024 - 2025 for publication.

5 Consultation

5.1 N/A. The report is concerned with indicators and is made available for the public to view.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The Council will be required to make copies of the Monitoring Report publicly available online, in public libraries and in Members' meeting rooms. The associated costs are expected to be minimal and will be met within the Strategic Planning revenue budget. (Mohammed Hussain)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Under section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), every local planning authority must prepare reports on the implementation of the local development scheme and the extent to which the policies set out in the local development documents are being achieved. The reports must be in respect of a period which the authority considers appropriate in the interests of transparency, which begins with the end of the period covered by the authority's most recent report, and which is not longer than 12 months or such shorter period as is prescribed. The report must also be made available to the public. Under the Council's Local Development Framework scheme of delegation, the annual monitoring report can be approved by the Portfolio Member in consultation with the Executive Director. (A Evans)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 No procurement implications. Skapoor (CPU).

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 Yes (please see Appendix 2: Oldham Impact Assessment for Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024-2025).

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 RBO-04-26

12 **Background Papers**

12.1 There are no background papers for this report.

13 **Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1: Oldham's Monitoring Report
13.2 Appendix 2: Oldham Impact Assessment for Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024-2025

Oldham Local Plan

Oldham's Monitoring Report

April 2024 to March 2025

March 2026

Oldham Council

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Abbreviations

The following is a list of abbreviations used in this report:

AMR – Authorities Monitoring Report

BNG - Biodiversity Net Gain

CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy

DEFRA - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DLUHC - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

DPD – Development Plan Document

FRA - Flood Risk Assessment

GMCA - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Ha - Hectares

HDT - Housing Delivery Test

HMR - Housing Market Renewal

IFS - Infrastructure Funding Statement

JMDPD – Joint Minerals Development Plan Document for Greater Manchester

JNCC - Joint Nature Conservation Committee

JWDPD – Joint Waste Development Plan Document for Greater Manchester

LDD – Local Development Document

LDS – Local Development Scheme

LLFA - Lead Local Flood Authority

LPA - Local Planning Authority

MHCLG – Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government

NDO - Neighbourhood Development Order

NDP - Neighbourhood Development Plan

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

OPOL - Other Protected Open Land

PfE - Places for Everyone

PDL - Previously Developed Land

RAWP – Regional Aggregate Working Party

SAC - Special Area of Conservation

SCI – Statement of Community Involvement

SBI – Sites of Biological Importance

SPA - Special Protection Area

SPD – Supplementary Planning Document

SSSI - Sites of Special Scientific Interest

SUDS - Sustainable Urban Drainage System

Sqm - Square metres

UDP – Unitary Development Plan

Availability of Document

If you would like to receive this information in another format, such as large print, Braille, audio or alternative languages, please call us on 0161 770 4061.

Executive Summary

Local Development Scheme Progress

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) in place at the start of the monitoring period was approved in December 2023. During the monitoring period an update was published which took effect on the 4th March 2025. The revised LDS reflected the latest Local Plan timetables and removed the Places for Everyone (PfE) profile following its adoption.

i) **Performance on the LDS milestones was as follows:**

- Local Plan Review – Work progressed on preparing the Publication Plan stage of the Local Plan review.

ii) **Employment**

- 8,782 sqm of industrial and commercial floorspace was completed in 2024/25.
- 3.16 ha of land was developed for business and industrial uses in 2023/24 (gross).
- The total amount of employment land available for industrial and commercial use (Use Classes Order Eg)i), B2 and B8) as at 31 March 2025 was 90.83 ha. The total consists of 23.44 ha of saved UDP Business and Industrial and Business and Office allocations, 16.89 ha of sites that are not allocations but have planning permission for employment use and are either unimplemented or under construction and 50.50 ha of land allocated for employment within PfE.

iii) **Housing**

- PfE sets out Oldham's housing requirement for 2022 to 2039 (the PfE plan period). Policy JP-H1 identifies a stepped housing requirement (minimum) for Oldham of 404 homes per year for 2022-2025, 680 homes per year for 2025-2030, and 772 homes per year for 2030-2039. This equates to an annual average of 680 new homes per year.
- The housing requirement of 404 homes per year applies to the assessment of housing delivery for 2024/25 – the base year for this monitoring report – in line with the PfE stepped housing requirement.
- PfE is less than five years old (being adopted on 21 March 2024) and identified a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded. Further information on the PfE housing requirement is set out with JP-H1 of PfE. As per paragraph 76 of the current NPPF, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if: (a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and (b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.
- An update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) demonstrates that there is a housing land supply of 12,364 dwellings.
- In 2024/25 there were 578 net housing completions.
- 67% of completions during 2024/25 took place on previously developed land (PDL). A further 138 dwellings or 24% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on

mixed sites which contain both previously developed and greenfield land. Therefore 91% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on PDL or mixed sites. The number of dwellings completed on PDL is lower than the target, however greenfield sites only accounted for 9% (55 homes) of all homes (578 homes) completed during 2024/25, which is an improvement on the previous year (20% of all homes completed in 2023/24 were on greenfield land). Brownfield and mixed sites continue to make up the majority of sites within the housing land supply.

iv) **Heritage**

- In 2024/25, there were nine entries in the borough on the Historic England at Risk Register, and this does not include any Scheduled Monuments. This represents 1.6% of all assets in the borough (555), which is consistent with previous years.

v) **Air Quality**

- The level of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particle Matter is slightly lower than last year and well below the target.
- The number of days where pollution was moderate or higher is slightly lower than last year.

Key Actions

xi) **Collection**

- The Monitoring Report identifies several key actions designed to improve data collection and the ability of the Council to monitor progress against indicators. These actions include working with the Council's Development Management section to continue to develop ICT-based monitoring systems.

xii)**Timetables**

- The Local Development Scheme (LDS) in place at the start of the monitoring period was that approved in December 2023. During the monitoring period an update was published which took effect on the 4th of March 2025. The revised LDS reflected the latest Local Plan timetables and removed the Places for Everyone (PfE) profile following its adoption.

1 Introduction and Context

Oldham's Monitoring Report

1.1 Oldham's Monitoring Report (AMR) covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and sets out the five-year housing land position as of 1 April 2025. The Council has also prepared an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) as required under revised regulations, which sits alongside the monitoring report in a separate document available here[1].

1.2 The requirement to produce monitoring reports is contained within Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by paragraph 113 of the Localism Act 2011). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 - Part 8 Regulation 34 also outlines what should be included within a Monitoring Report. In summary, these are as follows:

- Review actual progress against the LDS timetable;
- List any adopted or approved Local Plan or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that were listed in the LDS;
- Where policies are not being implemented, explain why and set out the steps (if any) to be taken to implement the policy;
- Specify the number of net additional dwellings (including affordable dwellings) delivered during the reporting period and since the policy began, in any part of the area as relevant;
- Detail any Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) or Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) made;
- Report on financial information relating to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts as required under Reg 62(4) CIL Regulations 2012; and
- Detail action taken under Duty to Co-operate requirements during the reporting period.

1.3 The Monitoring Report is the main mechanism for assessing the Local Plan's performance and effects. Places for Everyone (PfE) came into force 21 March 2024. As set out in Appendix 1 - Table 11, PfE has replaced several policies in the Joint DPD. Where a policy has been replaced, if there was an indictor monitored that linked solely to that policy it has been deleted from the AMR.

1.4 The indicators in the main report relate to the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (the Joint DPD), adopted in November 2011. The Monitoring Report for PfE can be found at Appendix 2, the Monitoring Report for the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan can be found at Appendix 3 and the Monitoring Report for the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan can be found at Appendix 4.

1.5 The PfE Monitoring Report establishes the baseline at the point of adoption of PfE in March 2024. Where appropriate indicators have been reported on from the start of the PfE plan period in 2022. The report identifies several PfE indicators for which the first monitoring was for the period 2024/25.

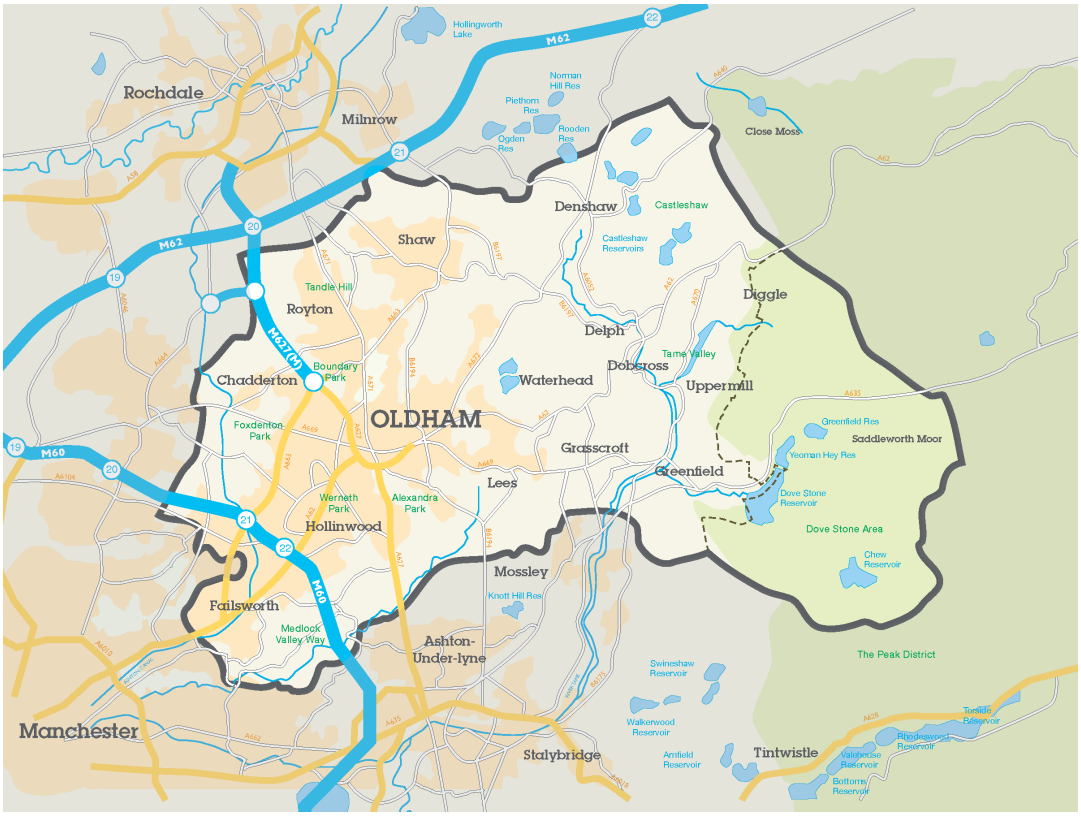
[1] The document can be viewed here: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/3154/infrastructure_funding_statement

Context

1.6 Oldham is situated in the northeast of the Greater Manchester conurbation, four miles from Manchester City Centre and covers an area of 55 square miles. Oldham has a mix of high-density urban areas, suburbs, and semi-rural locations and is in a pivotal position between the cities of Manchester and Leeds. It is made up of the districts of Shaw, Royton, Lees, Failsworth, Saddleworth, Chadderton and the town of Oldham itself. It contains a residential population of 251,560 and 95,422 households[2]. Around half the borough is open countryside and the southeast corner of the borough falls within the Peak District National Park, providing a unique and high-quality rural / semi-rural aspect to the borough.

1.7 The borough is one of contrasts, with significant levels of deprivation but also areas of prosperity. Oldham is home to an increasing, young population with a continuing upward trend in educational attainment. It also has a rich and diverse community with 34.8%[3] of the population being from ethnic minorities (all except white British).

Map showing the borough in its sub-regional setting



1.8 Regeneration, in all its forms - physical, social and economic - plays a huge part in the recent history and future development of the borough. There are still significant challenges that the borough faces on a range of issues including housing conditions; health; educational attainment; strengthening the economy; raising incomes and tackling pockets of high unemployment.

[2] 2025 ONS Household projections for England: 2022-based
[3] Census 2021 – includes defining ethnic minorities as including the 'white other' groups – mostly Eastern European

1.9 Oldham is home to several high-quality higher and further educational facilities including University Campus Oldham, Oldham College, Oldham Sixth Form College and the Regional Science Centre Oldham.

1.10 There are over 8,425 businesses, employing 84,000[4] people in Oldham. These span key sectors including advanced manufacturing, health, construction, digital and creative and financial and professional services. Manufacturing remains an important element of the local economy, including high-technology sectors such as electronic, electrical and instrument engineering. The borough is home to well-known and high-profile businesses including Reach Printing Services, Diodes Incorporated, Park Cake Bakeries, Innovative Technology, Ambassador Textiles, and Nov Mono Pumps.

1.11 Oldham Town Centre lies at the heart of the borough and is the focus for commercial, retail and education activity, whilst the borough's other centres also contribute to the economic, social and environmental fabric of the borough. The Council's ambitions for Oldham Town Centre aim to create a more vibrant, revitalised centre that plays a greater role in Greater Manchester.

1.12 By 2035, Greater Manchester aims to be one of the world's leading sub-regions, driving sustainable growth across a thriving north of England. We want to ensure the sustainability of Oldham Town Centre as a place to work, visit and enjoy in addition, to being where our people can live and take maximum advantage of the services, shops, skills and training they need to enjoy an excellent quality of life.

1.13 Building a Better Oldham[5] is the Council's ambitious transformation programme for the borough and will be achieved by:

- building quality homes
- providing opportunities to learn & gain new skills
- providing opportunities to grow local businesses and create jobs
- ensuring Oldham is the greenest borough
- embedding sustainability, energy efficiency & low (zero) carbon
- improving life-chances, health and well-being of our residents and local communities

1.14 Projects include:

- Introducing residential living into Oldham Town Centre through the development of around 2,000 high-quality new homes alongside vibrant public spaces, and exciting commercial opportunities.
- The redevelopment of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre to provide a new home for Tommyfield Market, new space for work and an improved leisure and entertainment offer for people of all ages, in a way that will safeguard the centre and create a sustainable retail offer for the future.
- Preserving our buildings and heritage to drive Oldham's cultural quarter through, for example, the restoration of the Old Library which will be home to the Oldham Theatre Workshop, a gallery, and a new Council chamber and offices.
- Making it easier and safer to travel around the town centre through Accessible Oldham which is transforming our streets by improving roads, footpaths and public areas, alongside public realm improvements comprising new rain gardens, seating areas and public spaces.

[4] Number of Businesses & Employees - IDBR

[5] Further information can be found at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201248/building_a_better_oldham

- Northern Roots Country Park[6], which as part of the Council's 'Green and Growing' priority will be the UK's largest urban farm and country park, providing new green space for communities from across Oldham and beyond.

1.15 In 2023 the Council signed a Master Development Agreement with placemaker Muse, as its new Strategic Development Partner to deliver the 2,000 new homes across several strategic sites within Oldham Town Centre. Entering into a delivery partnership of this nature is an important step for the Council helping to realise one of the key objectives within the Building a Better Oldham Programme.

1.16 Creating new homes on such a large scale will bring about a huge range of benefits for the whole borough including increased footfall in the town centre and boosting local businesses whilst maximising the opportunities presented by under-utilised sites. The partnership will also provide opportunities for employment, learning, skills and social contributions across the design, procurement, delivery, and operational phases of the projects.

1.17 A Detailed Business Plan has been signed off by the Council and a comprehensive public consultation on the Development Framework took place between July and September 2024. The plans are ambitious and can transform the quality of life enjoyed by those who live, work and visit the borough. The Local Plan is fundamental in the development and delivery of these plans.

[6] Further information can be found at: https://northern-roots.uk/

2 Implementation of the Local Development Scheme

2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("the Act") requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to prepare and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS), which is a project plan listing all the planning documents that the Council proposes to prepare and details their content and timescale for production.

2.2 This section of the Monitoring Report, therefore, examines the progress that the Council has made in preparing the Local Plan documents as set out in the LDS project plan covering the monitoring period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 inclusive. It addresses the questions:

- Have the timetables and milestones for Local Development Document (LDDs) preparation set out in the LDS been met?
- Is progress being made towards them?
- If not, what are the reasons and what action is being taken to address them?

2.3 The assessment of timetables and milestones is undertaken against the LDS that was in force at the start of this monitoring period, which was "Issue 14 Update". A revised LDS was published and took effect on the 4th of March 2025 (Issue 15).

Performance in Preparing Local Development Documents, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Local Development Scheme

2.4 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) in place at the start of the monitoring period was that approved in December 2023. During the monitoring period an update was published which took effect on the 4th of March 2025. The revised LDS reflected the latest Local Plan timetables and removed the Places for Everyone (PfE) profile following its adoption.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Local Plan Review

2.5 Work progressed throughout the monitoring period, preparing evidence and reviewing consultation responses. Preparation of the Publication Plan in early 2026 was the focus of this monitoring period.

Other Local Plan Documents

Neighbourhood Plans

2.6 The New Chadderton Partnership and Saddleworth Parish Council are both in the process of preparing their own neighbourhood plans.

2.7 Saddleworth Parish Council consulted on a draft Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) from 2nd April to 10th June 2024. They are now preparing for pre submission stage.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

2.8 The Council has determined not to proceed with a CIL schedule at this time and therefore no monitoring has or will take place in this regard.

3 The effects of the Local Plan

3.1 This section of the Monitoring Report examines the effects that Oldham's planning policies are having by measuring a series of indicators. It covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The indicators relate to the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (the Joint DPD), adopted in November 2011.

3.2 Key questions to address in this section are:

1. What impact are the policies having on national targets and any other targets identified in LDDs?

2. What significant effects are implementing the policies having on the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainability is defined and are these effects as intended?

IMPACTS ON TARGETS AND OBJECTIVES

BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Indicators

Business, Industry, and the Local Economy **Total amount of additional floorspace by type (Joint DPD Indicator 3)**
Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses (SO3b).
Target: N/A.
Oldham Position: The total floorspace completed during 2024/25 for industrial and commercial uses (use classes Eg)i), B2 and B8) was 8,782 sqm (gross). Of this: • 2,113 sqm was developed for Eg)i) uses; • 1,705 sqm was developed for B2 uses • 455 sqm was developed for B8 uses; and • 4,509 sqm was developed for a mixture of Eg)i), B2 and B8 uses. The total floorspace completed in previous years was as follows: • 2023/24: 27,848 sqm • 2022/23: 48,635 sqm • 2021/22: 746 sqm • 2020/21: 2,938 sqm • 2019/20: 11,223 sqm • 2018/19: 10,734 sqm • 2017/18: 13,416 sqm • 2016/17: 3,565.5 sqm • 2015/16: 2,676 sqm • 2014/15: 8,976 sqm • 2013/14: 1,643 sqm

Business, Industry, and the Local Economy

Total amount of additional floorspace by type (Joint DPD Indicator 3)

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Business, Industry, and the Local Economy

Total Amount of employment floorspace (gross) on previously developed land by type (Joint DPD Indicator 4).

Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by ensuring the effective and efficient use of land and buildings (SO1c).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: 100% of the floorspace developed for employment was on previously developed land in 2024/25.

In 2023/24, there was one completion on greenfield land that accounted for 34% of the total completions and in 2022/23 there was one completion on greenfield land that accounted for 31% of the total completions.

Prior to that the total floorspace developed for employment on previously developed land had been 100% for five years.

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Business, Industry, and the Local Economy

Employment land available by type (Joint DPD Indicator 5).

Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses (SO3b).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: The total amount of employment land available for industrial and commercial use (Use Classes Order Eg)i), B2 and B8) as at 31 March 2025 was 90.83 ha. The total consists of 23.44 ha of saved UDP Business and Industrial and Business and Office allocations, 16.89 ha of sites that are not allocations but have planning permission for employment use and are either unimplemented or under construction and 50.50 ha of land allocated for employment within PfE.

In previous years the total amount of employment land available was:

- 2023/24: 100.72 ha
- 2022/23: 57.7 ha
- 2021/22: 62.39 ha
- 2020/21: 67 ha
- 2019/20: 60.43 ha
- 2018/19: 70.56 ha
- 2017/18: 72.07 ha

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Business, Industry, and the Local Economy

Employment land lost to other uses (Joint DPD Indicator 6)

Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses (SO3b).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: In April 2024, construction began for 70 homes on a site that was allocated for Business and Industry in Diggle, resulting in a loss of 2.6 hectares of employment land.

Action needed: The Strategic Planning and Information section will continue to work with Development Management to improve the monitoring of this indicator, resources permitting.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Business, Industry and the Local Economy

Land developed for business and industry (Joint DPD Indicator 7)

Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by providing employment land which is fit for the 21st century for existing and new businesses (SO3b).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: 3.16 ha of land was developed for business and industrial uses in 2024/25. Of this:

- 1.71 ha was developed for E g) i) (office) uses;
- 0.10 ha was developed for B2 uses;
- 0.56 ha was developed for B8 uses and
- 0.78 ha was developed for a mixture of Eg)i), B2 and B8 uses.

The total land completed in previous years was as follows:

- 2023/24: 7.95 ha
- 2022/23: 12.12 ha
- 2021/22: 0.18 ha
- 2020/21: 1.35 ha
- 2019/20: 5.08 ha
- 2018/19: 2.97 ha
- 2017/18: 5.26 ha
- 2016/17: 1.73 ha
- 2015/16: 0.74 ha
- 2014/15: 2.15 ha
- 2013/14: 0.46 ha
- 2012/13: 4.31 ha

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Business, Industry and the Local Economy

New business registration rate (Joint DPD Indicator 8)

Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by addressing the worklessness agenda, tackling deprivation and creating skilled and accessible jobs for local residents (SO3a).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: In 2024, 1,200 new businesses were formed in Oldham. This is the latest information available.

In previous years business formation was:

- 2023: 1,005
- 2022: 1,335
- 2021: 1,070
- 2020: 1,245
- 2019: 1,270
- 2018: 910
- 2017: 1,060
- 2016: 1,500
- 2015: 940
- 2014: 865
- 2013: 965
- 2012: 695

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.

Source: Oldham Council and Inter Departmental Business Register

Business, Industry and the Local Economy

Overall employment rate (Joint DPD Indicator 9)

Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by addressing the worklessness agenda, tackling deprivation and creating skilled and accessible jobs for local residents (SO3a).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: Oldham's employment rate for ages 16 - 64 was 67.4% as at 2025.

In previous years the rate was:

- 2024: 75.4%
- 2023: 75%
- 2022: 66%
- 2021: 69%
- 2020: 71.1%
- 2019: 68.1%
- 2018: 68.1%
- 2017: 67.5%
- 2016: 68.6%
- 2015: 63.3%
- 2014: 63.6%
- 2013: 64.7%

Action needed: None.

Business, Industry and the Local Economy Overall employment rate (Joint DPD Indicator 9)
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.
Source: Oldham Council and Annual Population Survey

Business, Industry and the Local Economy Foxdenton developed as a premium employment site (Joint DPD Indicator 46)
Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by encouraging and facilitating the development of new and emerging industries (such as high technology, knowledge based, innovative, environmental technologies and creative industries) in appropriate locations (such as Foxdenton, Hollinwood Business District and Chadderton Technology Park) (SO3d).
Target: N/A.
Oldham Position: Broadway Green is an employment-led, mixed -use development scheme which is being delivered by a Joint Venture Company formed between Oldham Council, Seddon Developments and Grasscroft Property. To date, 412 homes have been built on the site, and another 36 homes are currently under construction. Unit 367 which is a speculatively built 367,000 square foot HQ-style logistics unit with dedicated office space and employee facilities is now completed and is being fitted out by Iceland Foods. A further 110,000 square foot of small/mid box industrial units (Plot 2000) is also under construction. A new retail store (Aldi) and a Costa Coffee have also been completed and are fully operational. In addition, planning approval was obtained for the new linear park and the first phase works have been completed. The second and final phase of construction of the linear park is also underway and will be completed in December 2025. A management company has been set up to deal with the maintenance of the park. The whole site is forecast to deliver 600,000 square foot employment space, up to 500 new homes and significant green open space in the form of a new linear park. It is expected to create up to 2,000 new jobs
Action needed: None.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 13, 14.
Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key issues

3.3 The systems in place for monitoring employment land losses need to be improved, and this should be resolved with an updated development management IT system. This is important to provide sufficient evidence for the Council to take development management

decisions ‘in the round’ where it is proposed to release employment land for other uses, typically housing.

Future Actions

3.4 Further develop monitoring systems particularly for loss of employment land, to ensure that the policies within the Joint DPD actively promote and enhance the needs of the local economy.

Housing

3.5 PfE sets out Oldham's housing requirement for 2022 to 2039 (the PfE plan period). Policy JP-H1 identifies a stepped housing requirement (minimum) for Oldham of 404 homes per year for 2022-2025, 680 homes per year for 2025-2030, and 772 homes per year for 2030-2039. This equates to an annual average of 680 new homes per year.

3.6 Some of the indicators and text in this section relate to the five-year housing land supply. The five-year housing land supply is forward-looking and covers the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030.

Housing

Plan period and housing targets; New additional dwellings – in previous years, for the reporting year, in future years and managed delivery target (Joint DPD Indicator 11)

Joint DPD Objective: To provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high value market housing (SO2 (b)). Relevant Joint DPD policies: 1, 3, 11

Target: Oldham's housing requirement is set out within policy JP-H1 of PfE for the plan period (2022-2039). JP-H1 identifies a stepped housing requirement (minimum) for Oldham of 404 homes a year for the first five years of the plan period (2022-2025); 680 homes a year for years 6-10 (2025-2030); and 772 homes a year for years 11-17 (2030-2039).

The housing requirement of 404 homes per year (as set out in policy JP-H1 of PfE) applies to the monitoring year 2024/25. Looking forward at the housing land supply from 2025 onwards, the relevant housing requirement will apply in line with the stepped requirement set out in policy JP-H1.

Oldham Position:

Table 1 below shows the number of net completions since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2011, compared to the housing requirement (the adopted Core Strategy housing requirement, the Government's Standard Methodology requirement or the PfE housing requirement). Oldham's adopted Core Strategy (Local Plan) housing requirement of 289 new homes per year applied from 2011/12. In 2018/19 the Government's Standard Methodology for Calculating Local Housing Need was introduced and applied until the adoption of PfE on 21 March 2024. PfE sets out Oldham's housing requirement for the plan period of 2022-2039 (as explained above) – this applies to years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 in table 1 below. Appendix 5 sets out the full completions data for the period of 2011/12 to 2024/25.

The latest Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results (2023 measurement) were published on 12 December 2024. According to the most recently published measurement, Oldham had delivered 91% of its housing need over the past three years (2020/21 to 2022/23). This is the same as the measurement results for 2022 and 2021 – 91%.

Table 1 – Housing Completions Compared to Housing Requirement[7]

Year	Completed (Net)	Housing Requirement	Variance (against housing requirement)
2011/12	11	289	-278
2012/13	257	289	-32
2013/14	363	289	74
2014/15	594	289	305
2015/16	296	289	7
2016/17	374	289	85
2017/18	345	289	56
2018/19	410[8]	692	-282
2019/20	728	692	36
2020/21	373	693	-320
2021/22	506	683	-177
2022/23	403	404	-1
2023/24	420	404	16
2024/25	578	404	174

The number of net completions has fluctuated over the last ten years. After falling in 2015/16, completions increased again from 2016/17 as several larger sites began construction. Prior to this there were high levels of clearance that took place due to regeneration activity during 2003/04 to 2012/13, along with the changing economic conditions witnessed since 2008/09 that may have had an effect. Completions for 2020/21 were significantly lower than the previous year 2019/20 and the following year of 2021/22. It is likely that the impact of Covid-19 and wider socio-economic issues may have contributed to the lower completions for 2020/21. However, on average over the last ten years (2015/16 to 2024/25), completions have improved, with an average of 443 dwellings being completed annually.

The number of completions, net of clearance, for 2024/25 was 578 dwellings. This brings the total number of completions for 2011/12 to 2023/24 to 5,658 dwellings.

[7] MHCLG housing completions data can differ slightly due to data recording methods.

[8] This is the actual completion figure for 2018/19. Official MHCLG housing returns show a higher figure of 502 for 2018/19. Previous revisions are explained within the 2018/19 monitoring report.

Total Housing Land Supply

The housing trajectory (Figure 1) shows the position regarding the borough's future housing land supply and is made up of six elements:

1. Completions that have taken place during 2011/12 to 2024/25;
2. Future housing land supply from 2025/26 to 2038/39 (up to the end of the PfE plan period). Future housing land supply is shown as net additional dwellings and takes into account clearance allowance (4 dwellings per annum) and small sites allowance (small sites allowance is only applied from year 5 onwards). Future housing land supply has been identified through a full review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) as at 1 April 2025. See SHLAA for further details;
3. The annualised net supply which shows the housing land supply spread out evenly across the period;
4. The stepped housing requirement for Oldham, as set out in Places for Everyone (PfE)[9]. (See Indicator 12 for further information on the PfE housing requirement).

The housing trajectory shows that there is a potential housing land supply identified to deliver 12,364 dwellings (taking into account a small site allowance, minus projected clearances - see SHLAA for details). This is based on the update of the SHLAA for 2025. The SHLAA can be viewed on the Council's website[10].

Action needed:

Continue to update the borough's five-year housing land supply annually and update the Council's SHLAA. The Council's Housing Delivery Test Action Plan has been published to try and improve the delivery rate of housing in the borough.

Aside from an annual small sites allowance, the Council does not set out a specific windfall allowance in the Joint DPD. Consideration will be given to the need to make an allowance for larger windfall sites as part of future reviews of the Council's SHLAA and five-year housing land supply in line with national planning guidance.

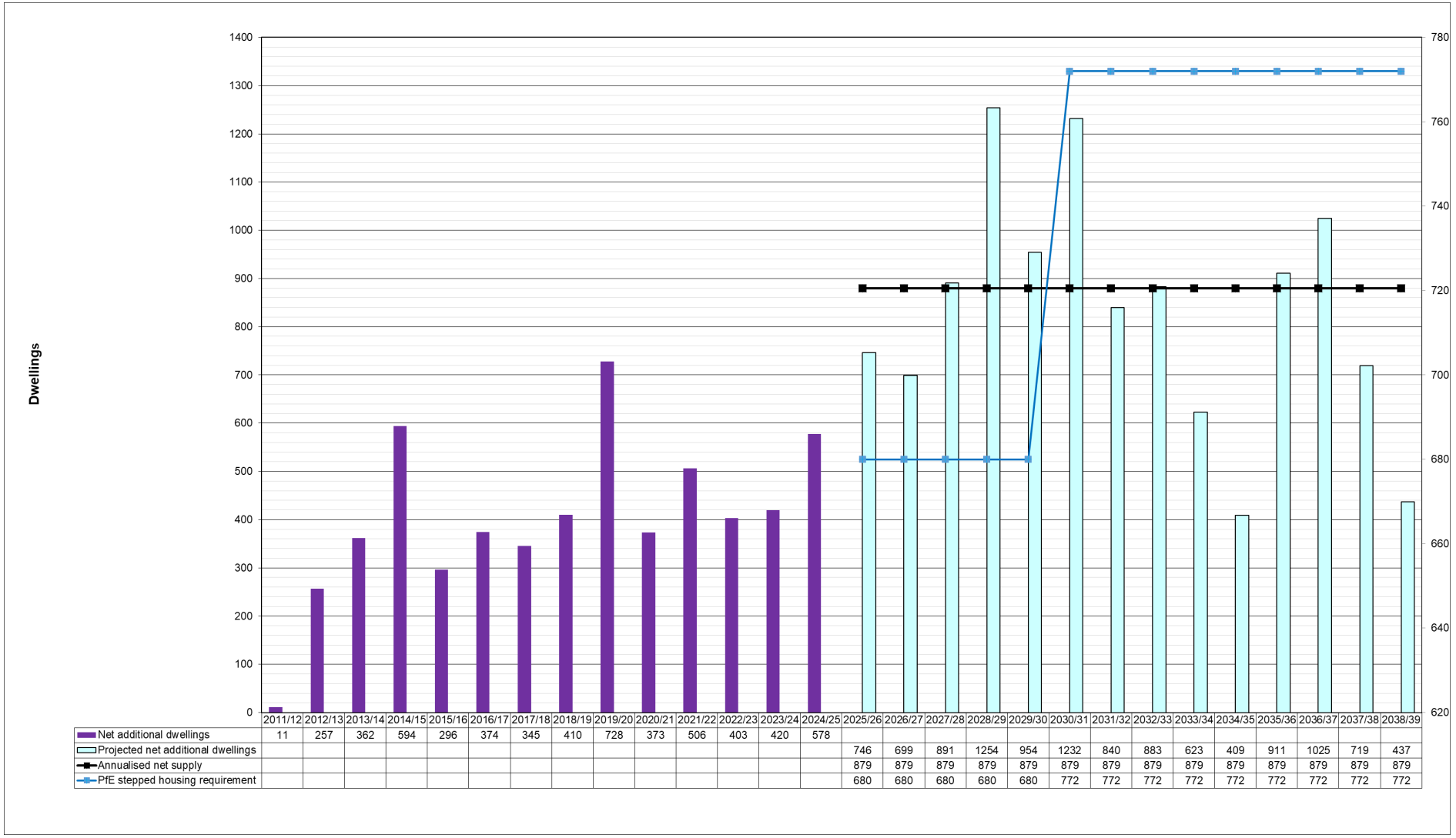
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3, 11

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

[9] Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9578/places-for-everyone-joint-development-plan-document.pdf

[10] Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

Figure 1 – Housing Trajectory



	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	2036/37	2037/38	2038/39
Net additional dwellings	11	257	362	594	296	374	345	410	728	373	506	403	420	578														
Projected net additional dwellings															746	699	891	1254	954	1232	840	883	623	409	911	1025	719	437
Annualised net supply															879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879	879
PfE stepped housing requirement															680	680	680	680	680	772	772	772	772	772	772	772	772	772

Housing

Supply of ready to develop housing sites (Joint DPD Indicator 12)

Provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high value market housing (SO2(b)); and Focus new homes on regeneration areas (including Oldham Town Centre and the former HMR area), also areas within and accessible to the borough's other centres (of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill), and rural settlements (such as the Saddleworth villages (SO2(e)); and Ensure over the lifetime of the Local Plan up to 2026 that approximately 60% of new homes are built in East and West Oldham, with approximately 10% of new homes built in Chadderton, and in Failsworth and Hollinwood, and in Royton, Shaw and Crompton, and in Saddleworth and Lees (SO2(f)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3.

Target: Five-year supply can accommodate the borough's housing requirement - as set out in policy JP-H1 of PfE[11].

For the five-year supply, the PfE housing requirement of 680 homes per year (which applies to 2025/26-2029/30) is used. This equates to a total requirement of 3,400 homes for the five-year period of 2025-2030.

Oldham Position:

As HMR areas no longer exist this indicator is not monitored against SO2(e). In addition, given the need to deliver housing borough-wide to meet the housing requirement, it is not possible to ensure the delivery of housing as per SO2(f). As such this element of the indicator is also not monitored.

This indicator therefore considers SO2(b) only.

PfE is less than five years old (being adopted on 21 March 2024) and identified a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded. As per paragraph 76 of NPPF, LPAs are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if: (a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and (b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.

Action needed: Maintain a supply of deliverable five-year housing land supply, which can meet Oldham's requirement as set out in Places for Everyone (of 404 homes a year (2022-2025); 680 homes a year (2025-2030); and 772 homes a year (2030-2039)).

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

[11] Policy JP-H1 of PfE identifies a stepped housing requirement for Oldham of 404 homes per year for 2022-2025, 680 homes per year for 2025-2030 and 772 homes per year for 2030-2039.

Housing

New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land (Joint DPD Indicator 13)

Joint DPD Objective: Ensure over the lifetime of the Local Plan up to 2026 that at least 80% of new homes are built on previously developed land across the borough as a whole (SO2(g)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3, 11.

Target: The Joint DPD sets out a requirement for at least 80% of new dwellings in the borough to be built on previously developed land.

Oldham Position: In 2024/25, 67% (385) of new and converted dwellings were completed on previously developed land (PDL) in Oldham. This is higher than 2023/24 (55%) but is still below the target of 80%. However, a further 24% (138) of new and converted dwellings were completed on mixed sites (including both brownfield and greenfield land) – these are not included within the figure for PDL. As such, 91% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on PDL or mixed sites.

The number of dwellings completed on previously developed land is lower than the target, however greenfield sites only accounted for 9% (55 homes) of all homes (578 homes) completed during 2024/25, which is an improvement on the previous year (2023/24) – 20% (86 homes).

Brownfield and mixed sites continue to make up the majority of sites within the housing land supply.

The previously developed land trajectory (figure 2) shows:

- 76% of all completions during 2011/12 to 2024/25 were on PDL;
- Overall, an average of 60% of all dwellings identified as part of the borough's future housing land supply are on PDL.

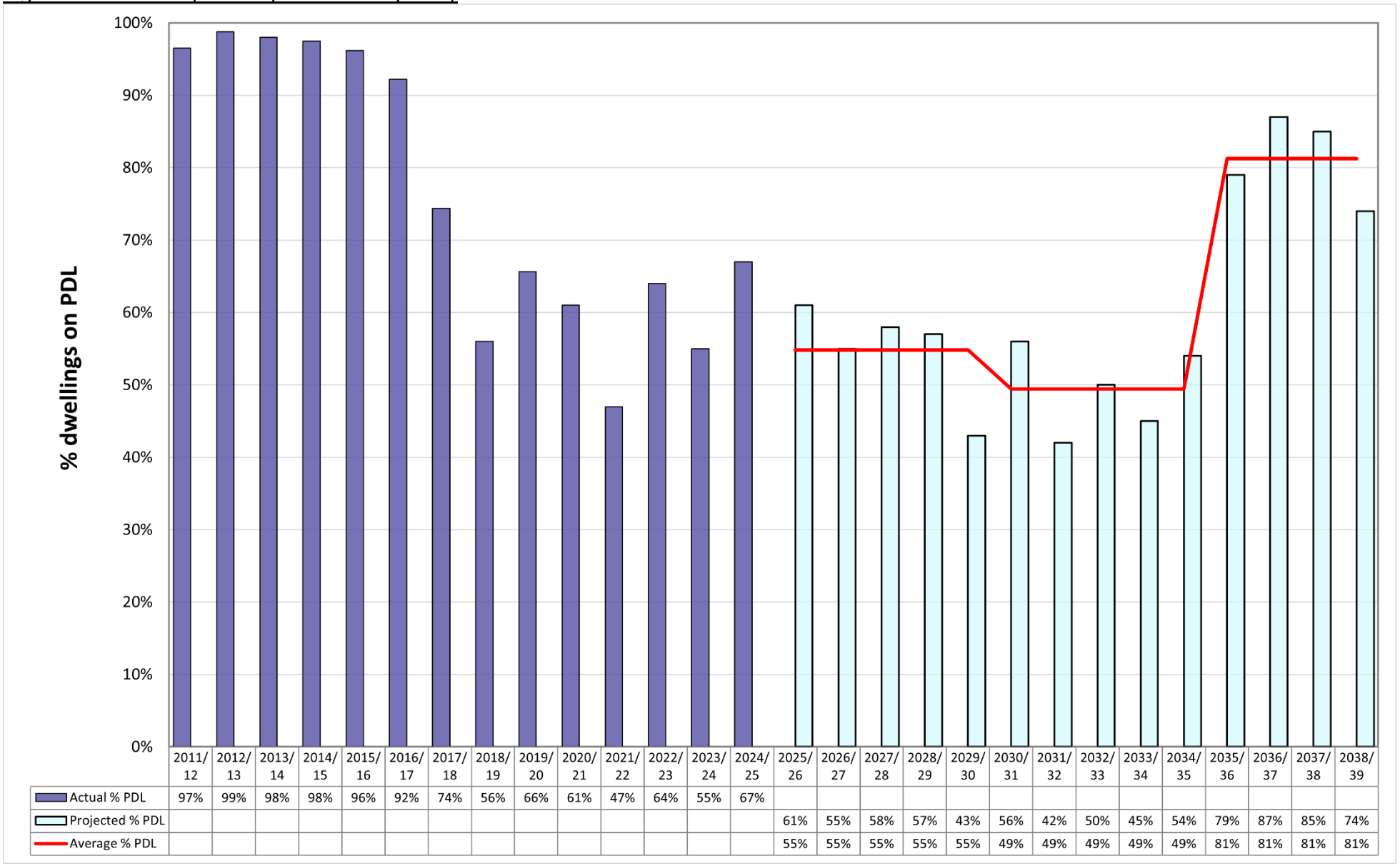
The projections included in the trajectory do not include dwellings to be delivered on sites where there is a mix of greenfield and previously developed land.

Action Needed: Continue to encourage new residential development on previously developed land in line with the Joint DPD and specifically consider actions to increase the delivery of housing on PDL (through the Housing Delivery Action Plan)

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,11

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Figure 2 – Previously Developed Land Trajectory



	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	2036/37	2037/38	2038/39
Actual % PDL	97%	99%	98%	98%	96%	92%	74%	56%	66%	61%	47%	64%	55%	67%														
Projected % PDL															61%	55%	58%	57%	43%	56%	42%	50%	45%	54%	79%	87%	85%	74%
Average % PDL															55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%	81%	81%	81%	81%

Housing

Development density in schemes of 5 dwellings or more (Joint DPD Indicator 14)

Joint DPD Objective: Provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high-value market housing (SO2(b)); and

Make the best use of, and continuing to raise the quality of, our new and existing housing stock (SO2(d)).

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3, 11.

Target: N/A

Oldham Position: Out of 578 dwellings completed, there were 521 dwellings completed on sites with a capacity of 5 dwellings or more, representing 90% of the total completions.

Densities achieved on these sites were as follows:

- Less than 30 dwellings per hectare = 20% (117 dwellings out of 578)
- 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare = 29% (166 dwellings out of 578)
- Over 50 dwellings per hectare = 51% (295 dwellings out of 578)

Previous year's position:

In 2023/24 out of 420 dwellings completed, there were 362 dwellings on sites with a capacity of 5 dwellings or more, representing 86% of the total completions. Out of these completions there were: 227 dwellings or 54% completed on sites with a density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare; 72 dwellings or 17% completed on sites with a density of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare; and 121 dwellings or 29% completed on sites with a density of 50 dwellings per hectare and above.

These figures show that land is continuing to be used efficiently in Oldham.

Action Needed: None

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,11

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Housing

Gross Affordable Housing Completions (Joint DPD Indicator 15.i)

Joint DPD Objective: Provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high-value market housing (SO2(b)); and

Achieve the right quantity of affordable housing to meet local needs and demands (SO2(c)).

Target: 7.5% of the total development sales value to go towards the delivery of affordable housing where viable in line with Policy 10 of the Joint DPD.

Oldham Position:

In 2024/25, 216 new affordable homes were completed (new build only). There have been 1,984 affordable homes delivered (via new build) since 2011/12 - table 2 below shows the trends.

Table 2 – Number of Affordable Homes Delivered

Year	**Number of affordable homes delivered (new build only)**
2011/12	112
2012/13	198
2013/14	202
2014/15	280
2015/16	20
2016/17	60
2017/18	42
2018/19	90
2019/20	176
2020/21	129
2021/22	173
2022/23	165
2023/24	121
2024/25	216
Total	**1,984**

Housing Gross Affordable Housing Completions (Joint DPD Indicator 15.i)
Affordable housing delivery was much higher during the years when there was significant activity in the Housing Market Renewal areas but, as these sites have been completed, the number of new affordable homes being built reduced between 2015 and 2019. However, the number of affordable homes being built increased again from 2019 onwards. The PfE Monitoring Report measures affordable housing delivery using an alternative source of data – 'Affordable housing supply in England'[12] – which includes new build affordable housing and acquisitions (a private sector property that has been purchased for use as an affordable home). Using that source of data, Oldham has delivered 221 affordable homes during 2024/25. As such affordable housing completions data set out within this Monitoring Report is not comparable to the PfE report. This will be reviewed for consistency in future Monitoring Reports.
Action Needed: To support the delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy, supporting action plan and the affordable homes delivery programme.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,10
Source: Oldham Council Housing Strategy Delivery Team

Housing Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Traveller) (Joint DPD Indicator 16)
Joint DPD Objective: To provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high-value market housing (SO2 (b)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3, 12.
Target: N/A
Oldham Position: The number of net additional pitches for 2024/25 is zero, as no pitches were constructed or lost.
Action Needed: The Local Plan Review consider the need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople provision as appropriate, based on up-to-date evidence. In the meantime, relevant development proposals will continue to be considered in line with the Joint DPD Policy 12.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,12

[12] 'Affordable housing supply in England: 2024 to 2025': https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-housing-supply

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Housing

Housing completions by size and type (Local Indicator)

Joint DPD Objective: Provide sufficient housing to meet the needs and demands of the borough's urban and rural communities, including affordable, low cost and high-value market housing (SO2(b)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3, 11.

Target: N/A

Oldham Position:

The breakdown of dwellings completed in 2024/25 by house type is shown below:

- Detached - 120 (20.5%)
- Semi-detached - 133 (23%)
- Bungalow – 3 (0.5%)
- Terraced – 115 (20%)
- Flats - 201 (35%)
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) – 6 (1%)

The breakdown of dwellings completed in 2024/25 by size is shown below:

- 1 bedroom - 140 (24%)
- 2 bedrooms - 138 (24%)
- 3 bedrooms – 195 (34%)
- 4 or more bedrooms - 105 (18%)

This shows that 43.5% of dwellings completed are detached or semi-detached and 52% have 3 or more bedrooms.

Action Needed: Continue to encourage the provision of larger family (three/four plus bed) accommodation as part of the mix of new residential developments. Utilise local evidence, including the Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Oldham's Local Housing Needs Assessment and Oldham's Housing Strategy, to ensure that housing delivered meets the needs of the local community.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,11

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Housing

Dwellings cleared (Joint DPD Indicator 17)

Joint DPD Objective: Integrate the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder's and the Council's housing objectives, policies, programmes, masterplans and initiatives (SO2(a)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3, 11.

Target: N/A

Oldham Position:

During 2024/25 one dwelling was lost through change of use to non-residential use and one dwelling was lost to conversion (2 dwellings into 1 dwelling).

Since 2011/12 there have been 331 dwellings demolished/ lost. This is an average of around 24 dwellings per annum.

Clearance levels have been high in previous years, reaching their highest in 2010/11 due to the regeneration activity that has taken place within the borough. Previous clearance levels are set out in the 'Net housebuilding table' in Appendix 5.

The clearance allowance from 1 April 2025 is calculated at 4 dwellings per year based on past levels of clearance. The clearance allowance is fully set out within the SHLAA as at 1 April 2025.

In general, levels of clearance will be kept under review although it is expected that these will continue at a marginal rate over the remaining plan period.

Action Needed: Continue to review the five-year supply to ensure there is adequate supply to accommodate expected clearance for 2025/26 to 2029/30.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3,11

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Housing

Reduction in the vacancy rate (Joint DPD Indicator 18)

Joint DPD Objective: Make the best use of, and continuing to raise the quality of, our new and existing housing stock (SO2(d)). Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 3.

Target: Below a 3% vacancy rate.

Oldham Position:

This indicator is monitored annually from 1st October to 30th September, to align vacancy rate monitoring with other departments in the Council. The latest figures are set out below in table 3.

Table 3 – Vacant stock in Oldham

Year	Total stock	Total vacant	Vacant stock as a percentage of total
1 October 2025	99,072	1,708	1.72%
1 October 2024	98,912	1,726	1.74%
1 October 2023	98,567	1,944	1.97%

There has been a small decrease in the percentage of vacant stock from 2024 to 2025.

Action Needed: None

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1,3

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information Section

Housing Key Issues

3.7 A total of 578 dwellings (net) were completed over the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. During 2024/25 two dwellings were lost – one to change of use (to non-residential uses) and one to residential conversion.

3.8 Oldham's housing requirement is set out within policy JP-H1 of PfE for the plan period (2022-2039). JP-H1 identifies a stepped housing requirement (minimum) for Oldham of 404 homes a year for the first five years of the plan period (2022-2025); 680 homes a year for years 6-10 (2025-2030); and 772 homes a year for years 11-17 (2030-2039).

3.9 For the purposes of this monitoring report, the housing requirement of 404 homes per year applies to the monitoring years of 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25, as 2022/23 is the start of the PfE plan period to which the PfE stepped requirement (set out in JP-H1 of PfE) applies. Looking forward at supply from 2025 onwards, the relevant housing requirement will apply in line with the stepped requirement set out in policy JP-H1.

3.10 PfE is less than five years old (being adopted on 21 March 2024) and identified a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded. Further information on the PfE housing requirement is set out with JP-H1 of PfE. As per paragraph 76 of the current NPPF, local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if: (a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and (b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.

3.11 Over the last fourteen years (since the adoption of the Local Plan) housing completions have been variable (as set out in Appendix 5). Over this time the housing completions have exceeded the housing requirement (as applied to that year) eight times:

- Five of which the Local Plan requirement of 289 new homes applied;
- Once in 2019/20 when the standard methodology housing requirement (of 692 homes for that year) applied; and
- Most recently in 2023/24 and 2024/25, against the PfE housing requirement (404 homes per year for 2022-2025). In 2022/23 housing completions (403 homes) almost met the housing requirement (404 homes per year).

3.12 It should be noted that high levels of clearance took place during the early years of the Local Plan period, and it is likely that Covid-19 and Brexit may have impacted housing completions during 2020/21 (373 homes completed) and 2021/22 (506 homes completed).

3.13 To help drive and deliver growth in housing delivery across the borough the Council has prepared a Housing Delivery Action Plan to ensure the right homes are delivered in the right places to meet local housing needs. This is available to view at: Oldham Housing Delivery Action Plan[13] and includes such measures as:

- Improving capacity and processes;
- Increasing the delivery of sites within our housing land supply, in particular on previously developed land (brownfield); and
- Delivery of the Council's ambitions to improve and increase the housing offer within Oldham.

3.14 The latest Action Plan was published in June 2025 and will be updated as appropriate.

3.15 67% of all completions during 2024/25 for new residential development were on previously developed land. This is higher than the previous year (55%). Additional dwellings were also delivered on mixed sites (containing both brownfield and greenfield land) - therefore 91% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on previously developed land or mixed sites. Greenfield sites accounted for 9% (55 homes) of all homes completed during 2024/25 (578 homes). Brownfield and mixed sites make up the majority of sites within the housing land supply.

3.16 The focus for new residential development continues to be on previously developed land and the Council will ensure that actions to increase the delivery of housing on previously developed land are implemented, in line with the Housing Delivery Action Plan.

3.17 The proportion of detached and semi-detached properties being built is lower than last year (43.5% of all completions were detached or semi-detached in 2024/25, compared to 61% in 2023/24). In 2024/25 6 HMOs were completed (or delivered) through the planning process. This is lower than the previous year with 7 HMOs completed through the planning process in 2023/24.

3.18 It should be noted that not all HMOs require planning permission and can be developed under permitted development rights (these are not included in the above).

[13] This document can be viewed online at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/2135/housing_delivery_action_plan

3.19 However, on the 22 September 2025 Oldham Council decided to introduce a boroughwide non-immediate Article 4 Direction removing the permitted development right to convert a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) into a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4) for up to six residents (small HMO)[14]. This Article 4 Direction will come into effect on 1 January 2026, or such other later date as considered appropriate, should the Direction be confirmed. This means that such conversions will no longer be permitted development and will require planning permission from that date. This will impact future monitoring of this type of development.

3.20 The proportion of three and four bedroomed plus properties completed is lower this year at 52% of all housing completions, compared to 71% of all housing completions in 2023/24. The need for larger family accommodation continues, along with the need to encourage the development of higher value aspirational housing that will provide opportunities for existing residents and attract new residents to the borough. The supply and delivery of new houses and apartments in the borough will continue to be monitored.

Future Action:

3.21 Continue to regularly update the Council's SHLAA to inform the housing land supply position and the Local Plan review.

3.22 Whilst each application will be treated on its planning merits, proposals for residential development on greenfield sites will (whether new proposals or where the renewal of planning permission is sought) continue to be resisted unless there are other relevant material considerations.

3.23 The focus for new residential development will remain on previously developed land and the Council will seek to implement actions to increase the delivery of housing on such land as set out in the Housing Delivery Action Plan.

3.24 Planning applications for the conversion and change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and which are technically classified as greenfield developments (because agricultural buildings are not regarded as "previously developed land") continue to be treated on their planning merits.

3.25 The Local Plan review will consider the needs and requirements for sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, as appropriate, where there is a clear and demonstrable need based on up-to-date evidence. In the meantime, relevant development proposals will continue to be considered in line with the Joint DPD Policy 12.

3.26 Encourage the provision of larger family (three/four plus bed) accommodation as part of the mix of new residential developments.

3.27 Utilise local evidence, including the Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Oldham's Local Housing Needs Assessment and the Housing Strategy, to ensure that housing being delivered meets the needs of the local community.

3.28 In past years, key actions have been that 'Saved' UDP Phase 2 Housing Allocations are not brought forward and released for development and that preparation of the SPD on the "Release of UDP Phase 2 Housing Allocations" will be rolled forward twelve months (with its preparation subject to the conclusions of the next Monitoring Report). These actions have, however, been superseded by PfE and the emerging Local Plan. The phasing arrangements set out in the UDP no longer apply.

[14] Further information about the Article 4 Direction can be found on the Council's website.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Indicators

Transport

Number of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permission (Joint DPD Indicator 26).

Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport (SO1e).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: 10 travel plans were secured as a condition of planning permissions granted in 2024/25.

The number of travel plans secured as a condition of planning permissions in previous years were:

- 2023/24: 6
- 2022/23: 4
- 2021/22: 3
- 2020/21: 6
- 2019/20: 10
- 2018/19: 9
- 2017/18: 8
- 2016/17: 7
- 2015/16: 8
- 2014/15: 8
- 2013/14: 11
- 2012/13: 6

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 5, 17.

Sources: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.29 There are currently no issues linked to this indicator.

Access to services

i) Number of minor [6] residential developments with access to at least 2 key services (Joint DPD Indicator 23i)

ii) Number of major [7] residential developments with access to at least 3 key services (Joint DPD Indicator 23ii).

Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by guiding development to the most accessible and sustainable locations (SO1d).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position:

74.5% of minor residential developments in 2024/25 had access to at least two key services.

85.0% of major residential developments in 2024/25 had access to at least three key services.

Previous years:

- 2023/24: 74.5% minor and 84.2% major
- 2022/23: 93.5% minor and 63% major
- 2021/22: 93.75% minor and 80% major
- 2020/21: 71% minor and 79% major
- 2019/20: 65% minor and 52% major
- 2018/19: 68% minor and 71% major
- 2016/17: 66% minor and 80% major
- 2015/16: 72% minor and 95% major
- 2014/15: 66% minor and 98% major
- 2013/14: 69% minor and 78% major
- 2012/13: 90% minor and 91% major

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 5, 16, 17.

Sources: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.30 The percentage of major residential developments with access to three or more key services has varied since 2012/13. There is a need to continue to ensure that new residential developments have access to key services.

Future Action

3.31 The Council will continue to raise awareness of the importance of accessibility to key services for new residential developments.

3.32 The policies within the Joint DPD aim to ensure that new developments are in the most accessible locations with good transport links and make use of travel plans in major new developments.

LOCAL SERVICES

Indicators

Local Services – Town Centre Uses **Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses' (Joint DPD Indicator 10)**
Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by facilitating appropriate developments in Oldham Town Centre, the centres of Chadderton, Failsworth, Hill Stores, Lees, Royton, Shaw and Uppermill, and along transport corridors (SO3e).
Target: N/A.
Oldham Position: In 2018/19 a new system was implemented to monitor 'town centre' uses. A database has been compiled of approved applications for 'town centre' uses since 2018/19 of over 500sqm. In 2024/25 there were no completions from the applications recorded in the database however it is acknowledged that, as reported on last year, there is a comprehensive redevelopment of Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre in Oldham Town Centre still on-going. In addition, there are other retail developments under construction such as a new Lidl store in Hollinwood. The AMR will continue to monitor the progress made on these projects and record their completions in the relevant year.
Action needed: Processes to be put in place to ensure future monitoring of indicator.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 4, 15.
Sources: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.33 There is a continued need to locate 'town centre' uses' in or near to centres.

Future Action

3.34 Processes are to be put in place to ensure future monitoring of the indicator improves as appropriate.

WASTE AND MINERALS

Waste Indicators

3.35 Please see Appendix 3 for the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan AMR.

Waste **Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority (Joint DPD Indicator 35).**
Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by promoting sustainable waste management through the waste hierarchy. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD (SO1k).
Target: N/A
Oldham Position: During 2024/25 there were no planning permissions granted for new waste management facilities.
Action needed: None.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 7.
Sources: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Waste **Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type by waste planning authority (Joint DPD Indicator 34).**
Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by promoting sustainable waste management through the waste hierarchy. Developments will have regard to the Greater Manchester Joint Waste DPD (SO1k).
Target: 33% of household waste is managed by recycling and composting.
Oldham Position: All figures reported are for Household Waste only. All figures come from Waste Data Flow which is verified by the Environment Agency and DEFRA. Total Amount of Household Waste Arisings 2024/25: 71,672 tonnes. Of the total household waste, 32,853 tonnes were managed by recycling and composting. Total amount of household managed by incineration was 38,819 tonnes. The overall recycling rate for household waste in Oldham for 2024/25 was 45.84%. In previous years the recycling rate was: • 2023/24: 45.99% • 2022/23: 46.35%

Waste Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type by waste planning authority (Joint DPD Indicator 34).
• 2021/22: 47.68% • 2020/21: 42.2% • 2019/20: 44% • 2018/19: 44.65% • 2017/18: 44.69% • 2016/17: 42.53% • 2015/16: 39% • 2014/15: 38% • 2013/14: 37% • 2012/13: 36.76%
Action needed: None.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 7.
Sources: Oldham Council.

MINERALS

Minerals Indicators

3.36 Please see Appendix 4 for the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan AMR.

Key Issues

3.37 There are currently no issues linked with these indicators.

Future Action

3.38 The policies within the Joint DPD, the Joint Waste DPD and the Joint Minerals DPD continue to recognise the importance of sustainable waste and minerals management.

FLOOD PROTECTION AND WATER QUALITY

Indicators

Flood Protection and Water Quality **Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds (Joint DPD Indicator 28i).**
Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by avoiding development within areas of flood risk and where necessary controlling and mitigating the impact and residual risks. Developments will have regard to the findings of the Oldham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SO1h).
Target: To not approve applications contrary to EA advice.
Oldham Position: In 2024/25 there were no applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality. In 2023/24 there were two applications with EA objections on water quality grounds. One was refused and was one resolved and granted permission. These were the first applications with objections on water quality since 2012/13. In 2024/25 there were two planning applications determined which received EA objections based on flood risk. One application for housing was granted where the EA objection was resolved following submission of additional information and subject to conditions. The other application for housing was refused, although this was not due to flood risk grounds. Since 2012/13 there have been EA objections on flood risk grounds each year.
Action needed: Continue to ensure that the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) advice is addressed, and national planning guidance is followed.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 19.
Source: Environment Agency (2025) and Oldham Council Planning.

3.39 This year's monitoring indicates that EA advice is being followed with regards to flood risk and water quality.

BIODIVERSITY

Indicators

Biodiversity

i) Change in areas of biodiversity importance (Joint DPD Indicator 38i);and

ii) Improved local biodiversity (Joint DPD Indicator 38ii).

Joint DPD Objective: To improve and value the borough's environment by protecting, conserving and enhancing the character and quality of the borough's landscapes and townscapes, its natural assets and heritage, green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, and its built heritage and historic environment, including their wider settings (SO4b).

Target: N/A

Oldham Position: An update to the borough's Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) was received in October 2024 and was approved in December 2025 which included a new SBI at Boardman's Edge (Grade B), resulting in a net gain of 5.8 ha.

Previous years:

- 2023/24: net loss –0.5ha.
- 2022/23: no updates
- 2021/22: net gain of 4 ha
- 2020/21: no updates
- 2019/20: extent of SBIs increased by 2.6 hectares
- 2018/19: extent of SBIs increased by 2.4 hectares.
- 2017/18: one SBI deleted at Royton Moss resulting in 2.3 hectares loss. Plus, designation of a Regionally Important Geodiversity Site (RIGS) at Glodwick Brickpit.
- 2016/17: no changes reported.
- 2015/16: extent of SBIs increased by 2.3 hectares.
- 2014/15: extent of SBIs increased by 3.6 hectares.
- 2013/14: extent of SBIs decreased by 0.1 hectares.
- 2012/13: extent of SBIs increased by 43.2 hectares.

Defra publishes data on the 'Single data list 160-00 Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being, or has been, implemented. The latest figures for Oldham in 2024 show that 100% of local sites (41) are under positive conservation management. Positive management includes wetland creation and management, leaking dams, woodland creation and management, pollinators, non-intervention and invasive weed control. Habitat piles, standing and fallen deadwood. Wildlife reporting, tackling ASB, species protection and monitoring.

Previous years: Since 2012 (apart from 2013/14 no data was available) 100% of sites have been under positive conservation management.

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 6, 21.

Source: Defra, Oldham Council

Key Issues

3.40 Biodiversity and habitat management runs through everything we do across our countryside estate, and so from none / limited intervention to major schemes and projects all sites are positively managed in relation to conservation and biodiversity.

3.41 Since 2012/13 there has been a significant increase in the extent of Sites of Biological Importance, the borough has gained two Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites and had ancient woodland designated.

Future Action

3.42 Ensure that biodiversity is enhanced through statutory biodiversity net gain and biodiversity duties including helping to implement the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

GREEN BELT AND OPEN LAND

Indicators

Green Belt

Number and type of developments in the Green Belt (Joint DPD Indicator 36)

Joint DPD Objectives: To improve and value the borough's environment by ensuring appropriate land management in the open countryside and Green Belt that has regard to the needs of the rural economy (SO4d); and

To improve and value the borough's environment by maintaining Green Belt boundaries and permitting only appropriate developments (SO4e).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: There were 71 applications approved in the Green Belt during 2024/25.

These included:

- Householder developments: 25
- Major small scale: 1
- Minor other: 16
- Minor dwellings: 6
- Change of use: 3
- Listed building consent: 5
- Prior approval: 1
- Variation of conditions: 8
- Non-Material amendments: 4
- Minor Material Amendment: 0
- Agricultural Notification: 1
- Certificate of Lawfulness: 1
- Discharge Condition: 0

In addition, 12 applications for telecommunications were noted during the monitoring period in the Green Belt.

Previous years (number of applications approved in the Green Belt):

- 2023/24: 108
- 2022/23: 91
- 2021/22: 126
- 2020/21: 51
- 2019/20: 96
- 2018/19: 100
- 2017/18: 84
- 2016/17: 79
- 2015/16: 97
- 2014/15: 105
- 2013/14: 84
- 2012/13: 105

Action needed: None

Green Belt

Number and type of developments in the Green Belt (Joint DPD Indicator 36)

Relevant Joint DPD Policy: 1, 22.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.43 The number of applications granted within the Green Belt is slightly lower in this monitoring period compared to previous years. There were fewer minor dwellings applications approved than the previous year.

3.44 Generally, applications approved in the Green Belt are minor in nature, with the majority being householder applications.

Future Action

3.45 The Council should continue to protect the newly adopted PfE Green Belt for Oldham in line with policies of the NPPF, PfE and the saved policies in the Local Plan.

Other Protected Open Land

Number and type of developments in Other Protected Open Land (Joint DPD Indicator 39i)

Joint DPD Objective: To improve and value the borough's environment by identifying 'Other Protected Open Land' and 'Land Reserved for Future Development' (SO4f).

Target: N/A.

Oldham Position: A search for applications within Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) in 2024/25 highlighted that one application was granted planning permission.

The application (NMA/352826/24) was for a non-material amendment to approved application MMA/344723/20 for alterations to the proposed arrangement for the diversion of a footpath.

One telecommunications application was also noted during the monitoring period in OPOL.

Number of planning applications granted on OPOL in previous years:

- 2023/24: 3
- 2022/23: 8
- 2021/22: 2
- 2020/21: 1
- 2019/20: 2
- 2018/19: 5
- 2017/18: 3
- 2016/17: 3
- 2015/16: 5
- 2014/13: 8
- 2013/14: 6
- 2012/13: 3

Other Protected Open Land

Number and type of developments in Other Protected Open Land (Joint DPD Indicator 39i)

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policy: 1, 22.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.46 The number of planning applications granted on OPOL is low and the one permitted application in 2024/25 was deemed acceptable in line with the policy.

Future Action

3.47 An Other Protected Open Land Interim Planning Position Paper was adopted September 2021 that sets out how the Council will consider Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) when assessing planning applications for development that may impact on the OPOL and is available on the Oldham Council website.

3.48 Since the Interim Planning Position Paper was prepared the adopted PfE has allocated sites for development which has meant that OPOL at Bullcote Lane (OPOL 9), Shawside (OPOL 10) and Cowlishaw (OPOL22) have been de-designated.

3.49 The Council should protect remaining designated OPOL from development unless the proposed development is appropriate, small-scale or ancillary development close to existing buildings within the OPOL, which does not affect openness, local distinctiveness or visual amenity in line with the saved Local Plan policy.

Landscape Character

Number of planning applications refused on landscape character grounds (Joint DPD Indicator 27)

Joint DPD Objective: To improve and value the borough's environment by protecting, conserving and enhancing the character and quality of the borough's landscapes and townscapes, its natural assets and heritage, green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, and its built heritage and historic environment, including their wider settings (SO4b).

Target: 100% of planning applications that do not protect and/or enhance landscape character, where appropriate, should be refused.

Oldham Position:

During 2024/25 there were no applications refused on landscape grounds.

Previous years:

Landscape Character

Number of planning applications refused on landscape character grounds (Joint DPD Indicator 27)

- 2019 - 2024 - 0
- 2018/19: 1
- 2017/18: 0
- 2016/17: 4
- 2015/16: 6
- 2014/15: 4
- 2013/14: 5
- 2012/13: 2
- 2011/12: 2

Action needed: None.

Relevant Joint DPD Policy: 21

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.50 No key issues. Generally, relevant applications are refused on matters relating to amenity, highways and Green Belt.

Future Action

3.51 PfE and the Joint DPD aims to ensure that the borough's landscape is conserved and enhanced when assessing relevant planning applications.

CONSERVATION

Indicators

Conservation

i) Number and percentage of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk Register' (Joint DPD 22i)

ii) Number/extent of Conservation Areas (Joint DPD 22ii)

iii) Number of listed buildings and number of buildings in conservation areas lost through new development proposals (Joint DPD Indicator 22iii).

Joint DPD Objective: To improve and value the borough's environment by protecting, conserving and enhancing the character and quality of the borough's landscapes and townscapes, its natural assets and heritage, green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, and its built heritage and historic environment, including their wider settings (SO4b).

Target: No loss

Oldham Position in 2024/25:

i) There are nine entries in the borough on the Historic England at Risk Register and this does not include any Scheduled Monuments. This represents 1.6% of all assets in the borough (555).

In previous years the number of entries on the heritage at risk register has been:

- 2019 - 2024: 9
- 2017 - 19: 10
- 2016/17: 9
- 2015/16: 10
- 2014/15: 7
- 2012 - 2014: 6

ii) There are 36 conservation areas covering 250.79 ha. This has remained the same since the Joint DPD was adopted. However, 'Oldham Town Centre' Conservation Area is on the 'Heritage at Risk' list.

An updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Oldham Town Centre has been carried out and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in August 2019. This has included four extensions to the conservation area totalling 4.04 hectares. This variation has been designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. However, until the reviewed Local Pan is adopted these extensions cannot be shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map and will be treated as a material planning consideration. It is hoped that the Management Plan will help to remove Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area from the 'Heritage at Risk' register.

iii) An assessment of the planning applications approved for 2024/25 shows the following in relation to loss of listed buildings:

There were zero applications for loss of listed buildings as a whole. There was one application granted (LBC/353715/24) for the demolition of an existing orangery structure and rear porch and the erection of new masonry-built orangery. The Conservation Officer considered that the proposed extension represented a very low level of less than substantial harm which should be

Conservation

i) Number and percentage of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk Register' (Joint DPD 22i)

ii) Number/extent of Conservation Areas (Joint DPD 22ii)

iii) Number of listed buildings and number of buildings in conservation areas lost through new development proposals (Joint DPD Indicator 22iii).

considered against the public benefits generated, including where appropriate securing an optimum viable use.

iii) In relation to applications approved for buildings to be demolished within conservation areas during 2024/25:

There was an application approved (HOU/352964/24) which proposed the demolition of a domestic garage and attached storage sheds and replacement with an ancillary domestic building. It was considered that the proposal would not result in harm to the neighbouring listed building or the wider Diglea Conservation Area.

There was also an application approved (HOU/353177/24) which proposed the demolition of existing outbuilding (and redevelopment). It was considered that the proposal would not harm the character of the original dwelling or the Uppermill Conservation Area.

Previous years (for both (part) demolitions of listed buildings and/or their settings and demolition in conservation areas):

- 2023/24: Listed buildings – zero; conservation areas – one application
- 2022/23: Listed buildings – zero (but one rebuild); conservation areas – eight applications
- 2021/22: Listed buildings – one application for alternation; conservation areas – nine applications
- 2020/21: Listed buildings – four applications for alterations; conservation areas – one application
- 2019/20: Listed buildings - one application for loss of link bridge connected to a listed building; conservation area - one application
- 2018/19: Listed Building - one application for the whole of a listed building and six relating to alterations to listed buildings
- 2017/18: Listed buildings - three applications; conservation areas - zero applications
- 2016/17: Listed buildings - four applications; conservation areas - two applications
- 2015/16: Listed buildings - two applications; conservation areas - one application
- 2014/15: Listed buildings - six applications; conservation areas - three applications
- 2013/14: Listed buildings - two applications; conservation areas - eight applications

Action needed: None. Policy 24 of the Joint DPD states that the Council will protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 24.

Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.52 The number of buildings on the "Heritage At Risk" Register has remained the same since last year. A positive strategy is needed to promote the use of heritage assets and to support their repair, restoration and enhancement. The Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD has been adopted which should help to remove the Town Centre from the at-risk register.

3.53 The number of applications granted for demolitions relating to listed buildings has remained low and there were only two applications granted for the demolition to buildings/structures within conservation areas. The proposals were found to be acceptable in heritage terms.

Future Action

3.54 Continue to ensure that the policies within PfE and the Joint DPD protect, conserve and enhance the borough's heritage assets.

HEALTH, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES

Indicators

Health **Number of health and well-being centres started and/or completed (Joint DPD Indicator 40).**
Joint DPD Objective: To create safer and stronger inclusive communities by improving the health and well-being of the borough's population by facilitating programmes such as the new health and well-being centres and facilities in accessible locations (SO5h).
Target: N/A
Oldham Position: Shaw & Crompton Medical Centre opened on 19 July 2024.
Action needed: None.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 2.
Source: Oldham Council.

Health **i) Adult participation in sport (Joint DPD Indicator 41i).** **ii) Children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport (Joint DPD Indicator 41ii).**
Joint DPD Objective: To create safer and stronger inclusive communities by improving the health and well-being of the borough's population through the provision of quality and accessible open spaces, sport and recreation facilities (SO5g).
Target: i) The Council target for this indicator is 20%. ii) N/A

Health

i) Adult participation in sport (Joint DPD Indicator 41i).

ii) Children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport (Joint DPD Indicator 41ii).

i) Information on Sport and Physical Activity levels for Oldham's population (Adults 16+) is now available through Sport England's Active Lives Survey. The latest results available are from the survey 2023/24 survey and are as follows:

- 35.9% of Oldham's population do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week - classed as 'inactive'. A rise of 0.9% since last year.
- 9.6% of Oldham's population do 30-149 minutes of physical activity per week - classed as 'fairly active'. A small decrease since last year.
- 54.5% of Oldham's population do 150+ minutes of physical activity per week - classed as 'active'. The same as last year.

Previous years AMRs:

- 2023/24: Less than 30 minutes – 35%, 30 – 149 minutes – 10.5% and 150+ minutes - 54.5%
- 2022/23: Less than 30 minutes – 28.5%, 30 -149 minutes – 11.8% and 150+ minutes – 59.7%.
- 2021/22: Less than 30 minutes – 33.4%, 30 -149 minutes – 12.7% and 150+ minutes – 53.4%.

ii) There is no information regarding children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport for the year 2023/24.

Action needed: N/A

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 2, 6, 23.

Source: Sport England.

Key Issues

3.55 The percentage of Oldham's adults (aged 16+) doing more than 150 minutes of activity per week and classed as 'active' is the second lowest in Greater Manchester. At 54.5% it is also below the Greater Manchester average of 61.2%.

3.56 The children and young people element of this indicator is no longer available because the method of gathering data related to this indicator ceased.

Future Action

3.57 The Council should continue to apply Local Plan policies 1, 2, 6 and 23 to protect existing indoor and outdoor sports provision and to support the development of new sports provision as appropriate. The Council should also look at increasing accessibility for people of all ability to areas of greenspaces.

Education **Number of education related developments started and/or completed (Joint DPD Indicator 43).**
Joint DPD Objective: To promote economic diversification, growth and prosperity and the sustainable economic regeneration of the borough by supporting the borough's transforming education agenda to improve education and skills: by i) facilitating improvements to the borough's schools through programmes such as the Primary Capital Programme. ii) facilitating higher and further education proposals such as those of the University Campus Oldham, the Oldham College and the Oldham Sixth Form College including the development of the Regional Science Centre Oldham in Oldham Town Centre (SO3g).
Target: N/A
The following education related developments were completed in the monitoring year 2024/25: • East Crompton St James C Of E Junior School, Shaw - Single storey flat roof masonry infill extension to create SEN provision for school. • Cooperative Academy, Failsworth - Single storey teaching building There were also a number of minor planning applications for educated related developments approved in the monitoring year 2024/25, including: • East Crompton St James C Of E Junior School, Shaw - Erection of an outdoor timber classroom
Action needed: N/A
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 2.
Source: Oldham Council.

Key Issues

3.58 There are no key issues related to this indicator.

Future Action

3.59 The Council should support proposals for education related development in line with Policy 2 and other relevant policies in the Joint DPD.

Communities **Number of people who are engaged in the Local Plan consultation process (Joint DPD Indicator 1).**
Joint DPD Objective: To create safer and stronger inclusive communities by promoting community cohesion (SO5a).

Target: To engage as many people and organisations in the Local Plan consultation process in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
Oldham Position: There are 527 people, agencies and organisations on the Local Plan mailing list and therefore engaged in the Local Plan consultation process. • 2023/24: 521 • 2022/23: 541 • 2021/22: 561 • 2020/21: 561 • 2019/20: 392 • 2018/19: 459 • 2017/18: 1,609 • 2016/17: 1,609 • 2015/16: 1,578 • 2014/15: 1,545 • 2013/14: 1,299 • 2012/13: 1,218
Action needed: Council to continue to encourage people, agencies and organisations to subscribe to the Local Plan mailing list.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: All policies.
Source: Oldham Council Strategic Planning and Information section.

Key Issues

3.60 There was a significant drop in the number of people registered on the mailing list between 2017/18 and 2018/19 and therefore engaged in the Local Plan consultation process. This is primarily down to the introduction of the GDPR legislation which led to the removal of the majority of addresses registered.

Future Action

3.61 The Council will continue to encourage people, agencies, and organisations to subscribe to the Local Plan mailing list.

AIR QUALITY

Indicators

Air Quality and Development

Number of days of Air Pollution (Joint DPD Indicator 30)

Annual Average Nitrogen Dioxide

Joint DPD Objective: SO1 To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by minimising the impact of motorised traffic on the global climate and on local air quality (SO1g); and

To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by promoting the prudent use, appropriate reclamation where necessary and sustainable management of natural resources (land, soil, air and water) and man-made resources (SO1l).

Target: Annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO2) target = 40 microgrammes per cubic metre (ugm3).

Oldham Position:

Table 4 - Number of Days in Greater Manchester where pollution was moderate or higher[15]

Air Quality Band	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Low	356	347	348	359	353	342	344	353	355
Moderate	10	18	17	6	13	22	20	10	11
High	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Very High	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Total number of days where pollution was moderate or higher	**10**	**18**	**17**	**6**	**13**	**23**	**21**	**12**	**11**

The overall air pollution index is determined by the highest concentration of 5 pollutants in the area. These are nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, particles <2.5 ug in diameter, and particles <10 ug. The above figures are based on actual monitoring data from the Greater Manchester area, including the monitoring station in Oldham at Crompton Way, Shaw. Health advice is given for people who are at risk from elevated levels of air pollution, for example, adults and children with lung or heart problems. Defra produces daily air pollution forecast tweets from @DefraUKAir so that people who may be affected by poor air quality can take relevant action. More information on pollution bands is available on the Defra website www.uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/daqi.

[15] For data on years prior to 2015 please see previous versions of the Monitoring Report.

Air Quality and Development

Number of days of Air Pollution (Joint DPD Indicator 30)

Annual Average Nitrogen Dioxide

The Air Quality monitoring station on Crompton Way, Shaw in 2024 captured 95% of the available data on Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) and measured an annual average of 20 µg/m3, i.e., well below the National objective of 40µg/m3. This is slightly less the previous year's level of 21µg/m3. There were also no exceedances of the hourly average objective (i.e., 200µg/m3 not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year) at the site in 2024, in fact again, as in 2023, there were no incidences when the hourly mean was greater than 200µg/m3 in 2024 at all.

The Air Quality monitoring station on Crompton Way, Shaw in 2024 captured 98% of the available data on PM10. The annual mean for PM10 (particle matter) at the monitoring station in 2024 was 14µg/m3 i.e., well below the objective of 40µg/m3. This is slightly below the level of 15µg/m3 measured at the site in 2023. In addition, the objective for the 24-hour mean of 50µg/m3 not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year was not exceeded at this site.

Diffusion Tubes - In 2024 there was one site that exceeded the annual air quality objective of 40µg/m3 when distance corrected for the nearest exposure (where necessary). This was:

1. Tube OL25 - Outside 21 Shaw Road in Royton recorded a distance corrected result of 40 µg/m3. This tube is sited in an Air Quality Management Area. The road the tube is situated next to is often used by Heavy Goods vehicles as they visit the industrial areas off Salmon Fields and Higginshaw Lane in Royton. There is also often standing traffic at lights in the area. The result is very similar to last year's reading of 43 µg/m3.

Previous year's annual mean Nitrogen Dioxide levels were (µg/m3):

- 2023: 21
- 2022: 24
- 2021: 25
- 2020: 23
- 2019: 30
- 2018: 30
- 2017: 36
- 2016: 29.0
- 2015: 34.6
- 2014: 32.4
- 2013: 30.07
- 2012: 31.8
- 2011: 32.3

Action: None

Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 9.

Source: Oldham Council Environmental Health.

Key Issues

3.62 The level of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particle Matter is slightly lower than last year and well below the target.

3.63 The number of days where pollution was moderate or higher is significantly lower than last year.

Future Action

3.64 Ensure that new development minimise the need to travel and promotes active travel and the use of public transport, as well promoting electric vehicle charging points. New developments should also be energy efficient. The policies within PfE and the Joint DPD aim to protect and improve local environmental quality.

Air Quality and Development

Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors (previously NI186) (Joint DPD Indicator 44)

Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by supporting carbon neutral developments by following the principles of the zero-carbon hierarchy (SO1a);

To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by minimising the impact of motorised traffic on the global climate and on local air quality (SO1g); and

To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by promoting the prudent use, appropriate reclamation where necessary and sustainable management of natural resources (land, soil, air and water) and man-made resources (SO1i).

Target: 48% reduction in emissions on the 1990 baseline (750.36kt CO2)

Oldham Position: The latest information is for 2023 when there were 3.0 tonnes of per capita emissions.

The sources of this were:

- Industrial – 84.8 kt
- Commercial – 75 kt
- Public Sector – 37.8 kt
- Domestic – 260.7 kt
- Transport – 232.8 kt
- Total – 728.3 kt

Previous years (tonnes per capita):

- 2022: 3.2 tonnes
- 2021: 3.5 tonnes
- 2020: 3.0 tonnes
- 2019: 3.3 tonnes

Air Quality and Development Per capita emission estimates, industry, domestic and transport sectors (previously NI186) (Joint DPD Indicator 44)
• 2018: 3.4 tonnes • 2017: 3.4 tonnes • 2016: 3.5 tonnes • 2015: 3.7 tonnes • 2014: 3.9 tonnes • 2013: 4.4 tonnes • 2012: 4.6 tonnes • 2011: 4.2 tonnes
Action needed: None
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 9, 18.
Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Key Issues

3.65 The figures for 2023 are a decrease compared to 2022 and the lowest since the plan period (it is the same as 2020 which is likely to be due to covid). The trend is positive.

Future Action

3.66 The policies within the Joint DPD help to guide development to accessible locations, and promote and encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling and low carbon energy. There is the need to continue to reduce emissions and to ensure that the Local Plan review helps to deliver the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan and Transport strategies.

CONTAMINATED LAND

Indicators

Contaminated Land Number of sites remediated as a result of planning permission (Joint DPD Indicator 29)
Joint DPD Objective: To mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote sustainable development in the borough by promoting the prudent use, appropriate reclamation where necessary and sustainable management of natural resources (land, soil, air and water) and man-made resources (SO1i).
Target: N/A.
Oldham Position: This indicator is no longer monitored, and the Council will need to review how contaminated land is monitored in the future. In the meantime, 385 planning applications were reviewed by Environmental Health between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Of these planning applications: • 40 were requested to have Landfill Gas Investigation • 23 were requested to have Contaminated Land Investigation • 29 were requested to have a watching brief for contaminated land • 11 were requested to have a Gas Membrane condition Previous year's show the following number of applications for contaminated land investigation, landfill gas and gas membrane conditions respectively: • 2024: 19; 47; and 7 applications • 2023: 39; 44; and 9 applications • 2022: 78; 80; and 20 applications • 2021: 81; 54 and 10 applications
Action needed: None.
Relevant Joint DPD Policies: 1, 9.
Source: Oldham Council Environmental Health section.

Key Issues

3.67 The Council no longer monitors the original indicator. Alternative information has been provided.

Future Action

3.68 The policies within the Joint DPD will help protect and improve local environmental quality.

Indicators that are no longer monitored

3.69 For information, the indicators that are no longer monitored are:

- Number of sites remediated as a result of planning permission;
- Windfall completions (housing);
- Public transport accessibility of new residential development to key services (Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, GPs, hospitals, employment areas and major retail centres);
- Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag award standard;
- Net change in the extent of protected open space;
- Number of Air Quality Management Areas;
- Number of quality bus corridors;
- Number of potentially contaminated sites in the borough;
- Number of applications relating to contaminated sites;
- Extent of derelict and underused land;
- Number of Local Nature Reserves and Country Parks;
- Number of domestic burglaries per 1,000 households;
- Percentage of vehicle crimes per 1,000 population;
- Number of cyclists involved in road accidents;
- Number of pedestrians involved in road accidents;
- Extent of cycleway and footpath provision;
- Number of wind turbine applications granted and refused planning permission;
- Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years;
- Healthy life expectancy at 65;
- Number of properties added to stock which have 3+bedrooms in HMR area;
- Supply of ready to develop housing sites (SO2(e)) and (SO2(f));
- Number and type of developments in Land Reserved for Future Development;
- Percentage of large developments incorporating low carbon generation;
- Extension of Greater Manchester's light rail network, 'Metrolink', to the borough; and
- Number and percentage of major planning applications refused on poor design grounds.

3.70 In addition, this year the following indicators have not been possible to monitor due to the necessary information not being available, lack of resources and changes in monitoring processes:

3.71 Amount of completed non-residential development within Use Classes A, B and D complying with car parking standards set out in the local plan. (Joint DPD Indicator 25);

- Building for Life Assessments (Joint DPD Indicator 20);
- Local Services - Open Space: i) Extent of protected (Joint DPD Indicator 37i); and ii) Percentage of quality and accessible open spaces meeting local standards (Joint DPD Indicator 37ii);
- Improved street and environmental cleanliness (Joint DPD Indicator 45); and
- Indicators in relation to the Joint Minerals and Joint Waste DPD's.
- Number of new developments where agreed with the Council incorporated Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) (Joint DPD Indicator 28ii).

3.72 These indicators will be re-visited each year in case circumstances change and an update provided in future Monitoring Reports as appropriate.

4 Implementation of the Statement of Community Involvement

Analysis of responses to Local Plan consultations

4.1 The latest Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted in July 2021. The SCI sets out how the Council will involve the community and stakeholders in the preparation of the Local Plan, neighbourhood plans and the consideration of planning applications.

4.2 Section 10 of the SCI (Review and Monitoring) explains that the Council will monitor the SCI to see how effective it is in terms of involving the community in the preparation of the Local Plan. The table below looks at the Local Plan consultations undertaken during the monitoring period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

4.3 The table below sets out the consultation techniques used for each document, the number of people and organisations consulted, the response rate and an analysis of the equalities monitoring. (Note: The number of people consulted can vary for each consultation - this is because the Local Plan Mailing List is an evolving list with new people added and others removed throughout the year at consultee requests). It identifies any problems or issues and sets out any further actions required to improve our engagement and consultation with the community and stakeholders.

Table 5 – Local Plan Document Consultation

Local Plan Document / Consultation Dates	Consultation Techniques Used	Number of people / organisations consulted	Response Rate	Effective problems identified / any changes required
Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD consultation was held from 1 November – 12 December 2024.	A public notice was published in the Oldham Times; documents were made available via the Council's website and at the borough's public libraries and the Council's Spindles Shopping Centre reception. The consultation was also advertised by social media. A press release was prepared by GMCA. A letter or email was sent to those individuals and organisations on the mailing list regarding the consultation. As well as	There were 531 people, agencies and organisations on the Local Plan Mailing list who were directly contacted by Oldham Council. This consultation was also carried out by Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and coordinated by GMCA.	24 people / organisations responded in total.	Comments made were considered whilst finalising the SPD.

Local Plan Document / Consultation Dates	Consultation Techniques Used	Number of people / organisations consulted	Response Rate	Effective problems identified / any changes required
	to Councillors and relevant internal officers.			
South Pennine Moors SPD consultation was held from 1 November – 12 December 2024.	A public notice was published in the Oldham Times, documents were made available via the Council's website and at the borough's public libraries and the Council's Spindle's Shopping Centre reception. The consultation was also advertised by social media. A press release was prepared by GMCA. A letter or email was sent to those individuals and organisations on the mailing list regarding the consultation. As well as to Councillors and relevant internal officers.	There were 531 people, agencies and organisations on the Local Plan Mailing list who were directly contacted by Oldham Council. This consultation was also carried out by Rochdale and Tameside and was coordinated by GMCA.	20 people / organisations responded in total.	Comments made were considered whilst finalising the SPD.

5 Key findings and actions

Implementation of Policies

5.1 This section of the Monitoring Report analyses how Oldham's planning policies are being implemented. Where they are not, or are being implemented effectively, the reasons are examined and what, if any, actions may be needed.

5.2 From analysing the indicators within Section 3, 'The effects of the Local Plan', it is possible to highlight policies that may not be being effectively implemented or interpreted correctly and/or are not hitting their targets. Below is a list of indicators that may need to be further examined for their effectiveness or how they are being implemented:

- New and converted dwellings – on previously developed land (Joint DPD Indicator 13) - at least 80% of new dwellings in the borough to be built on PDL: In 2024/25, 67% (385) of new and converted dwellings were completed on previously developed land (PDL) in Oldham. This is higher than 2023/24 (55%) but is below the target of 80%. However, it should be noted that there were another 138 dwellings completed in 2024/25 on mixed sites which contain both PDL and greenfield land. These are not included in the PDL figure. Therefore 91% of all dwellings completed in 2024/25 were on PDL or mixed sites. Whilst the number of dwellings completed on previously developed land is lower than the target, greenfield sites only accounted for 9% (55 homes sites) of all homes (578 homes) completed during 2024/25, compared to greenfield sites making up 20% of all homes completed in 2023/24. Brownfield and mixed sites continue to make up the majority of sites within the housing land supply.

Action needed to address gaps in information

5.3 The key actions under this heading are:

- To continue working with the Council's Development Management section to ensure that relevant data is entered into the planning applications management system to facilitate the closer monitoring of the use of policies in decision-making.
- To further develop monitoring systems for relevant indicators as appropriate, including the loss of employment land, vacant previously developed land and open space.
- To look at how the Council can effectively monitor the Contaminated Land indicator in future years.

Action needed to respond to indicators

5.4 The key housing related actions under this heading are:

- Continue to review of the Council's SHLAA annually to inform the housing land supply position and the emerging Local Plan review;
- Whilst each application will be treated on its planning merits, proposals for residential development on greenfield sites will (whether new proposals or where the renewal of planning permission is sought) continue to be resisted unless there are other relevant material considerations;

- Planning applications for the conversion and change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and which are technically classified as greenfield developments (because agricultural buildings are not regarded as “previously developed land”) continue to be treated on their planning merits;
- The Local Plan will consider the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, as appropriate, in line with up-to-date evidence and the Joint DPD Policy 12;
- Encourage the provision of larger family (three/four plus bed) accommodation, a diverse mix of house types, a range of affordable housing and housing for older people, as identified within the Local Housing Needs Assessment (2024) as part of the mix of new residential developments; and
- Utilise local evidence, including both the Greater Manchester and Oldham’s Strategic Housing Market Assessments and the Council's Housing Strategy and Local Housing Needs Assessment, to ensure that housing delivered meets the needs of the local community.

5.5 In terms of flood risk, the LLFA is now a statutory consultee on major planning applications and will address surface water flood risk and SUDS.

5.6 The key action associated with biodiversity is to ensure that biodiversity is enhanced through statutory biodiversity net gain and wider biodiversity duties.

5.7 The key action associated with OPOL is to continue to protect designated OPOL in line with the Local Plan policy unless material considerations suggest otherwise.

5.8 The key action associated with landscape character is to ensure that the borough's landscape is conserved and enhanced when assessing relevant planning applications.

5.9 The key actions associated with health are:

- The Council should continue to apply Local Plan policies 1, 2, 6 and 23 to protect existing indoor and outdoor sports provision and to support the development of new sports provision as appropriate; and
- There is the need to ensure that developments are located close to key services, with good public transport networks and access to open space, sport and recreation provision to encourage people to use active modes of travel and to reduce air pollution.

5.10 The key action associated with education is to ensure that the Council continues to support proposals for education-related development.

5.11 The key actions associated with air quality and development are:

- Ensure that new development minimise the need to travel and promote active travel and the use of public transport, as well providing as electric vehicle charging points. New developments should also be energy efficient. The policies within the Joint DPD aim to protect and improve local environmental quality.

Action needed to update timetables in the Local Development Scheme

5.12 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) in place at the start of the monitoring period was that approved in December 2023. During the monitoring period an update was published which took effect on the 4th March 2025. The revised LDS reflected the latest Local Plan timetables and removed the Places for Everyone (PfE) profile following its adoption. No action currently needed to update the LDS.

Action needed to respond to new policy/prepare new development plan documents

5.13 The key actions under this heading are:

- To continue working with GMCA partners on the implementation and monitoring of PfE;
- To continue working on the preparation of the Local Plan review; and
- Review existing indicators and monitoring processes as part of the Local Plan review as appropriate.

Action needed to respond to master planning activity

5.14 As part of the Council's plans for regeneration, there has been and will continue to be, a considerable amount of master planning activity taking place in the borough, such as the Oldham Town Centre Framework.

5.15 To meet the requirements of Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan Policies: JPA10 Beal Valley and JPA12 Broadbent Moss the main developer / landowner consortium (consisting of Casey, Barratt Redrow, Kellen Homes and Wain Homes) collaborated with the Council to prepare a masterplan and spatial design code for the sites. Whilst outside of the monitoring period this is now being progressed by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Consultation on the draft SPD commenced 25 February 2025. The Draft SPD sets out:

- The constraints and opportunities that have helped inform the masterplan and spatial design code
- A vision and the main development principles for both sites
- A spatial design code that considers matters such as:
    - Identity
    - nature and Green and Blue Infrastructure
    - movement and public realm
    - built form
- An infrastructure phasing and delivery strategy

6 Other Monitoring Matters

Neighbourhood Development Order and Neighbourhood Development Plans

6.1 In November 2016 Saddleworth Neighbourhood Area was designated. Informal consultation and information gathering on a neighbourhood plan for the area has been on-going since then. During 2019/20 a survey was distributed to residents and businesses.

6.2 Saddleworth Parish Council consulted on a draft Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) from 2nd April to 10th June 2024. They are now preparing for pre submission stage.

6.3 Chadderton Neighbourhood Area and The New Chadderton Partnership was designated on 28 February 2022 following consultation on the revised forum and area applications between 29 November 2021 and 10 January 2022.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.4 The Council has determined not to proceed with a CIL schedule at this time and therefore no monitoring has or will take place in this regard.

Duty to Co-operate

6.5 All consultations that have been undertaken in the monitoring period have been carried out in accordance with the adopted SCI, with the relevant Statutory Consultees contacted for comments as appropriate. The table below outlines formal Duty to Co-operate meetings regarding the progress of local plan documents held during the monitoring period. In addition to these meetings there are on-going meetings with various key stakeholders as and when necessary, including regular meetings with the other districts in Greater Manchester and other neighbouring districts.

Table 6 - Formal Duty to Co-operate meetings held during 2024 - 2025

Organisation / Local Authority	Strategic Issues Considered	Who the issue was discussed with	Date	Outcome of discussion
Oldham Council	Meeting to discuss Historic England's comments on the Draft Local Plan and work needed in preparation for the Publication Plan.	Historic England	05/04/2024	To continue liaising as the Local Plan progresses.
Oldham Council	Meeting to discuss Environment Agency's comments on the Draft Local Plan and work needed	Environment Agency	09/04/2024	To continue liaising as the Local Plan progresses.

Organisation / Local Authority	Strategic Issues Considered	Who the issue was discussed with	Date	Outcome of discussion
	in preparation for the Publication Plan.			
Oldham Council	Meeting to discuss United Utilities' comments on the Draft Local Plan and work needed in preparation for the Publication Plan.	United Utilities	18/04/2024	To continue liaising as the Local Plan progresses.
GMCA	Meeting to discuss South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA SPD	GMCA, Oldham Council, Rochdale Council and Tameside Council	05/06/2024 28/06/2024	To continue preparation of the SPD.
Tameside Council	Tameside's Homes, Spaces and Places - Shaping Tameside for Tomorrow Plan	Oldham Council and Tameside Council	24/07/2024	To continue liaising on Local Plan and any cross-boundary issues
Oldham Council	PDNPA Reg 18 Issues and Options workshop with GM districts	Peak District National Park Authority	24/09/2024	To continue liaising on Local Plan and any cross-boundary issues
Oldham Council	Meeting to discuss validation checklist and supply.	Environment Agency	14/01/2025	To continue liaising as the Local Plan progresses.

Appendix 1 Joint DPD Policies Replaced by Places for Everyone

The following policies from Oldham's Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2011) (Joint DPD) have been wholly or partially replaced by policies within Places for Everyone (PfE). Any part of the policy which is not replaced has been retained and will remain part of the statutory development plan until it is replaced by the relevant part of the Local Plan.

Table 7 - Joint DPD Policies Replaced by Places for Everyone

Joint DPD Policy	Replaced by PfE policy / policies	Section of policy to be superseded
3 An Address of Choice (Partially)	JP-H1	Section of policy on Distribution of Housing (including Table 5 - Current distribution of housing within District Partnership areas (based on the 2009 SHLAA)). Paragraphs 5.41 to 5.45 Table 6 – Current distribution of housing land types within District Partnership areas (based on the 2009 SHLAA findings)
4 Promoting Sustainable Regeneration and Prosperity (Partially)	JP-J3 and JP-J4	Second and third paragraph of policy wording. Paragraphs 5.51 and 5.52 of the reasoned justification
5 Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Modes (Partially)	JP-C3, JP-C5, JP-C6 and JP-C8	Policy requirements b) to j) Paragraphs 5.59 and 5.60 of the reasoned justification
18 Energy (Partially)	JP-S2	Section of policy on Carbon Dioxide Reduction Targets (including Table 8 – Energy Infrastructure Framework) Paragraphs 6.93 to 6.105 of the reasoned justification
19 Flooding (Partially)	JP-S4, JP-G3, JP-D1	Policy requirements a), b), c) and e) are superseded and replaced by policy JP-S4 Policy requirement d) is superseded by Policy JP-G3 Policy requirement f) is superseded by Policy JP-D1 Paragraphs 6.113 to 6.116 of the reasoned justification
20 Design	JP-P1	The entirety of policy 20 is superseded by Policy JP-P1
22 Protecting Open Land (Partially)	JPA13 Chew Brook Vale	Policy wording 'The 2006 UDP Policy OE1.8 'Major Developed Site in Green Belt 'will be saved and will be

Joint DPD Policy	Replaced by PfE policy / policies	Section of policy to be superseded
		assessed in the Site Allocations DPD' and paragraph 6.140 from the reasoned justification.
	JPA10 Beal Valley JPA12 Broadbent Moss JPA14 Cowlishaw	The following areas of Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) will be de-designated (and their reference removed from paragraph 6.141 of the reasoned justification) as they are included in the boundary of strategic allocations: OPOL 9 – Bullcote Lane, Royton OPOL 10 – Shawside, Shaw (Moss Hey) OPOL 22 – Cowlishaw, Shaw
	JPA12 Broadbent Moss JP-G9	Policy wording 'Development on LRFD will only be granted where it would be acceptable in the Green Belt and which would not prejudice the later development of LRFD beyond the life of the LDF' and paragraph 6.143 from the reasoned justification
25 Developer Contributions	JP-D2	The entirety of policy 25 is superseded by policy JP-D2

Appendix 2 Places for Everyone Annual Monitoring Report

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GREATER MANCHESTER

Places for Everyone

Monitoring report for the joint development plan for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan

Monitoring report for 2024/2025

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

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1. Introduction

Context

1.1 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, 2022 - 2039 is the strategic spatial plan for nine Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), and as such sets out a collective planning policy framework across the nine PfE local authorities. The PfE Plan was adopted with effect from 21 March 2024.

1.2 The PfE Plan[1] forms part of the Development Plan for each of the nine PfE local authorities and is used to assess individual planning applications. Local plans need to be consistent with the PfE Plan and neighbourhood plans need to be in general conformity with the PfE Plan's strategic policies. The PfE Plan provides an appropriate strategic policy framework for local plans to be produced in the nine PfE local authorities.

Purpose of this report

1.3 Monitoring is a key component of any development plan document and therefore is key to the success of the PfE Plan. As such, to be effective, plans need to be kept up-to-date and monitored. This report is therefore part of this process in regularly monitoring performance to assess whether the strategic objectives and policies in the PfE Plan are being achieved and remain relevant, or whether they need to be updated.

1.4 The monitoring framework for the PfE Plan is set out in Tables 12.1 to 12.7 of the PfE. This report assesses the performance of the PfE Plan against the indicators and policy outcomes in the monitoring framework since adoption. A copy of the PfE Monitoring Framework is in Appendix A.

[1] greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9578/places-for-everyone-joint-development-plan-document.pdf

Report format

1.5 The monitoring report follows the structure of the PfE Monitoring Framework, as such the policy outcomes and indicators for each chapter of the PfE Plan are reported on in turn:

- Sustainable and Resilient Places
- Places for Jobs
- Places for Homes
- Greener Places
- Places for People
- Connected Places
- Delivering the Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.6 This report also monitors significant environmental effects of implementing the PfE Plan, as required by the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations. The purpose of this is to identify any unforeseen adverse environmental effects at an early stage so that appropriate remedial action can be taken. The significant environmental effects of the PfE Plan are embedded into the policy outcomes and objectives of the PfE monitoring framework. The PfE Integrated Assessment Adoption Statement, available on the GMCA website[2], illustrates that the PfE Integrated Assessment Framework objectives, which incorporate the significant environmental effects of the PfE Plan, link across to and are covered by the PfE monitoring framework.

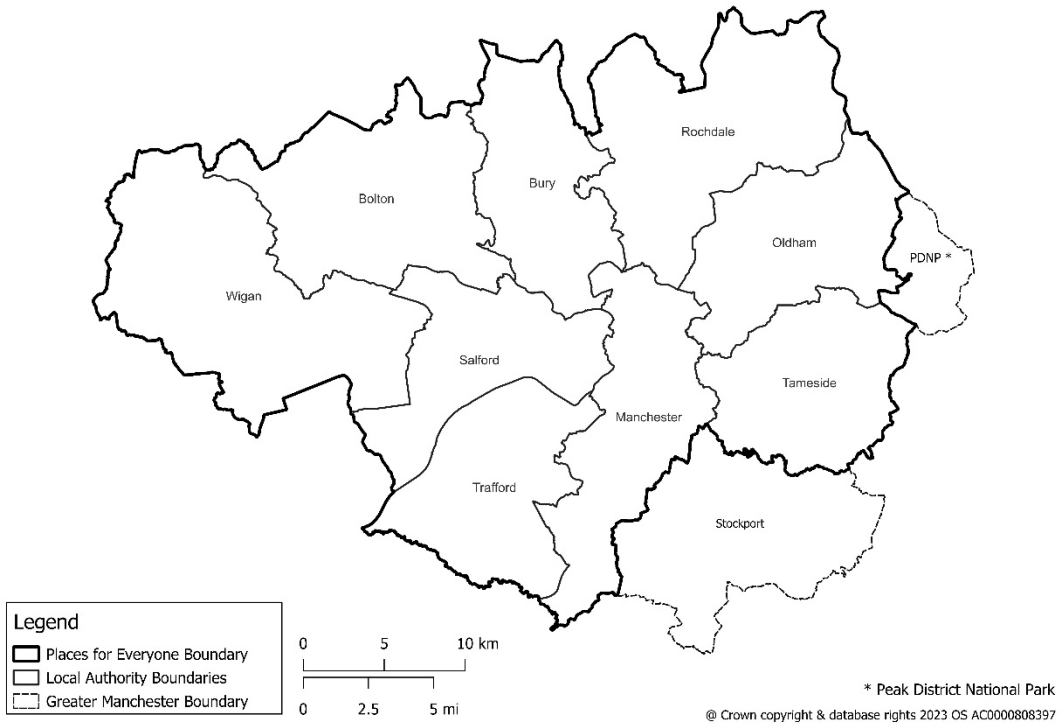
[2] Adoption - Greater Manchester Combined Authority (greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Geographical area

1.7 The PfE indicators are monitored across four types of geographic area: the full PfE area[3]; at the nine local authority level; at the PfE strategy area level; and PfE allocation level. The PfE Monitoring Framework indicates the level the indicators are monitored at.

1.8 The nine local authorities which PfE covers are; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham (excluding the Peak District National Park), Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. The below map shows the extent of the PfE boundary within a Greater Manchester context:

Figure 1.1: Places for Everyone Boundary



Source: Places for Everyone 2024

1.9 The PfE spatial strategy areas are as follow: Core Growth Area (JP-Strat1), the Inner Areas (JP-Strat5), the Northern Areas (JP-Strat6) and the Southern areas (JP-Strat9). The boundaries for these areas are established or

[3] The PfE area does not include the part of the Oldham Local Authority area that is within the Peak District National Park.

proposed in adopted or emerging local plans, the monitoring report illustrates the geographical boundaries as agreed by the local authorities[4].

Further monitoring

1.10 Whilst this report looks in detail at specific indicators in the PfE monitoring framework, it should be noted that the GMCA and local authorities carry out extensive further research and monitoring in a number of related areas. This includes the GMCA Research dashboards including the Housing Market Monitor dashboard and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This all sits under the umbrella of the Greater Manchester Strategy for which there is also extensive evidence and monitoring[5].

Timescales

1.11 This is the second Monitoring Report of the PfE Plan. It reports on the first year of the implementation of the PfE Plan and covers the period April 2024 to March 2025.

1.12 The data in this report generally covers financial year time periods, starting from 2022-23 to correspond with the start of the PfE Plan period in 2022. Where data is not available for the financial year, calendar year or a snapshot view of a point in time, e.g. July 2024, is used. Some indicators are subject to a data lag between the time data is collected and published. There are also a number of indicators which do not cover the period 2022-23 – 2023-24 as the policies which are being monitored only applied from when the PfE was adopted in March 2024.

[4] These spatial areas have been confirmed with the relevant Local Authorities and are in line with their Local Plan or Emerging Local Plan. These spatial areas align with those agreed in Salford City Council's Draft Local Plan: Core Strategy and Allocations 2024, Trafford's Emerging Local Plan, Manchester's Draft Local Plan and other applicable plans.

[5] **https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/research**

2. Summary of key findings

2.1 This section summarises some of the key messages from this monitoring report.

Brownfield Land

2.2 In 2024-25, 8,107 new residential units were built on brownfield land in the Places for Everyone area, signifying around 78% of all new residential development during that period. This was a 5 percentage point decrease in the number of new units built on brownfield land in 2023-24. However, 81% of residential sites delivering new housing in 2024-25 were on brownfield sites a 5 percentage point increase from 2023-24.

2.3 136,767 sqm of employment floorspace was built on brownfield land in the PfE area, 99.9% of all employment floorspace delivered in 2024-25.

2.4 100% of new employment sites were built on brownfield land in the Core, Inner and Norther Spatial Strategy Area in 2024-25. In the Southern Area all but one small site was a brownfield employment site.

Housing completions

2.5 There were 10,407 net housing completions in the PfE area in 2024-25, which is 1344 higher than the 2022-2025 PfE annualised phased delivery of 9,063.

2.6 Affordable housing, which can be for either rent or sale, is for those whose needs are not met by the market. It includes different tenures, including social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership, among others. There were 2,797 new build affordable housing completions across the PfE area in 2024-25. This was an increase of 383 homes from 2023-24.

2.7 In terms of the percentage split of housing completions in the Spatial Strategy Areas, the majority in 2024-25 were concentrated in the Northern Spatial Strategy Area (42%), closely followed by the Core Growth Area (38%).

Office completions

2.8 In 2024-25, 61,684 sqm of office floorspace was delivered in the PfE area. The majority of this floorspace was delivered in the Core Growth Spatial Strategy Area (51,014 sqm).

Industry and warehousing completions

2.9 92,613 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace was delivered in the PfE area in 2024-25. 42% of this floorspace was delivered in the Core Growth Spatial Strategy Area (32,223 sqm).

Greener Places

2.10 As of Autumn 2024, there was just over 13,800 hectares of publicly accessible green infrastructure in the PfE Area. This was a change of -0.4% from Autumn 2022. Most of this was found in the Northern Spatial Strategy Area (11,870 ha), the least was in the Core Growth Area (72 ha).

Flood Risk

2.11 In 2024-25, of the 25 developments across the PfE area that were referred to the Environment Agency for advice, zero went against this advice. This was no change from 2023-24 where zero referrals (30) went against EA advice.

Town Centres

2.12 In 2024/25, 4.3% (437) of all housing completions* were delivered in a main town centre in the PfE area. This was decrease from 8.9% in 2023/24.

Accessibility

2.13 79% of all housing completions were delivered within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the PfE area in 2024-25

2.14 In terms of the Spatial Strategy Areas, 100% of housing completions were within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the Core Growth Area and less than 50% in the Southern and Northern Strategic Areas.

2.15 In 2024-25, 71% of all new employment floorspace was delivered within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the PfE area. 100% of new employment floorspace was within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the Core Growth Area and less than 25% in the Southern and Northern Strategic Areas.

3. Sustainable and Resilient Places

Policy Outcome: Reduced Carbon emissions from new development

Indicator: % of net additional residential development completed with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of A and B

3.1 In 2024-25 there were 9,135 EPC A-G certificates lodged for new build residential developments, 7,653 of these were completed with an EPC rating of A and B in the Places for Everyone area, representing 84% of all new developments with an EPC A-G certificate. This is a decrease of 1 percentage point from the 2023-24 position.

Table 3.1: Percentage of Net Additional Residential Development Completed with an Energy Performance Certificate Rating of A and B

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	90%	78%	86%	91%	84%	68%	89%	86%	92%	84%
2023-24	85%	80%	90%	93%	90%	80%	85%	73%	85%	85%
2022-23	72%	78%	73%	87%	89%	76%	79%	60%	94%	78%

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, **Live Tables on Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates, Table NB1**[6] (Accessed October 2025)

Issues arising

3.2 None identified.

[6] Please note: Figures presented in Table NB1 are subject to revision over time. This includes data from previous quarters, which may differ between downloads due to updates to the Energy Performance of Buildings Register. Changes can occur for reasons including certificate holders opting out of disclosure, corrections to existing records, or additional lodgements being added retrospectively.

Policy Outcome: Maximise the use of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land for development

Indicator: Percentage of residential development on brownfield land

3.3 In 2024-25, 8,107 new residential units were built on brownfield land in the Places for Everyone area, signifying around 78% of all new residential development during that period[7]. This was a 5 percentage point decrease in the number of new units built on brownfield land in 2023-24.

3.4 In 2024-25, the number of residential sites delivered on brownfield land during this time, 479, represented 81% of all new residential sites in the Places for Everyone area, a 5 percentage point increase in the number of residential sites built on brownfield land in 2023-24.

3.5 The percentages of the number of residential units delivered on brownfield land in the Spatial Strategy Areas in 2024-25 ranged from 52% in the Southern Area and up to 95% in the Core Growth Area.

3.6 In 2024-25, the Core Growth, Inner, Northern and Southern Spatial Strategy Areas, each had at least 77% of new residential sites built on brownfield land. Core Growth had the highest percentage of new residential sites on brownfield land (96%), followed by the Inner Spatial Strategy area (80%).

Table 3.2: Percentage of Residential Units on Brownfield Land

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	55%	96%	94%	67%	51%	74%	85%	94%	62%	78%
2023-24	53%	93%	97%	55%	77%	92%	84%	83%	50%	83%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

[7] There is a discrepancy between the PfE monitoring report and SCC monitoring report due SCC reporting including all brownfield completions. SCC Monitoring report: **Residential development monitoring report 2024 to 2025 - updated 2 May 2025**

Table 3.3: Percentage of Residential Sites on Brownfield Land

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	68%	93%	91%	70%	68%	77%	82%	86%	75%	81%
2023-24	77%	88%	88%	67%	63%	85%	74%	76%	61%	76%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 3.4: Percentage of Residential Units on Brownfield Land

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	95%	87%	61%	52%
2023-24	99%	98%	62%	60%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 3.5: Percentage of Residential Sites on Brownfield Land

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	96%	89%	77%	83%
2023-24	96%	90%	71%	78%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Issues arising

3.7 Across the PfE area, although the percentage of residential units on brownfield land was down by 5% in 2024-25 (78%) compared to 2023-24 (83%), the percentage of number of sites on brownfield land increased from 76% in 2023-24 to 81% in 2024-25. This suggests that the residential sites completed in 2024-25 on brownfield land were smaller than sites on

greenfield land, which, although fewer were completed, were larger and could accommodate more homes.

3.8 No actions identified.

Indicator: % of gross employment development on brownfield land

3.9 In 2024-25, 136,871 sqm of employment floorspace was built on brownfield land in the Places for Everyone area, representing 99.9% of all employment floorspace delivered in that period. This accounts for nearly a 17 percentage point change from 2023-24 where 83% of employment land completions were on brownfield land.

3.10 Of the 66 employment sites completed in 2024-25 all but one were brownfield sites, accounting for 98% of sites as brownfield sites a 6 percentage point increase from 2023-24 in terms of the percentage of employment sites delivered which are brownfield sites.

3.11 In the Inner, Northern and Southern Spatial Strategy Areas, all employment sites were built on brownfield land in 2024-25. In the Core Growth Spatial Strategy Area all but one small new employment sites were build on brownfield land.

Table 3.6: Percentage of Employment Development Sites on Brownfield Land

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	100%	-*	100%	100%	-*	100%	100%	93%	100%	98%
2023-24	100%	100%	96%	67%	50%	100%	100%	100%	88%	93%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 3.7: Percentage of Employment Development Space (Square Metres) on Brownfield Land

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	100%	-*	100%	100%	-*	100%	100%	99.8%	100.%	99.9%
2023-24	100%	100%	99.5%	31%	0.9%	100%	100%	100%	80%	82%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 3.8: Percentage of Employment Development Sites on Brownfield Land

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	100%	100%	100%	87%
2023-24	100%	100%	88%	96%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 3.9: Percentage of Employment Development Floorspace (Square Metres) on Brownfield Land

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	100%	100%	100%	99%
2023-24	100%	100%	51%	99%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Issues arising

3.12 None identified.

Policy Outcome: No new homes and employment premises at risk of flooding

Indicator: No. of planning permissions approved against Environment Agency advice

3.13 The data below shows flood risk objections to planning applications for development that were referred to the Environment Agency (EA) for advice in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.

3.14 In 2024-25 of the 25 developments across the PfE area that were referred to the Environment Agency for advice, zero went against this advice. This was no change from 2023-24 where zero referrals (30) went against EA advice.

Table 3.10: Number of Planning Permissions Approved Against Environment Agency (EA) Advice: Flood Risk

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2022-23	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2

Source: Environment Agency Objections to Planning on the basis of Flood Risk and Water Quality: 2016-17 to 2024 - 25, Accessed September 2025

Issues arising

3.15 No actions identified.

Policy Outcome: Improve air quality

Indicator: Exceedance of the legal level of NO2 (as an Annual Mean) in local AQMA and Clean Air Plan Monitoring

3.16 Monitoring NO2 for the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan (GM CAP)[8] uses diffusion tubes at sites where "target determination"[9] modelling predicted illegally high levels of NO2.

3.17 In the calendar year 2024, monitoring for the CAP was carried out at 248 PfE locations. Of these locations, CAP air quality monitoring data showed 35 locations where exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean limit value, with a further 66 locations considered to be at risk of exceeding the limit. This was a significant reduction from 2023 where there were 57 areas with exceedances.

Table 3.11: Number of PfE CAP Monitoring Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024	32	36	160	19	15	60	32	18	13	385
2023	19	19	109	13	6	32	19	4	3	224
2022	32	36	160	19	15	60	32	18	13	385

Source: [2024 Air Quality Annual Status Report (GMCA)]

8 [Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan | Clean Air Greater Manchester (cleanairgm.com)]

9 The government's Joint Air Quality Unit undertook a process called 'target determination', which involves comparing the outputs of the local and national modelling, verifying the local modelling methodology and then agreeing the forecast concentration assessment to be compared to the limit value for each exceedance. The outcome of this is an agreement of the NO2 problem Greater Manchester must resolve ("target determination") and formed the basis for the original Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan. In 2025, the government approved an update to this plan to a non-charging, investment-led approach.

Table 3.12: Number of PfE CAP Sites Exceedances (>40.4µg/m3)

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024	0	0	31	1	0	0	2	0	1	35
2023	2	3	39	1	0	4	7	0	1	57
2022	4	6	49	5	1	13	8	0	1	87

Source: 2024 Air Quality Annual Status Report (GMCA)

Table 3.13: Number of PfE CAP Sites at Risk of Exceedance (>35 < 40.4 µg/m3)

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024	3	9	31	1	1	15	6	0	0	66
2023	3	6	31	4	3	17	7	0	0	71
2022	4	10	49	5	4	15	8	1	2	98

Source: 2024 Air Quality Annual Status Report (GMCA)

3.18 The CAP monitoring data indicates that air pollution is decreasing, and 2024 levels are significantly lower than levels recorded in 2023. As of 2024, five of the nine PfE local authorities had no exceedances of the NO2 legal limit. Analysis of the factors influencing pollution emissions and air quality indicate that this improved trend is likely due to the electrification of the bus network and depots across the region.

Issues arising

3.19 No actions identified.

4. Places for Jobs

Policy Outcome: Improve productivity

Indicator: % increase in GVA per job

4.1. Increasing productivity will contribute to a thriving, inclusive and productive economy in the Places for Everyone area. Gross Value Added (GVA) per job can be used as a proxy measure of productivity. GVA measures output and is calculated by taking the value of goods and services produced in an area, minus the cost of the inputs used to produce them. GVA is then divided by the number of employees to reach an output per job value. Productivity measures can indicate how well an area uses its resources to generate economic growth.

4.2. The total GVA per job fell by 1.0% in the Places for Everyone area from 2022 – 2023. Still, two of the four PfE Spatial Strategy Areas, Northern and Core, experienced a percentage increase in GVA per jobs during this time. The Northern Area saw the largest increase of 4.2% between 2022 - 2023. The Inner Area saw the largest decrease of -5.7% in GVA per full job during this time.

Table 4.1: Total GVA per Job (£k, 2022 prices), Strategic Spatial Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern	PFE Area
2023	79.4	61.4	56.8	69.8	63.5
2022	78.6	65.1	54.5	69.9	64.1

Source: Authors calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; HM Treasury GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP November 2025; and the Business Register and Employment Survey

Table 4.2: GVA per job change year on year, Strategic Spatial Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern	PFE Area
2022-2023	0.9%	-5.7%	4.2%	-0.1%	-1.0%
2021-2022	3.2%	7.3%	1.1%	3.3%	4.4%

Source: Authors calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; HM Treasury GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP November 2025; and the Business Register and Employment Survey

Table 4.3: Total GVA per Job (£k, 2022 prices), Local Authorities

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2023	59.5	53.6	72.7	54.1	52.9	61.0	53.8	66.5	56.2	63.5
2022	55.1	54.4	75.3	50.7	55.3	66.0	53.7	65.1	56.0	64.1

Source: Authors calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; HM Treasury GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP November 2025; and the Business Register and Employment Survey

Table 4.4: GVA per Job Change Year on Year, Local Authorities

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022 - 2023	8.0%	-1.5%	-3.4%	6.6%	-4.2%	-7.6%	0.2%	2.2%	0.4%	-1.0%
2021 - 2022	1.6%	1.6%	10.9%	0.3%	4.3%	-1.1%	4.0%	-1.1%	0.0%	4.4%

Source: Authors calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; HM Treasury GDP Deflators at

market prices, and money GDP November 2025; and the Business Register and Employment Survey

Issues arising

4.3. No actions identified.

Policy Outcome: Increased number of jobs

Indicator: Proportion of our residents (working age) in employment

4.4. In 2024-25, the percentage of working age residents in employment was just over 71% in the PfE area. This was the same as 2023-24 where there were 71% of working age residents in employment.

4.5. Six of the nine local authorities in the PfE area saw an increase in the proportion of working age residents in employment between 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Table 4.5: Proportion of Our Residents (Working Age) in Employment

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	67%	70%	69%	69%	71%	72%	74%	82%	73%	71%
2023-24	66%	69%	67%	77%	73%	71%	75%	78%	69%	71%
2022-23	69%	82%	68%	74%	68%	73%	73%	74%	75%	72%

Source: Annual Population Survey, Employment Rate – aged 16-64. (Accessed December 2025)

Issues arising

4.6. No actions identified.

Policy Outcome: Improve access to jobs

Indicator: Number of local labour agreements

4.7. The indicator for number of local labour agreements was first monitored for the PfE period 2024-25. The below data or collected from the PfE local authorities and reports on the number of local labour agreements signed in the year. In 2024-25 there were 99 local labour agreements signed across the nine PfE local planning authorities.

Table 4.6: Number of Local Labour Agreements

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	4	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	35	99

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Issues arising

4.8. 2024-25 was the first year that the number of local labour agreements was monitored, therefore it is too early in the plan period to identify any trends in the data. Consequently, there are no specific actions identified apart from continue to monitor this indicator.

Policy Outcome: Increase office floorspace by 2 million sqm by 2039

Indicator: Increase in office floorspace (gross)

4.9. Development of office floorspace will work towards increasing office floorspace by 2 million sqm by 2039 in the PfE area.

4.10. In 2024-25, 61,684 sqm of office floorspace was delivered in the PfE area. The majority of this floorspace was delivered in the Core Growth Spatial Strategy Area (51,014 sqm).

4.11. Since 2022-23, 261,982 sqm of office floorspace has been delivered in the PfE area.

Table 4.7: Gross Office Floorspace (Square Metres)

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	140	0	55,200	4,367	0	0	72	1,905	0	61,684
2023-24	402	214	64,277	12,205	0	43,105	275	8,309	1,050	129,837
2022-23	501	172	49,614	11,046	0	2019	1496	15787	0	70,462
Total	1,043	386	169,091	27,618	0	45,124	1,843	15,827	1,050	261,982

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 4.8: Gross Office Floorspace: Spatial Strategy Areas (Square Metres)

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	51,014	4,225	4,579	1,866
2023-24	106,913	60	14,483	8,382

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

4.12. Across the PfE allocations in 2024-25 there were no office completions.

Issues arising

4.13. Although less office completions were recorded in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24 across the PfE area, it is too early in the plan period to judge whether this is an issue that needs to be considered, therefore, currently, no actions have been identified apart from continue to monitor this indicator.

Policy Outcome: Increase in industry and warehousing floorspace by 3.5 million sqm by 2039 (gross)

Indicator: Increase in industry and warehousing floorspace (gross)

4.14. Delivering industrial and warehousing floorspace will work towards increasing this floorspace by 3.5 million sqm over the period 2022- 2039.

4.15. In 2023-24, 92,613 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace was delivered in the PfE area.

4.16. Since 2022, 450,029 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace has been delivered in the PfE area.

Table 4.9: Gross Industry and Warehousing Floorspace (Square Metres):

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	178,921	0	7,525	4,415	0	7,273	2,767	40,771	12,436	92,613
2023-24	15,554	166	3,584	15,642	32,466	16,010	949	78,318	16,233	178,921
2022-23	4644	5500	16,180	38,578	51,860	12,224	0		4,200	178,921
Total	20,198	5,666	27,289	58,635	84,326	35,507	3,716	134,876	32,869	433,029

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Table 4.10: Gross Industry and Warehousing Floorspace 2023-24: Spatial Strategy Areas (Square Metres)

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	32,223	14,598	37,244	8,548
2023-24	51,763	1,443	96,786	28,930

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

4.17. There were no industry and warehousing completions in 2024-25 in the PfE allocations.

Issues arising

4.18. Although less industrial and warehousing completions were recorded in 2024-25 compared to 2023-24 across the PfE area, it is too early in the plan period to judge whether this is an issue that needs to be considered. Much of the industrial and warehousing land supply across the PfE area is earmarked for large PfE allocations that were taken out of the Green Belt for development. As 2024-25 is first year of implementing the PfE Plan policies, including allocations and considering that it can take several years to deliver large sites, industry and warehousing completions are likely to pick-up as time goes on.

Policy Outcome: Secure main town centres as local economic drivers

Indicator: No. of residential units (net) delivered in main town centres

4.19. In 2024-25, 4.3% (437) of all housing completions* were delivered in a main town centre in the PfE area.

Table 4.11: Number of residential Units* Delivered in Main Town Centres

Year	Altrincham (Trafford)	Ashton-under-Lyne (Tameside)	Bolton (Bolton)	Bury (Bury	Oldham (Oldham)*	Rochdale (Rochdale)	Salford Quays (Salford)	Wigan (Wigan)	PFE Area
2024-25	14	8	182	65	15	0	151	2	437
2023-24	8	26	46	58	9	242	N/A	12	401

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. An asterisk (*) indicates figures are either gross or mix of gross and net housing completions; all other figures represent net completions.

Table 4.12: Percentage of Housing Completions in Main Town Centres

Year	Altrincham (Trafford)	Ashton-under-Lyne (Tameside)	Bolton (Bolton)	Bury (Bury)	Oldham (Oldham)*	Rochdale (Rochdale)	Salford Quays (Salford)	Wigan (Wigan)	PFE Area
2024-25	2.0%	1.7%	25.6%	20.9%	2.6%	0.0%	5.5%	0.2%	4.3%
2023-24	1.0%	4.1%	7.8%	23.8%	2.1%	35.5%	N/A	1.0%	8.9%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Issues arising

4.20. Although a smaller proportion of homes in 2024-25 were completed in the town centres compared to 2023-24, as 2024-25 is the first year of the implementation of the PfE Plan, it is too early judge whether this is an issue that needs to be considered until there is more trend data to analyse from future PfE Monitoring Reports. Therefore, currently, no actions are identified, apart from continuing to monitor the indicator.

Indicator: GVA in and within 800m of the main town centres

4.21. Between 2022 and 2023, the total GVA increased in within 800m of main town centres in the PfE area, including within 800m of all but two of those main town centres. In total, GVA increased by 2.9% during this time, going from £12.1 billion in 2022 to £12.5 billion in 2023.

4.22. Please note, there are no main town centres situated in the Manchester district as the city of Manchester is classed as a City Centre, hence no data is listed for Manchester in the table below.

Table 4.13: GVA in and within 800m of Main Town Centres, £bn Current Prices

Year	Altrincham (Trafford)	Ashton-under-Lyme (Tameside)	Bolton (Bolton)	Bury (Bury)	Oldham (Oldham)	Rochdale (Rochdale)	Salford Quays (Salford)	Wigan (Wigan)	PFE
2023	2.2	1.0	1.6	1.2	1.5	0.9	3.0	1.1	12.5
2022	2.0	1.0	1.6	1.1	1.5	0.8	3.0	1.0	12.1

Source: Author's calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; and HM Treasury GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP November 2025

Table 4.14: GVA Change Year-on-Year (2021 – 2023)

Year	Bolton	Bury	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022-2023	2.2%	5.0%	-3.0%	7.2%	-0.1%	0.3%	10.1%	3.6%	2.9%
2021-2022	-2.4%	1.4%	13.3%	11.9%	-2.1%	6.0%	11.1%	8.4%	4.5%

Source: Author's calculations using UK small area GVA estimates - Table 1; Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry - Table 2; and HM Treasury GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP November 2025

Issues arising

4.23. None identified.

5. Places for Homes

Policy Outcome: Deliver net increase in new homes

Indicators: Deliver approximately 9,063 homes annually by 2025, 10,305 annually by 2030 and 10,719 annually by 2039

5.1 To deliver a net increase in the number of new homes across the plan period, there should be a phased delivery of approximately 9,063 homes annually by 2025, 10,305 annually by 2030 and 10,719 annually by 2039. Below sets out the PfE phased delivery by local authority.

Table 5.1: PfE Phased Housing Delivery

Years	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022-2025	787	246	3,533	404	568	1,658	236	817	814	9,063
2025-2030	787	452	3,533	680	616	1,658	485	1,122	972	10,305
2030-2039	787	520	3,533	772	632	1,658	568	1,122	1,025	10,719

Source: Places for Everyone

5.2 Net housing completions for the PfE area was 10,407 over the financial year 2024-25, which is 1344 higher than the 2022-2025 PfE phased delivery of 9,063.

Table 5.2: Net Housing Completions

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	712	311	3,138	578	650	2,730	475	360	1,169	10,123
2023-24	575	253	2,962	420	681	2,640	632	741	1,146	10,050
2022-23	737	280	1,892	400	594	2,214	467	945	1,408	8,937

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. * This table includes communal establishments in line with the Housing Delivery Test calculation.

5.3 In terms of the percentage split of housing completions in the Spatial Strategy Areas, the majority in 2024-25 were concentrated in the Northern Spatial Strategy Area (42%), closely followed by the Core Growth Area (38%).

Table 5.3: Housing Completions: Spatial Strategy Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	3,956	1,710	4,325	416
2023-24	3,878	1,846	3,966	495

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

* Some figures include Gross rather than Net housing completions meaning that the total delivery in some years is more than the net delivery in table 5.2. This table also includes communal establishments in line with the Housing Delivery Test calculation.

5.4 Across the PfE allocations, 291 homes were delivered on 8 allocation sites in 2024-25.

Issues arising

5.5 No actions identified at PfE area scale as, collectively, the PfE districts have delivered 10,407 homes in 2024-25 which is above the annual average requirement of 9,063 homes between 2022-2025.

Policy Outcome: Maximise delivery of additional affordable homes

Indicator: No. of new affordable homes completed

5.6 Affordable housing, which can be for either rent or sale, is for those whose needs are not met by the market. It includes different tenures, including social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership, among others. There were 2,797 new build affordable housing completions across the PfE area in 2024-25. This was an increase of 383 homes from 2023-24.

5.7 The majority of the new build affordable housing delivery in 2024-25 was shared ownership (33%) and affordable rent (46%), while social rent made up 19% a 6 percentage point increase from 2023-24 delivery.

Table 5.4: New Build Affordable Housing Completions: PfE Local Planning Authorities

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	298	95	611	221	127	608	288	68	481	2,797
2023-24	302	69	603	209	210	306	189	102	424	2,414
2022-23	254	57	349	112	154	269	82	281	486	2,044

Source: MHCLG: Affordable housing table 1011C, Accessed November 2025

5.8 Across the PfE allocations 55 affordable homes were delivered in 2024-25 across 4 sites.

Issues arising

5.9 None identified.

Policy Outcome: Increase the number of homes meeting National Described Space Standard (NDSS)

Indicator: % new homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)

5.10 The indication of percentage of new homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standards applies in this report to those homes granted planning permission and completed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Five of the local planning authorities had completions which met this criteria and four have none. Where there were no homes permissioned which were completed by the end of March 2025 N/A is reported in the table below.

5.11 In 2024-25 there were 155 completions which the Policy JP-H3 applied to, of them 24% met the policy requirement, which states that all of new dwellings must comply with the NDSS. In some local planning authorities NDSS standards were adopted prior to March 2024, where there are completions which were granted planning permission prior to March 2024 and completed in 2024-25 these are not captured in the below table.

Table 5.5: Percentage of New Homes Meeting Nationally Described Space Standards

Year	Bolton*	Bury*	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside*	Trafford	Wigan*	PFE
2024-25	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	18%	100%	N/A	50%	24%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. *Fewer than 5 homes delivered in the local planning authority where the policy was relevant. *Fewer than 5 homes delivered in the local planning authority where the policy was relevant.

Issues arising

5.12 As 2024-25 is first year of implementing the PfE Plan policies, including JP-H3 which has the NDSS requirement, it is too early to draw any firm

conclusions on this indicator, particularly as NDSS requirement only applied to 255 completions. Nevertheless, where the policy requirement has not been met, it will be useful to understand why this is the case and to continue to monitor the indicator across the local authorities.

Policy Outcome: Increase the number of new homes meeting A&A standard

Indicator: % new homes meeting Accessible & Adaptable (A&A) standard

5.13 The indication of percentage of new homes meeting Accessible and Adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations applies in this report to those homes granted planning permission and completed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Five of the local planning authorities had completions which met this criteria and four have none. Where there were no homes permissioned which were completed by the end of March 2025, N/A is reported in the table below.

5.14 In 2024-25 there were 150 completions which the PfE Accessible and Adaptable standard in Policy JP-H3 applied to, of them 2% met the policy requirement, which states that all new dwellings must be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable . In some local planning authorities the Accessible and Adaptable standard were adopted prior to March 2024, where there are completions which were granted planning permission prior to March 2024 and completed in 2024-25 these are not captured in the below table.

Table 5.6: Percentage of New Homes Meeting Accessible and Adaptable Standard

Year	Bolton*	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	0%	40%	N/A	N/A	N/A	1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	2%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. *Fewer than 5 homes delivered in the local planning authority where the policy was relevant.

Issues arising

5.15 As 2024-25 is first year of implementing the PfE Plan policies, including JP-H3 which has the Accessible and Adaptable standard, it is too early to draw any firm conclusions on this indicator, particularly as the standard only applied to 150 completions. Nevertheless, where the policy requirement has not been met, it will be useful to understand why this is the case and to continue to monitor the indicator across the local authorities.

6. Greener Places

Policy Outcome: Enhance the green infrastructure network

Indictor: Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain

6.1 Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain (BNG) applies to monitoring from March 2024. BNG has applied nationally since February 2024. Below sets out the habitat that has been agreed to be created in planning permissions in the period set out. Two pieces of data are reported; total hectares of habitat post development[10] and kilometres of trees and hedgerows[11].

6.2 Between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, 6.91 hectares of habitat was agreed to be created across the PfE area and 0.6 kilometres of trees and hedgerows[12].

6.3 Delivery of BNG is reported as units as opposed to hectares and will be reported as BNG is delivered.

Table 6.1: Kilometres of trees and hedgerows

Year	Bolton*	Bury*	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale*	Salford	Tameside*	Trafford	Wigan*	PFE
2025	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.10	0	0.50	0	0.60

[10] Total hectares post development covers: Cropland, Grassland, Heathland and Scrub, Lakes, Sparsely Vegetated Land, Urban, Wetland, Woodland and Forest, Intertidal sediment, Coastal Saltmarsh, Rocky Shore, Coastal Lagoons, Intertidal Hard Structures, Watercourse footprint, and Individual Trees.

[11] Total kilometres of hedgerows and trees covers: Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch, Species-rich native hedgerow with trees, Species-rich native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch, Native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch, Species -rich native hedgerow, Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch, Native hedgerow with trees, Ecologically valuable line of trees, Ecologically valuable line of trees - associated with bank or ditch, Native hedgerow, Line of trees, Line of trees associated with bank or ditch, and Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

[12] As Biodiversity Net Gain only became mandatory in February 2024, relatively few developments had reached condition discharge stage during 2024/25.

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, BNG Quantitative Data, April 2024 – March 2025 (Accessed January 2026). An asterisk (*) indicates returns of zero reflect the fact that no developments had reached BNG condition discharge stage in 2024/25, following the introduction of mandatory BNG in February 2024.

Table 6.2: Hectares of habitat was agreed to be created

Year	Bolton*	Bury*	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale*	Salford	Tameside*	Trafford	Wigan*	PFE
2025	0	0	1.0	0	0	1.45	0	4.46	0	6.91

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, BNG Quantitative Data, April 2024 – March 2025 (Accessed January 2026). An asterisk (*) indicates returns of zero reflect the fact that no developments had reached BNG condition discharge stage in 2024/25, following the introduction of mandatory BNG in February 2024.

Issues arising

6.4 As BNG has only been monitored since March 2024 and 2024-25 is first year of implementing the PfE Plan policies, it is too early to draw any firm conclusions on this indicator. Therefore, this indicator will continue to be monitored through future PfE Monitoring Reports.

Indicator: Number, area and condition of sites of biological importance (SBI's)

6.5 The number and area of SBIs is recorded by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit on an annual basis and the data is reported on a lag. The latest data for the number and area of SBIs is from the 2022 survey season and was published in July 2025. No data is available on the condition of the SBIs.

6.6 SBIs are selected mainly based on their ecological value (for example, if they represent a particularly good example of a habitat type or contain a large number of species or particularly rare species). The appeal of sites to people and the extent to which they enable people to learn about and

appreciate nature can also contribute to sites being selected as sites of biological importance.

6.7 Depending on their relative importance in their local context, SBIs are given one of three grades:

- Grade A (county importance)
- Grade B (local authority importance)
- Grade C (more than local importance)

6.8 As of the July 2025 SBI update, which covers a survey cycle of 2022, there were 471 SBI sites in the PfE area covering more than 10,100 hectares. Of these, nearly 7,500 hectares (74%) were Grade A (county importance).

Table 6.3: Number of SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	67	50	37	40	46	33	57	48	93	471

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, [Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update]. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.4: Hectares of SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	1,189	923	289	1,083	2,510	627	1,463	441	1,611	10,135

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update.** (Accessed November 2025.

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.5: Number of Grade A SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	18	20	8	10	16	6	22	10	37	147

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update**. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.6: Hectares of Grade A SBI sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	734	786	84	902	2,317	258	1,080	194	1,108	7,463

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update**. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.7: Number of Grade B SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	30	18	13	17	15	14	20	15	31	173

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.8: Hectares of Grade B SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	369	106	132	139	112	298	315	135	374	1,980

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update**. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.9: Number of Grade C SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	19	12	16	13	15	13	15	23	25	151

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update**. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Table 6.10: Hectares of Grade C SBI Sites

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham*	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2022	86	32	72	42	81	70	68	112	129	692

Source: Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, **Sites of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester, 2022 survey, July 2025 Update**. (Accessed November 2025)

An asterisk (*) indicates that SBI figures cover the PfE area only and exclude the Peak District area of Oldham, which is included in Oldham's separate reporting.

Issue arising

6.9 As BNG has only been monitored since February 2024 and 2024-25 is first year of implementing the PfE Plan policies, it is too early to draw any firm conclusions on this indicator. Therefore, this indicator will continue to be monitored through future PfE Monitoring Reports.

Policy Outcome: Increase tree planting

Indicator: Number of trees planted annually

6.10 In 2024-25, there were just over 28,300 trees planted across the PfE local planning authorities, compared to 64,190 trees planted in 2023-24, this is a total of nearly 92,500 over the two financial years.

Table 6.9: Number of Trees Planted Annually

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	4,694	810	4,123	2,076	6,850	1,056	1,199	5,820	1,675	28,303
2023-24	15,176	1,958	2,942	5,795	15,118	2,629	3,496	1,958	15,118	64,190

Source: City of Trees. (Accessed October 2025)

Issues arising

6.11 The number of trees planted in 2024-25 was significantly less than in 2023-24. Although, 2024-25 was the first year of implementing the PfE policies, including Policy JP-G9: Trees and Woodland, which means there is little trend data to analyse, it will be useful to understand why there was drop in tree planting between 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Policy Outcome: Increase access to green infrastructure

Indicator: Number of hectares of green infrastructure (metric will consider publicly accessible GI where information is available)

6.12 As of Autumn 2024, there was just over 13,800 hectares of publicly accessible green infrastructure in the PfE Area. This was a change of -0.4% from Autumn 2022. Most of this was found in the Northern Spatial Strategy Area (11,870 ha), the least was in the Core Growth Area (72 ha).

Table 6.10: Amount of Publicly Accessible Green Infrastructure in Hectares in PfE Local Planning Authorities

Time period	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
Autumn 2024	1,722	846	1,304	1,460	3,821	626	1,961	396	1,703	13,839
Autumn 2022	1,734	862	1,324	1,431	3,810	637	1,983	406	1,701	13,888

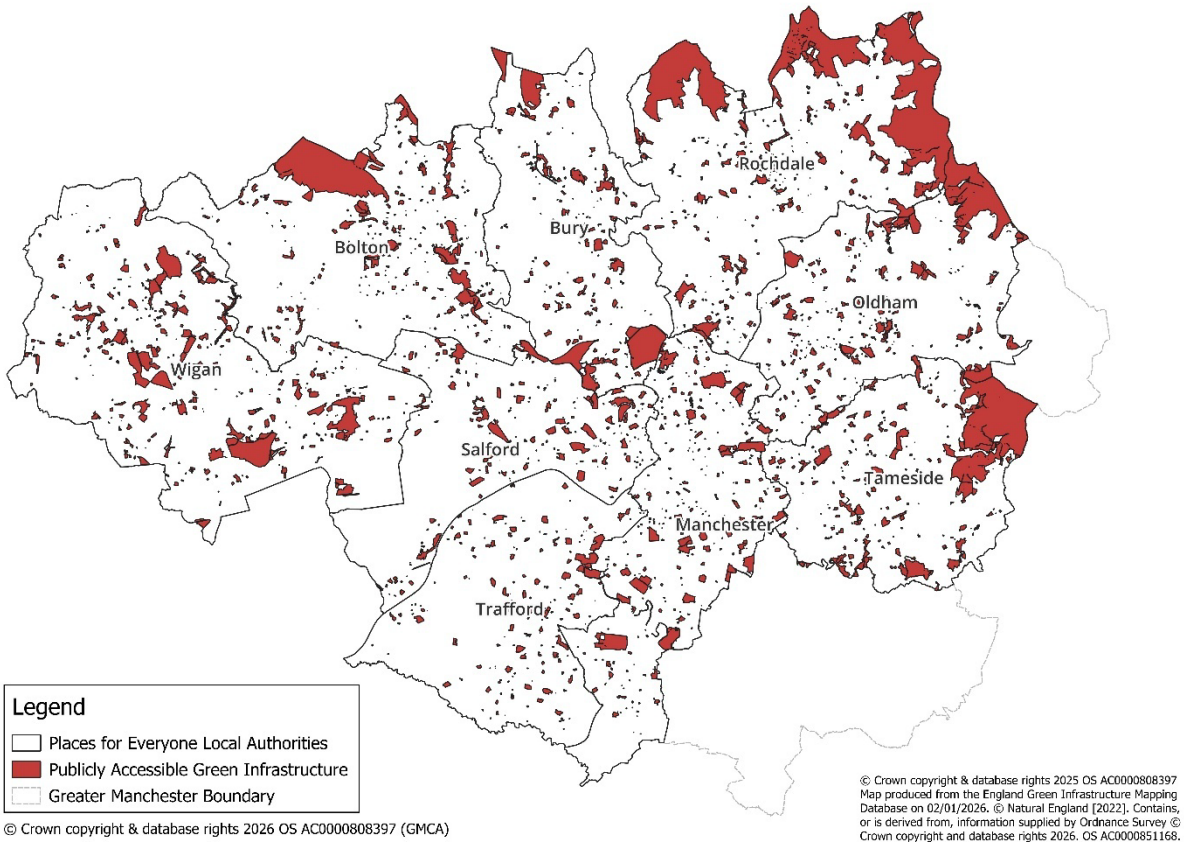
Source: Natural England, Green and Blue Infrastructure (England), August 2025. (Accessed August 2025)

Table 6.11: Amount of Publicly Accessible Green Infrastructure in Hectares in the PfE Strategy Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
Autumn 2024	72	1,054	11,870	843
Autumn 2022	68	1,165	11,889	770

Source: GMCA via Natural England, Green and Blue Infrastructure (England), August 2025. (Accessed August 2025)

Figure 6.1: Map of Publicly Accessible Green Infrastructure in the PfE Area 2024-25



Source: GMCA via [Natural England, Green and Blue Infrastructure (England), August 2025](). (Accessed August 2025)

Issue arising

6.13 No actions identified.

Places for People

Policy Outcome: Conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets

Indicator: Increase % of buildings on the "At Risk Register" with a strategy for their repair and re-use

7.1 The PfE Local Planning Authorities reported a mixture of buildings and conservations areas at risk. 24% of those on the "At Risk Register" had a strategy for repair and re-use. It must be in noted that in some areas the local authority or partners will undertake pre-emptive works to ensure buildings do not become at risk. Furthermore, where there is an ecclesiastical building at risk, generally the ecclesiastical owner would take responsibility for the repair and re-use strategy.

Table 7.1: Percentage of Buildings on the "At Risk Register" with a Strategy for their Repair and Re-use

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	0%	50%	32%	11%	0%	0%	0%	-	73%	24%

Source: GMCA via Local Authorities (when Local Authority is reported as dash, it indicated that no information has been returned from the Local Authority at present)

Issues arising

7.2 2024-25 was the first year that the indicator 'Percentage of Buildings on the "At Risk Register" with a Strategy for their Repair and Re-use' was monitored, therefore it is too early in the plan period to identify any trends in the data. Consequently, there are no specific actions identified apart from continue to monitor this indicator.

Policy Outcome: Provision of additional school places to support new development

Indicator: Numbers of school places (Annual School Capacity survey) *Consideration of 'headroom' statistics where available.

7.3 There were 427,964 primary and secondary school state-funded places in the PfE area in the academic year 2023-24 an increase of over 2000 school places from 2022-23 academic year. 7% of school places were unfilled in 2023-24, unchanged from 2022-23.

Table 7.2: Numbers of School Places

Academic Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2023-24	52,755	29,659	91,374	46,505	38,493	38,180	38,496	43,913	48,589	427,964
2022-23	52,824	29,659	90,734	46,505	38,404	37,447	38,226	43,360	48,704	425,863

Source: School Capacity: Academic Year 2023-24, Department for Education (March 2025)

Table 7.3: Percentage of Unfilled School Places

Academic Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2023-24	5%	8%	6%	9%	6%	7%	9%	6%	5%	7%
2022-23	6%	8%	6%	9%	7%	6%	8%	5%	6%	7%

Source: **School Capacity: Academic Year 2023-24, Department for Education** (March 2025)

Issues arising

7.4 No actions identified.

Policy Outcome: Workforce is ready to benefit from new employment opportunities

Indicator: % of working age population with Higher Level (4+) qualification(s) and % of working age population with sub Level 2 qualification

7.5 In calendar year 2024, 42% of the working age population in Greater Manchester had a higher level (4+) qualification, a fall of 3 percentage points from 2023.

Table 7.4: Percentage of Working Age Population with Higher Level (4+) Qualification(s)

Calendar Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024	37%	55%	46%	33%	36%	50%	33%	54%	31%	42%
2023	38%	47%	60%	29%	38%	49%	35%	56%	33%	45%
2022	35%	46%	53%	28%	28%	46%	33%	58%	35%	42%

Source: Annual Population Survey, % with RQF4+ - aged 16-64 (Accessed October 2025).

7.6 Those with a sub Level 2 qualification in 2024 were 17% of the population, an increase of 3 percentage points from 2023.

Table 7.5: Percentage of Working Age Population with Sub Level 2 Qualification

Calendar Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024	25%	12%	16%	19%	20%	17%	15%	11%	19%	17%
2023	18%	13%	11%	12%	24%	15%	15%	9%	17%	14%
2022	21%	13%	17%	19%	21%	17%	17%	10%	16%	17%

Source: Source: GMCA via Annual Population Survey, % with RQF4+ - aged 16-64 and % with RQF2+ - aged 16-64. (Accessed October 2025).

Issues arising

7.7 No actions identified.

Connected Places

Policy Outcome: Increased proportion of daily trips by modes other than the car

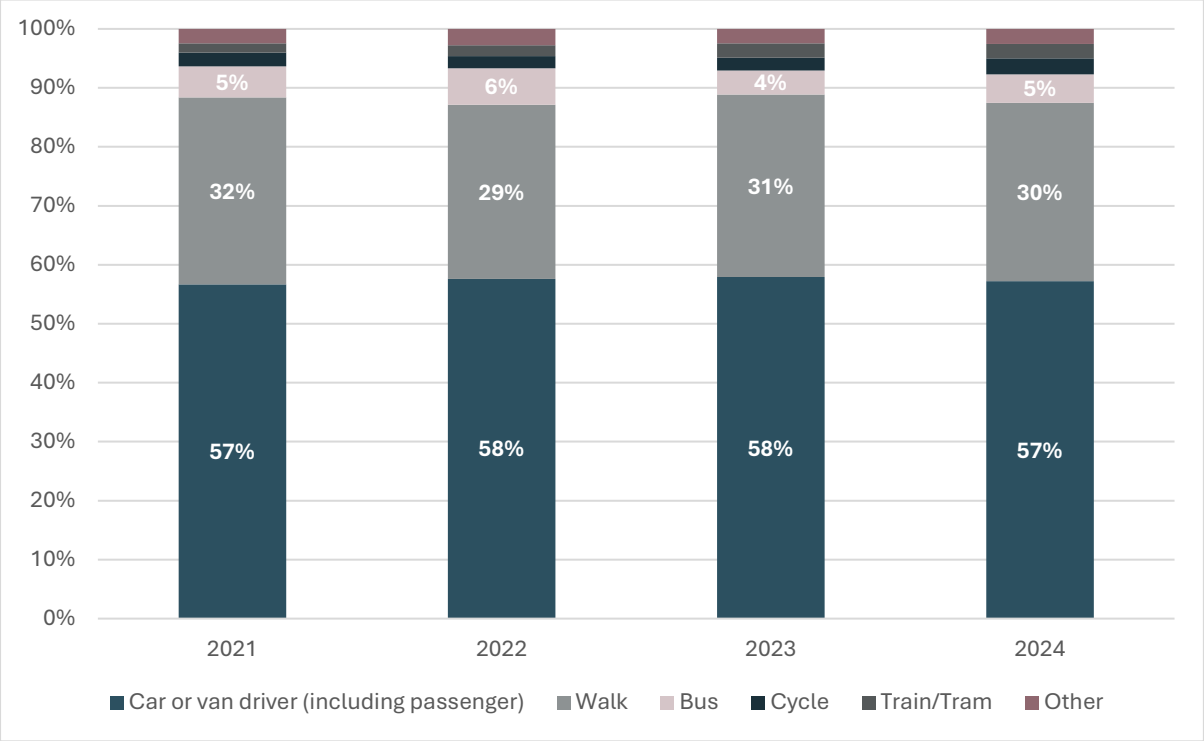
Indicator: % of daily trips made by active travel, public transport, car & other (monitoring subject to further analysis of data collection methods – TRADS monitor undertaken by TfGM)

8.1 In 2024, the most used method of travel was car or van (including passenger) at 57% of trips by GM residents, a one percentage point fall from 2023. A third of trips were made by active travel, while about one-in-sixteen trips were made by public transport (5% bus[13] and 2% train/tram). The remaining trips were made by taxi, minicab, motorcycle, scooter, moped, or any other type of vehicle.

8.2 The figures in each bar show the percentage of daily trips that were made by each mode since 2021. The mode share has remained relatively stable over time with car trips making up nearly three-in-five trips, active travel making up around a third of trips, and very broadly one in ten trips using public transport.

[13] For 2023, the bus trip estimates in TRADS are lower than expected given the patronage data. While this could be an issue related to the collection of the data since the pandemic, the possibility of this being an extreme estimate, which can occasionally occur in survey data, cannot be ruled out.

Figure 8.1: Daily Trip Count and Mode Share by Greater Manchester Residents



Source: Transport for Greater Manchester, [TRADS Report] (2021 to 2024). *Note: Other = taxi, minicab, scooter, moped or any other.*

Issues arising

8.3 None identified.

Policy Outcome: Increased proportion of new development in an accessible location

Indicator: % of new housing (net) within 800m of good public transport accessibility and % of new employment floorspace within 800m of good public transport accessibility*[14]

8.4 In 2024-25, 69% of all housing completions were delivered within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the PfE area. This was an 8 percentage point decrease from the 2023-24 housing completions within 800m of good public transport accessibility.

8.5 In terms of the Spatial Strategy Areas, 100% of housing completions were within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the Core Growth Area, while less than 50% of housing completions in both the Northern and Southern Strategic areas were within 800m, of good public transport accessibility.

Table 8.1: Percentage of New Housing 2024-25* within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	32%	42%	89%	39%	39%	82%	38%	78%	47%	69%
2023-24	31%	36%	99%	29%	44%	97%	67%	76%	47%	77%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) Data, Transport for Greater Manchester *Some data includes Gross rather than Net housing completions. This table also includes communal establishments in line with the Housing Delivery Test calculation

[14] * The spatial query for calculating New Net Housing and New Employment sites within 800m of Good Public Transport was based on if any of the site was wholly or partially within 800m of the Good Public Transport layer, if any of the site it was classed as within. The Good Public Transport Layer consisted of GMAL6+ 11/2025, Vantage Services, Rail Stations and Metrolink Stops.

Table 8.2: Percentage of New Housing 2023-24 within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility: Spatial Strategy Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	100%	80%	39%	37%
2023-24	100%	97%	47%	55%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) Data, Transport for Greater Manchester *Some figures include Gross, rather than Net housing completions. This table also includes communal establishments in line with the Housing Delivery Test calculation

8.6 In 2024-25, 71% of all new employment floorspace was delivered within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the PfE area, this was a 1 percentage point change from 2023-24.

8.7 In terms of the Spatial Strategy Areas, 100% of new employment floorspace was within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility in the Core Growth Area and less than 25% of new employment floorspace in the Southern and Northern Strategic Areas were with 800m of good public transport accessibility.

Table 8.3: Percentage of New Employment Floorspace 2024-25 within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility

Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
2024-25	0%	-	100%	28%	-	93%	96%	53%	1%	71%
2023-24	51%	37%	97%	26%	100%	73%	27%	69%	37%	72%

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) Data, Transport for Greater Manchester

Table 8.4: Percentage of New Employment Floorspace 2023-24 within 800m of Good Public Transport Accessibility: Spatial Strategy Areas

Year	Core	Inner	Northern	Southern
2024-25	86%	96%	23%	19%
2023-24	100%	17%	49%	25%

Source Places for Everyone Local Authorities; Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) Data, Transport for Greater Manchester

Issues arising

8.8 As 2024-25 is the first year of the implementation of the PfE policies, there is currently not enough data over a series of years to draw any firm conclusions at the moment on this indicator. Therefore, the action for this indicator is to continue to monitor it in future PfE Monitoring Reports.

Policy Outcome: Digital connectivity

Indicator: Number of premises with full fibre connectivity

8.9 In the PfE area in July 2024, 773,410 premises had full fibre availability, 64% of all premises. This figure rose to just over 994,200 in July 2025, around 87% of all premises. The percent of premises with full fibre availability increased in every local authority in the Places for Everyone area between 2024-2025, and by over 28% in the plan area overall.

Table 8.5: Number of Premises with Full Fibre Connectivity

Month and Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
07/ 2025	112,514	79,789	204,288	88,875	72,869	114,257	96,823	95,116	129,687	994,218
07/ 2024	81,380	73,776	180,086	74,462	41,643	98,742	71,923	80,835	70,563	773,410

Source: Connected Nations and Infrastructure Reports - Ofcom (ofcom.org.uk). (Accessed November 2025). Please note: Connected Nations data is collected as a snapshot as of July each year and is not reported to a financial year.

Issues arising

No actions identified.

Policy Outcome: Increasing EV charging infrastructure

Indicator: Number of Electric Vehicle charging points

8.10 The number of public EV charging points increased from 1091 to 1402 as of April 1st 2025 from April 1st 2024 across the Places for Everyone area, a 29% increase.

Table 8.6: Number of Public Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Month and Year	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan	PFE
Apr-25	97	54	421	120	108	166	52	217	167	1402
Apr-24	76	53	348	105	60	127	38	181	103	1091
Apr-23	30	29	155	56	36	105	30	90	47	578
Apr-22	26	22	112	36	33	74	24	58	38	423

Source: Quarterly Electric Vehicle Public charging infrastructure statistics, Department for Transport, October 2025

Issues arising

8.11 No actions identified.

Air Quality Monitoring at Holcroft Moss

8.12 Through the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) process in support of the PfE Plan (and also Warrington's Local Plan), the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and in particular Holcroft Moss, has been identified as being at risk of harm from increased air pollution caused by traffic. To mitigate against this harm, there is a need for the delivery of long-term ecological resilience works, involving hydrological restoration measures to benefit Holcroft Moss.

8.13 As set out in Policy JP-C8 of the PfE Plan, qualifying developments, resulting in increased traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss of more than 100 vehicles per day or 20 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) per day, will be required to make a proportionate contribution towards restoration measures at Holcroft Moss.

8.14 The nine PfE authorities have produced a joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), (adopted in May 2025) which establishes the basis to secure contributions to the long-term ecological resilience works. As of March 2025, there has been one planning permission for development that has been granted in the PfE area that has triggered the requirement to make a contribution. This was a Class B8 employment development scheme in Carrington, Trafford (112794/FUL/24), granted permission on 13 Dec 2024 and will make a contribution of £2,951.83 on commencement of development.

Delivering the Plan

Policy Outcome: Ensuring the right infrastructure is delivered at the right time (broken down by different types of contribution)

Indicator: Links provided to each Local Authority's Infrastructure Funding Statement/ Annual section 106 monitoring report

Table 9.1: Local Authority Infrastructure Funding Statements

Area	Link to Infrastructure Funding Statements
Bolton	https://www.bolton.gov.uk/planning-policy-strategy/developer-contributions/1
Bury	https://www.bury.gov.uk/planning-building-control/policy-and-projects/planning-policy/evidence-and-monitoring/infrastructure-funding-statement
Manchester	https://democracy.manchester.gov.uk/documents/g4941/Public%20reports%20pack%2024th-Jul-2025%2014.00%20Resources%20and%20Governance%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10
Oldham	https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/3154/infrastructure_funding_statement
Rochdale	https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/downloads/download/292/infrastructure-funding-statement
Salford	End of year report for 2024/25: https://www.salford.gov.uk/media/rgdeqyso/section-106-end-of-year-report-2024-25_accessible.pdf Infrastructure funding statement: https://www.salford.gov.uk/planning-building-and-regeneration/planning-applications/planning-obligations-and-community-infrastructure-levy/planning-obligations-income-and-expenditure/
Tameside	https://tameside.moderngov.co.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=56428&Opt=3
Trafford	No reports produced CIL Receipts 2024/2025 Admin slice £114,931.75 Local slice £344,795.26 Strategic Slice £1,838,908.06 Total receipts £2,298,635.07
Wigan	https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Planning/Local-plan/Background/InfrastructureFundingStatementForSection106.aspx

Source: Places for Everyone Local Authorities, Bolton, Bury, Manchester. Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan

PfE Polices not being implemented

10.1 Regulation 34 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 requires that where a local planning authority is not implementing a policy specified in a local plan, the authority monitoring report must identify that policy and include a statement of the reasons why the policy is not being implemented and the steps (if any) that the local authority intend to take to implement the policy.

10.2 In accordance with Regulation 34 (2), PfE PolicyJP-G5 part 7c is currently not being implemented. PfE Policy JP-G5 part 7c relates to a potential recreation impact zone - up to 7km from the South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Within this zone new residential development could result in recreational disturbance impacts on the protected habitats and species of the SAC and SPAs and development may be required to mitigate this impact. Since the production of the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the PfE Plan (which formed the evidence base for the policy), Natural England has now indicated that there is no evidence of credible risk to the habitats and species on the SAC and SPAs from recreation impacts. Consequently, Natural England considers that new development within the PfE area, specifically the three authority areas of Oldham, Tameside and Rochdale, does not need to provide mitigation in accordance with part 7c of JP-G5. If further evidence is prepared on recreational impacts from new development, at a strategic level, i.e. across the whole South Pennine Moors area and not at a local level, such as these three PfE authorities, then Natural England will review its position and the three PfE authorities will consider the implementation of the policy.

Appendix A

Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework Tables

Table 12.1 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Sustainable and Resilient

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Reduce carbon emissions from new development	2,5,7,8,10	JP-S1, 2, 3 and 6 JP-P1	% of net additional residential development completed with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of A and B	✓	✓		
Maximise the use of suitable previously developed (brownfield)	2,3,5,7,8,9	JP-Strat1 to 6, JP-Strat9, JP Strat12, JP-S1, JP-J2, J3, J4	• % of residential development on brownfield land • % of gross employment	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
land for development		and JP-H1 and H4	development on brownfield land				
No new homes and employment premises at risk of flooding	2,8	JP-S1, and 4 JP-P1	No. of planning permissions approved against EA advice	✓	✓		All allocations with employment development
Improve air quality	2,5,7,8,10	JP-S1, S2 and S5	Exceedance of the legal level of NO2 (as an Annual Mean) in local AQMA and Clean Air Plan Monitoring	✓	✓		

Table 12.2 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Jobs

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Improve productivity	3,5,10	JP-Strat1 to 12, JP-J1	% increase in GVA per job	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	
Increased number of jobs	3,5,10	JP-Strat1 to 12 JP-J1 and 2	Proportion of our residents (working age) in employment	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	
Improve access to jobs	4,5	JP-Strat1 to 12 JP-J1	Number of local labour agreements	✓	✓		
Increase overall office floorspace by 2 million sq.m by 2039	3,5	JP-Strat1 to 12 JP-J1 to 3	Increase in office floorspace (gross)	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	All allocations with office development

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Increase overall industry and warehousing floorspace by 3.5 million sq. m by 2039	3,5	JP-Strat1 and 4 to 11, JP-J1, 2 and 4	Increase in industry and warehousing floorspace (gross)	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	All allocations with industry or warehousing development
Secure main town centres as local economic drivers	1,2,3,5,6,7,9	JP-Strat1, 6, 9 and 12 JP-P4	• No of residential units (net) delivered in main town centres • GVA in and within 800m of the main town centres	✓	✓		

Table 12.3 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Homes

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Deliver net increase in new homes	1,2,3,5,7,10	JP-Strat1 to 3, 5 to 9, 11 and 12. JP-H1	• Deliver approx. 9,063 annually by 2025 • Deliver approx. 10,305 annually by 2030 • Deliver approx.10,719 annually by 2039	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	All allocations with housing development
Maximise delivery of additional affordable homes	1,2,5,10	JP-H1 and H2	No. of new affordable homes completed	✓	✓		All allocations with housing development

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Increase the number of homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)	1,2,5,10	JP-H3	% new homes meeting Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)	✓	✓		
Increase the number of new homes meeting Accessible & Adaptable	1,2,5,10	JP-H3	% new homes meeting Accessible & Adaptable (A&A) standard	✓	✓		

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
(A&A) standard							

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Table 12.4 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Greener

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Enhance the green infrastructure network	2,5,7,8,9,10	• JP-Strat2, 3, 5, 12 and 13 • JP-G1 to 6, 8 and 9 • JP-P1	• Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	All allocations
			• Number, area and condition of sites of biological importance (SBIs)	✓	✓		
Increase tree planting	2,5,7,8,9,10	JP-G7	Number of trees planted annually	✓	✓		

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
			(metric to be determined with respect to tree planting programmes and on site delivery as a result of planning decisions where available)				
Increase access to green infrastructure	2,5,7,8,9,10	• JP-Strat 2, 3, 5, 12 and 13 • JP-G2 to 6 , 8 and 9 • JP-P6	Number of hectares of green infrastructure (metric will consider publicly accessible GI where information is available)	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	

Table 12.5 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – People

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets	2,4	JP-Strat1 to 3, 6 and 12, JP-P1, 2 and 3	Increase % of buildings on the "at risk register" with a strategy for their repair and re-use	✓	✓		
Provision of additional school places to support new development	2,9	JP-Strat1, 2 and 9 JP-P1 and 5	Numbers of school places (Annual School Capacity survey). Consideration of 'headroom' statistics where available.	✓	✓		

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Workforce is ready to benefit from new employment opportunities	3,5	JP-Strat5, 6, 9, 11 and 12 JP-P5	% of working age population with Higher Level (4+) qualification(s) and % of working age population with sub Level 2 qualification.	✓	✓	5,6	

Table 12.6 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Connected

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Increased proportion of daily trips by modes other than the car	2,5,6,7,10	JP-Strat1 to 12 JP-Strat14 JP-C1, 3, 5, 6 and 8	% of daily trips made by active travel, public transport, car & other (monitoring subject to further analysis of data collection methods – TRADS monitor undertaken by TfGM)	✓	✓		
Increased proportion of new development in an accessible location	2,5,6,7,10	JP-Strat14 JP-S1, 2 and 5 JP-C1, 3, 5, 6 and 8	% of new housing (net) within 800m of good public transport accessibility and % of new employment floorspace within	✓	✓	1,5,6,9	

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
			800m of good public transport accessibility *definition of good public transport accessibility to be agreed with TfGM				
Digital connectivity	2,3,4,5,6	JP-C2	Number of premises with full fibre connectivity	✓	✓		
Increasing EV charging infrastructure	2,6,7	JP-S2 and C8	Number of EV charging points (% change can be monitored year to	✓	✓		

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
			year or over longer time series)				

Table 12.7 Places for Everyone Monitoring Framework – Delivering the Plan

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
Ensuring the right	1,2,3,4,5,6, 7,8,9,10	JP-S1, JP-S2, JP-J1, JP-H2,	Links provided to each Local	✓	✓		

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
infrastructure is delivered at the right time (broken down by different types of contribution)		JP-G2, JP-G3, JP-G4, JP-G5, JP-G6, JP-G7, JPG 8, JP-P1, JP-P2, JP-P3, JP-P5, JP-P6, JP-P7, JP-C1, JP-C2, JP-C3, JP-C5, JP-C6, JP-C7, JP-C8, Allocations (where	Authority's Infrastructure Funding Statement/ Annual section 106 monitoring report				

Policy Outcome	Places for Everyone Strategic Objective	Relevant Places for Everyone policy	Indicator (s)	Geographic level: Full area of Places for Everyone	Geographic level: Local Authority	Geographic level: Spatial Strategy Areas set out in Policies JP-Strat1, 5, 6 and 9	Geographic level: Allocations
		mitigation is identified)					
Secure appropriate S106 contributions for affordable housing	1,2,3,4,5,6, 7,8,9,10	JP-H1 and H2 JP-D2	Developer contributions for the delivery of affordable housing	✓	✓		

Appendix 3 Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan

Authority Monitoring Report April 2020 – March 2025

July 2025

Introduction

1. This is the seventh Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) collating information to allow for the assessment of the performance of planning policies in the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan (Waste Plan), which was adopted on 26th April 2013.

2. This AMR covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2025.

3. The Waste Plan forms part of the statutory development plan for the following Authorities: Bolton; Bury; Manchester; Oldham; Rochdale; Salford; Stockport; Tameside; Trafford; and Wigan. This AMR reports on behalf of the ten authorities.

Background to the Waste Plan

4. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) agreed to produce a Joint Waste Plan in 2006. AGMA consists of all ten Greater Manchester Authorities. The Waste Plan forms part of each Authority's statutory development plan and runs from 2012 to 2027.

5. The purpose of the Waste Plan is to set out a waste planning strategy to 2027 which enables the adequate provision of waste management facilities in appropriate locations for Local Authority Collected Waste, commercial and industrial waste, construction, demolition and excavation waste, and hazardous waste. The Waste Plan includes a set of plans identifying the potential locations for development of future waste management facilities within each of the ten Authorities. It also includes a set of development management policies which will assist in the consideration of waste planning applications.

Waste Plan Policy Monitoring

Policy 1: Commercial and Industrial Waste: Energy Recovery Capacity

6. This policy sets out the annual requirement for recovery of energy from waste that planning applications for new facilities would be assessed against. The target and variance for capacity required in this reporting period is:

Year	Target – capacity required	Variance
2017-2027	354,000 tonnes per annum	Capacity is 10% more or less than the capacity required for the year in question

7. No additional energy recovery capacity was recorded during the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025. The available capacity is 128,000 tonnes per annum. The variance is greater than 10% and the target not met.

Policy 2: Non hazardous Waste: Disposal

8. This policy sets out the indicative cumulative capacity required (tonnes per annum) for non-hazardous landfill that planning applications for new facilities would be assessed against. The target and variance for capacity required in this reporting period is:

Year	Target –capacity required (cumulative)	Variance
2020	3,336,000 tonnes	Capacity is 10% more or less than the capacity required for the year in question
2021	3,692,000 tonnes	
2022	4,048,000 tonnes	
2023	4,404,000 tonnes	
2024	4,792,000 tonnes	

9. The dataset *Remaining Landfill Capacity: England as at end 2023*[1] lists two landfills in Greater Manchester with capacity remaining at the end of 2023 and site type of either 'Non hazardous landfill with SNRHW[2] cell' or 'Non

[1] Remaining Landfill Capacity - data.gov.uk

hazardous'. However, one of these, Harwood Quarry Landfill (Bolton), only accepted inert waste during the monitoring period.

10. The only landfill taking non-hazardous waste in Greater Manchester with capacity at the end of 2023 was Pilsworth South Landfill (Bury), which was recorded as having a remaining capacity of 5,634,597 cubic metres. Therefore the target has been met. The end date of the planning permission at this landfill is 31st December 2028.

Policy 3: Hazardous Waste: Disposal Capacity

11. This policy sets out the identified capacity requirements for disposal under which planning permission will be granted. The target and variance for capacity required in this reporting year is:

Year	Target – capacity required	Variance
2020 to 2023	No additional capacity required	Capacity is 10% more or less than the capacity required for the year in question
2024	68,000	Capacity is 10% more or less than the capacity required for the year in question
2025	136,000	Capacity is 10% more or less than the capacity required for the year in question

12. No additional disposal capacity for hazardous waste was permitted during the reporting period.

13. Pilsworth South Landfill in Bury has a specialist cell for the disposal of stable, non-reactive hazardous waste. The end date of planning permission at this site is 31st December 2028. Therefore this specialist cell continues to be available and the target has been met. A total of 4,577 tonnes hazardous waste, predominantly asbestos wastes, was received here in 2023[2].

[2] Source – 2023 Waste Data Interrogator

Policy 4: Site Allocations

14. This policy sets out the seven sites which have been identified as potentially suitable for built waste management facilities (Watersmeeting C South Triangle, Bolton; 226-228 Waterloo Street, Bolton; Land off Mossdown Road, Oldham; Land at Millstream Lane, Clayton Bridge, Oldham; Plot 5, Bredbury Parkway, Stockport; Land adjacent to Tank Farm Chemical Treatment Works, Trafford; and CA Site, Makerfield Way, Wigan). The target and variance for capacity required is:

    Target: Planning permission is only granted for developments identified as appropriate in the Waste Plan. The highest level of recycling is demonstrated by the applicant.

    Variance: Less than 100% of appropriate applications granted permission / demonstrate the highest level of recycling.

15. No new planning permissions for waste management were granted during the period 2020-2023 on the site allocations identified in the Waste Plan. An application for a waste facility at OL5 Land at Millstream Lane, Oldham, was refused in 2021 on the basis of risk to groundwater and risk of odour/pest nuisance. The applicant did not appeal this decision. This target is not applicable.

16. With the exception of W4 CA Site, Makerfield Way (which had an existing use for waste management when the Waste Plan was adopted), none of the sites allocated for waste management facilities in the Waste Plan have been developed for waste uses.

Table 1 Planning applications on sites allocated through the Waste Plan during the reporting period

Site Ref	Authority	Site Name	Site Developed for waste?	Planning Ref	Decision and Date
BL9	Bolton	Watersmeeting C South Triangle	No		
BL11	Bolton	226-228 Waterloo Street	No		
OL4	Oldham	Land off Mossdown Road	No		
OL5	Oldham	Land at Millstream Lane	No	FUL/346610/21	Refused 11.8.2021
ST2	Stockport	Plot 5, Bredbury Parkway	No		
TR8a	Trafford	Land adjacent to Tank Farm Chemical Treatment Works	No		
W4	Wigan	CA Site, Makerfield Way	Part of this site is in use as a waste management facility		

Policy 5: Area Allocations

17. This policy sets out the areas which have been identified as potentially suitable for built waste management facilities. The target and variance for capacity required in this reporting year is:

    Target: Planning permission is only granted for developments identified as appropriate in the Waste Plan. The highest level of recycling is demonstrated by the applicant

    Variance: Less than 100% of appropriate applications granted permission / demonstrate the highest level of recycling.

18. Planning permission was granted for 3 waste developments on area allocations across Greater Manchester between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2025. These applications demonstrated the highest level of recycling and therefore this target has been met.

Table 2 Planning applications on areas allocated in the Waste Plan during the reporting period

Site Ref	Authority	Site Name	Planning Ref	Address	Description	Decision and date
TR17	Trafford	Land at Trafford Park	100117/FUL/20	Electricity Sub Station On The West Side Of Trafford Park Road	Use of the site as a waste transfer station and ELV depollution site. […]	Approve with conditions - 10.10.2020
SL2	Salford	Clifton Industrial Estate	20/76423/FUL	Units 1 To 3, Junction Business Park, Rake Lane	Erection of building for B2 Use (general industrial) to form extension to existing recycling facility […]	Approve with conditions – 04.03.2021
TR17	Trafford	Land at Trafford Park	106592/FUL/21	Ocean Estates Trafford Park Road	Erection of a purpose built waste transfer building to be erected for the sortation of off-site food waste […]	Approve with conditions – 15.07.2022

Policy 6: Inert Residual Waste Disposal

19. This policy sets out the criteria under which permission will be granted for inert residual waste disposal.

    Target: Planning permission is only granted for developments identified as appropriate in the Waste Plan. The highest level of recycling is demonstrated by the applicant.

    Variance: Less than 100% of appropriate applications granted permission / demonstrate the highest level of recycling.

20. No planning permissions for inert residual waste disposal were granted or refused between 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 so this target is not applicable.

21. There are 2 inert landfills recorded as having remaining capacity at the end of 2023. These are Pilkington Quarry (Bolton) and Morley's Quarry (Wigan). The total recorded remaining capacity at these sites at the end of 2022 was 1,018,532 m^3. As set out in paragraph 15, Harwood Quarry in Bolton has a license to accept non-hazardous waste landfill but in practice accepted inert materials during the reporting period. The remaining capacity at Harwood Quarry at the end of 2023 was 729,282 m^3.

22. Permission was granted on 04.07.2023 to vary conditions 2, 3, 10, 17 & 18 of Application Reference Number: A/20/90250/MAJMIN: to amend the timescales for completion of works to 31st December 2030 at Whitehead Landfill.

23. The assumed remaining permitted void space is below:

Table 3 Remaining Capacity and Waste received at inert landfill, 2023

Site Name	Remaining capacity as at end 2023 (cubic metre)[3]	Waste Received 2023 (tonnes)[4]
Pilkington Quarry (Bolton)	696,677	148,566
Morley's Quarry (Wigan)	321,855	37,532
Whitehead Landfill (Wigan)	0	224,627

Policy 7: Non Hazardous Residual Waste Disposal

24. This policy sets out the sites which have been identified as potentially suitable for non-hazardous residual waste disposal. The target and variance for capacity required is:

    Target: Planning permission is only granted for developments identified as appropriate in the Waste Plan. The highest level of recycling is demonstrated by the applicant.

    Variance: Less than 100% of appropriate applications granted permission/demonstrate the highest level of recycling.

    No planning applications for non-hazardous residual waste disposal were determined during the monitoring period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 therefore this target is not applicable.

Policy 8: Requirement for Combined Heat and Power

25. This policy sets out a requirement for waste management facilities that have the potential to utilise biogas or energy from waste technologies to provide combined

[3] Remaining Landfill Capacity - data.gov.uk

[4] 2023 Waste Data Interrogator

heat and power (CHP) unless it can be demonstrated that they have the potential to deliver important waste infrastructure.

Target: Eligible energy recovery facilities generate heat and energy.

Variance: Less than 75%

26. No applications for combined heat and power were decided between 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 therefore this target is not applicable.

Policy 9: Restoration and Aftercare

27. This policy sets out a requirement for applications for landfill/land raise to demonstrate that the site will be adequately restored.

Target: Restoration and aftercare will be carried out in accordance with Annex A of MPG7 to meet standards required by DEFRA for restoration to agriculture, Forestry Commission Bulletin 110 for restoration to forestry and Natural England for restoration to nature conservation.

Variance: Non-compliance with the standards.

28. No planning permissions were granted for the disposal of inert waste between 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 therefore this target is not applicable.

Policy 10: Unallocated Sites

29. This policy sets out the criteria under which applications for waste management facilities on unallocated sites will be permitted.

Target: Planning permission is granted for developments which contribute to achieving the Waste Plan and take place on sites considered appropriate by the Plan. HRA Screening is applied to applications for waste management facilities on unallocated sites and site-based mitigation is implemented where appropriate.

Variance: Non-compliance with the standards. Less than 100% of applications granted permission. Less than 100% of appropriate applications apply HRA Screening.

30. The following planning decisions were made on applications for waste uses on unallocated sites that would result in a change in waste management capacity during the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025. These applications were determined in line with the requirements of Policy 10 therefore this target was met.

Table 4 Planning applications for waste management facilities at unallocated sites during the reporting period

Authority	Planning Ref	Address	Description	Decision and date
Bolton	12956/22	Unit 1A Slater Lane	Change of use to a waste transfer station and recycling facility (sui generis) for the receipt and treatment of mixed, dry, non-hazardous household, commercial and industrial and construction, demolition and excavation waste […]	Approve with conditions – 20.09.2022
Wigan	A/22/93756/RET	Unit 2A Mort Lane Tyldesley	Change of use of land to mixed use Sui Generis scrap yard and storage/distribution. Retrospective application.	Approve with conditions – 20.01.2023
Tameside	23/00347/FUL	4 Groby Road North Audenshaw	Change of use from commercial vehicle breaker, repairs and sales to waste transfer station […]	Approve with conditions – 15.12.2023
Bury	69956	Pilsworth Quarry, Pilsworth Road	Erection and operation of a Material Recycling Facility and associated works	Approve with conditions – 21.12.2023
Bury	71273	Pilsworth Quarry, Pilsworth Road	Erection and operation of Material Recycling Facility	Approve with conditions – 19.3.2025

Policy 11: Safeguarding of Allocated Sites

31. This policy sets out the requirement to safeguard sites allocated for waste management in the Waste Plan and safeguarding of sites required for the delivery of the Municipal Waste Management Strategies.

    Target: Sites of key importance for the achievement of the Waste Plan Retained

    Variance: 100% of sites retained

32. No planning applications were determined between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2025 on safeguarded sites therefore this target is not applicable.

Policy 12: Safeguarding Existing Waste Management Capacity

33. This policy sets out how existing waste management capacity will be safeguarded. Applications for non-waste uses on sites with a permitted waste use will be permitted where it is demonstrated (by the applicant) that there is no longer a need for the facility, that the capacity will be met elsewhere in Greater Manchester, or that there is an overriding need for the non-waste development in that location.

    Target: Sites of key importance for the achievement of the Waste Plan Retained

    Variance: 100% of sites retained.

34. No such applications were determined during the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 therefore this target is not applicable.

Monitoring of Scenario 2 of the Needs Assessment

35. A Waste Needs Assessment was prepared to inform the development of the Waste Plan. This illustrated the impacts of increasing recovery and recycling of Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I) and Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste (CD&E) on future capacity requirements against maintaining the status quo. Members of the ten Greater Manchester Authorities agreed to

adopt Scenario 2 (Maximised Recycling and Recovery) as outlined in the following table:

Target: Achievement of Scenario 2 targets: 100% of the recyclable C&I waste going to landfill is recycled, 50% of the possibly recyclable C&I waste is recycled and 25% remaining use for energy recovery by 2015.

Variance: Year specific targets not achieved

36. This target is no longer applicable as it refers to a 2015 target date. New national waste targets have been introduced since the Waste Plan was adopted and these will be used to inform evidence base work on a new joint Minerals and Waste Plan.

Conclusion of Monitoring Report

37. Plans are required by law to be reviewed at least once every five years, starting from the date of adoption. Such a review is focused on deciding whether plan policies remain relevant and effective in addressing local needs. Where policies are no longer considered to be relevant or effective, the plan should be updated in whole or part. Minerals and waste planning authorities are also required to prepare and maintain a 'minerals and waste plan timetable' which sets out key information relating to the coverage of their minerals and waste plans, as well as a timetable for preparation.

38. There have been numerous national policy and legislative changes since adoption of the Waste and Minerals Plans, including the publication of the Greater Manchester Sustainable Consumption and Production Plan 2022- 2025. The policies in the plans are no longer effective in addressing specific local issues. With regards to the Waste Plan, the annual monitoring has shown that the monitoring target for Policy 1: Commercial and Industrial Waste: Energy Recovery Capacity has not been met. Monitoring of Policy 4: Site Allocations has shown that the sites allocated in the Waste Plan have not come forward for waste uses as envisaged in the Plan.

39. At a meeting held on 28th March 2025[5], the AGMA Executive Board considered options on how to update the two plans and concluded that their replacement with a single, joint plan covering both minerals and waste matters offers benefits in terms of resource efficiencies (economy of scale) and will ensure that Greater Manchester can continue to deliver housing and infrastructure and ensure that recent policy changes relating to the environment and climate change are considered.

40. In order to progress a joint minerals and waste plan, each of the 10 GM authorities was required to obtain council approval. Approval from each Council was obtained in July 2025.

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[5] **Greater Manchester Combined Authority** – AGMA meeting information 28th March 2025

41. GMCA has also produced a monitoring report for the Minerals Plan. Further information on monitoring of the Minerals Plan can be found in the Greater Manchester Minerals Development Plan – Authority Monitoring Report April 2020 – March 2025 (Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan - Greater Manchester Combined Authority).

Appendix 4 Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan

Authority Monitoring Report April 2020 – March 2025

July 2025

Introduction

1. This is the seventh Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) collating information to allow for the assessment of the performance of planning policies in the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan (Minerals Plan), which was adopted on 26th April 2013.

2. This AMR covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2025.

3. The Minerals Plan forms part of the statutory development plan for the following Authorities: Bolton; Bury; Manchester; Oldham; Rochdale; Salford; Stockport; Tameside; Trafford; and Wigan. This AMR reports on behalf of the ten authorities.

4. Within Greater Manchester (GM) there is a supply of low-quality aggregate but a limited supply of the type of high-quality aggregates that are needed to ensure continued economic expansion of GM. Therefore, GM relies heavily on imports from Mineral Planning Authorities (MPAs) outside of the plan area to meet its high-quality aggregate needs.

5. Considering the above, GM will continue to work closely with the MPAs which export material to the area to ensure that material can continue to be sourced to meet its ongoing needs in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the use of recycled aggregates and secondary mineral products will be encouraged wherever possible to reduce the need for imports and promote sustainable use of raw materials.

Background to the Minerals Plan

6. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) agreed to produce a Joint Minerals Plan in 2009. AGMA consists of all ten Greater Manchester Authorities. The Minerals Plan forms part of each Authority's statutory development plan and runs to 2028.

7. The purpose of the Minerals Plan is to set out a minerals planning strategy up to 2028 to deliver a steady and sustainable supply of minerals, safeguard mineral resources, enable Greater Manchester to contribute to its sub-regional apportionment of aggregates, and facilitate greater use of recycled aggregates and secondary mineral products. The Minerals Plan includes a set of plans identifying the locations of Mineral Safeguarding Areas within each of the ten Local Planning Authorities. It also includes a set of development management policies which will assist in the consideration of minerals planning applications.

Minerals Plan - Core Output Indicators

8. This data is measured on a level which includes all ten Greater Manchester Authorities, the five Merseyside Authorities plus Halton, and the local authority of Warrington (known as the 'sub-region' in this report). The latest data is from 2022 and is published in the *Joint Local Aggregate Assessment*[1].

Indicator M1

9. Minerals Plan Indicator M1 compares the annual production of primary land won aggregates with the North West Aggregate Working Party (NW AWP) apportionment, as set out in the document *National and regional guidelines for aggregates provision in England 2005-2020*[2]. However, the apportionments were

[1] Joint Annual Local Aggregate Assessment 2020 to 2023 (Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Halton, and Warrington) local Aggregate Assessment 2020 - 2023

[2] National and regional guidelines for aggregates provision in England 2005 to 2020 - GOV.UK

for the period 2005 – 2020 and have not been updated. The annual production of primary land won aggregates as published in the Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) is instead averaged out over the previous 10 years of sales to establish the landbank. This links with Minerals Plan Objective 4i and Policy 2 & 3.

Table 1 Greater Manchester, Mersyside and Halton, and Warrington aggregate crushed rock landbank as at 31st December 2022

	Landbank at 31.12.2018	Landbank at 31.12.2019	Landbank at 31.12.2020	Landbank at 31.12.2021	Permitted reserves at 31.12.2022	Annual average of previous 10 year sales as at 2022	Landbank at 31.12.2022
Crushed Rock	29.2 years	21.4 years	21.5 years	21.6 years	11.67 million tonnes	0.49 million tonnes	**23.8 years**
Sand and Gravel	6.2 years	6.2 years	6 years	0 years	0	0.27 million tonnes	**0 years**

10. Permitted reserves of sand and gravel have dwindled in recent years and the landbank is now at or near zero, which is below the 7-year landbank required by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The landbank of crushed rock in the sub-region is above 10-year minimum landbank required by NPPF.

Indicator M2

11. This measures production of secondary and recycled aggregates by mineral planning authority. This links with Minerals Plan Objective 4iii.

12. Recycled Aggregates, which include inert materials such as concrete, stone, brick and other similar materials, are reprocessed materials previously used for construction purposes and which are often taken from the Construction, Demolition and Excavation (CD&E) waste stream. Secondary aggregates are usually by-products of quarrying and mining or industrial processes and can include materials such as clay waste, bottom ash and slag.

13. Data on secondary and recycled aggregate production and use is variable and incomplete. This is because, while some sites operate under permit and can be monitored, much recycling and re-use is temporary and takes place on individual construction sites, and data is not produced for such operations. The Mineral Products Association (MPA) has published data on the likely contribution that secondary and recycled materials make to the aggregates market, reporting that nationally these materials made up 30% of the market in 2022[3].

14. The best available information on CD&E waste is from the Environment Agency's Waste Data Interrogator (EA WDI). However, this will not reflect the true amount of CD&E waste produced and managed in the sub-region because it only shows the waste that moves through licenced sites and does not include waste that is reused on site or disposed of at exempt facilities. The true amount of CD&E waste produced will therefore be greater.

15. The EA WDI shows that the amount of CD&E waste received at facilities in Greater Manchester increased over the last five years (table 2).

[3] Recycled and Secondary Aggregates Brochure

Table 2 Total Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste Received in Greater Manchester – Source, EA WDI

Monitoring Period	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
Total CD&E Waste (million tonnes)	2.694	2.711	3.163	3.199	3.331

Minerals Plan Policy Monitoring

Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Minerals Development

16. This policy states that positive consideration will be given to minerals development which accords with the policies set out in the Minerals Plan and with all other relevant local plan policies and that such development will be permitted unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of mineral related development permitted in line with presumption in favour of sustainable development.

    Target: 100%

17. Planning applications for minerals or related infrastructure that were decided during the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2025 are shown in table 3. 100% of mineral related development was permitted in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and therefore this target was met.

Table 3 Planning applications for minerals or related infrastructure decided during the period 1st April 2020 - 31st March 2025

Authority	Planning Ref	Address	Description	Decision and date
Bolton	05250/19	Montcliffe Quarry Georges Lane Horwich (North western extension)	Application for a lateral northerly extension to the existing quarry in order to facilitate the extraction of gritstone for the purpose of producing high grade stone and aggregates	Appeal dismissed – 12.12.2022
Bolton	11067/21	Montcliffe Quarry Georges Lane Horwich (North western extension)	Application for a lateral northerly extension to the existing quarry in order to facilitate the extraction of gritstone for the purpose of producing high grade stone and aggregates (resubmission of application 05250/19)	Allowed at Appeal dated 25.07.2023
Bolton	10395/21	Land Adjacent To Montcliffe Quarry Georges Lane Horwich (North eastern extension)	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 93076/14 to increase the period of time for re-profiling and stabilisation works by 10.5 years	Approve subject to conditions 14.09.2023
Bolton	09801/20	Montcliffe Quarry Georges Lane Horwich	Variation of condition 14 on planning approval 97782/16 (introduction of an additional access to/from the site)	Approve subject to conditions 28.03.2022
Bolton	15401/23	Montcliffe Quarry Georges Lane Horwich	Variation of condition 1 on 09801/20 (to vary the time limit for mineral extraction and processing at Montcliffe Quarry from 20th February 2033 to 20th February 2037)	Approve subject to conditions 02.05.2023
Bury	65585	Fletcher Bank Quarry/Ramsbottom Works, Manchester Road, Ramsbottom	Erection and operation of mortar and screed batching plant and associated infrastructure	Approve with Conditions 07.10.2020

Policy 2: Key Planning and Environmental Criteria

18. This policy states that minerals development will be permitted where any adverse impacts on a list of criteria are avoided or can be appropriately mitigated. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of mineral development planning applications permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

Target:100%

19. The applications permitted during the monitoring period were compliant with the requirements of the policy and therefore this target was met.

Policy 3: Primary Extraction of Aggregate Minerals (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1 & 4i)

20. This policy states the conditions under which applications for extraction/and or processing of sand, gravel or sandstone/gritstone, both within and out with the Areas of Search for each mineral, will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of applications for primary extraction of aggregate minerals permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

    Target: 100%

21. There were no relevant planning applications for mineral extraction permitted during the monitoring period, so this target is not applicable.

Policy 4: Natural Building Stone (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1 & 4ii)

22. This policy states the conditions under which proposals for the working of natural building stone will be supported and what evidence must be provided to support the proposals. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of natural building stone excavation permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

Target: 100%

23. Planning application 1067/21 for a lateral quarry extension to Montcliffe Quarry in Horwich, Bolton was allowed at appeal dated 25.07.2023. The proposal was to extend into the northern end of the north-eastern face of this quarry, to extract further reserves of building stone. This would be used to restore, repair, and extend historic buildings in local towns such as Bolton, Turton, Farnworth, Horwich and Blackrod, as well as to construct new buildings that respect the heritage of such places.

24. This was the second appeal for this development, the first being dismissed because it did not respond to revised drainage information, and because the previous appeal sought to be operational for a much longer period than was authorised at the existing quarry and so, in time, would have had no access or servicing facilities. The monitoring target has been met as 100% of permissions were found to be compliant with the requirements of the policy.

Policy 5: Primary Extraction of Non-Aggregate Minerals (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1 &4ii)

25. This policy states the conditions under which proposals for the development of non-aggregate minerals will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of applications for primary extraction of non-aggregate minerals permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

    Target: 100%

26. There were no relevant planning applications for mineral extraction permitted during the monitoring period and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 6: Unconventional Gas Resources (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1 & 5)

27. This policy states the conditions under which applications for exploration and appraisal, and production wells for unconventional gas resources will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of unconventional gas resources developments permitted compliant with requirements of the policy

    Target: 100%

28. There were no relevant applications for unconventional gas resources developments permitted during the monitoring period and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 7: Peat (implements Minerals Plan objective 1)

29. This policy states the conditions under which applications for peat extraction will be granted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of peat extraction developments permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

    Target: 100%

30. There were no applications for peat extraction developments permitted during the monitoring period and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 8: Mineral Safeguarding Areas (implements Minerals Plan objective 1, 2 and 3)

31. This policy states that all non-mineral development proposals within the Mineral Safeguarding Area should extract any viable mineral resources present in advance of construction. The policy also states the requirements for proposals for non-mineral development within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas that do not allow for the prior extraction of minerals. It is also states that all non-mineral development proposals outside the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, where the potential for prior extraction to take place has been identified, should seek to

extract any viable mineral resources present in advance of construction. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

Indicator: % of non-mineral development permitted within the MSA (falling within the policy thresholds) which do not needlessly sterilise mineral resources.

Target: 100%

32. There have been no non-mineral developments permitted within the MSA that would needlessly sterilise mineral resources and therefore this target was met. The minerals and waste planning unit was consulted on a number of planning applications for non-minerals development within Mineral Safeguarding Areas. However it was considered that none of the permitted non-mineral development was contrary to Policy 8 and this was reported to the case officer for each application to inform their recommendation.

33. Mineral Safeguarding Areas can be found within a number of allocations in Places for Everyone, which is a plan of nine of the Greater Manchester authorities. Places for Everyone allocations where there is also a Mineral Safeguarding Area have a policy requirement for developers to consider the extraction of any viable mineral resources, in accordance with Minerals Plan Policy 8.

Policy 9: Sustainable Transport of Minerals (implements Minerals Plan objective 3)

34. This policy states that developers will be encouraged to transport minerals via the most sustainable transport mode, wherever practicable, and allows for transport of minerals by road where the use of more sustainable transport is not practicable, and the existing highway network is able to accommodate traffic generated by the proposal. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

Indicator: % of mineral development permitted utilising most sustainable transport modes in compliance with the policies of the Minerals Plan.

Target: 100%

35. Transport was considered as part of all relevant planning applications and therefore this target was met.

Policy 10: Reworking of Colliery Spoil Tips (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1&5)

36. This policy states the conditions under which applications for the reworking of colliery spoil tips will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of applications for reworking colliery spoil tips permitted compliant with the requirements of the policy.

    Target: 100%

37. There were no applications for reworking colliery spoil tips permitted during the monitoring period and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 11: Protecting Existing Mineral Sites/Infrastructure (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1, 2, 4 & 5)

38. This policy protects existing mineral sites and infrastructure from new development and states the conditions under which development likely to have an unacceptable impact on mineral sites and infrastructure will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of non-mineral related development permitted within a distance that could affect existing mineral sites/infrastructure, in the absence of justification provided by the developer as set out within the policy.

Target: 100%

39. There were no applications on sites that could affect existing mineral sites/infrastructure, in the absence of justification provided by the developer as set out within the policy, and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 12: Protecting quarries important for maintaining historic buildings (implements Minerals Plan objectives 1, 2, 4 & 5)

40. This policy states that the impact upon quarries important for maintaining historic buildings will be considered and states the conditions under which development likely to have an unacceptable impact on the future use of a quarry will be permitted. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of mineral related development permitted in line with the restoration and aftercare requirements

    Target: 100%

41. There were no relevant planning applications permitted during the monitoring period and so this target is not applicable.

Policy 13: Restoration and aftercare (implements Minerals Plan objective 1)

42. This policy states that applications for minerals extraction will be permitted where they are accompanied by appropriate proposals for site restoration and aftercare. The indicator and target for the monitoring of this policy is:

    Indicator: % of mineral related development permitted in line with the restoration and aftercare requirements.

    Target: 100%

43. Two applications for a quarry extension were determined in the monitoring period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2024. These applications were for similar proposals - lateral northerly extension to Montcliffe Quarry – with both being refused by Bolton Council. The applicant appealed both decisions, with one appeal (05250/19) being dismissed and the other (11067/21) allowed. The proposed development was allowed at appeal in line with restoration and aftercare requirements and therefore the target of 100% was met.

Conclusion of Monitoring Report

44. Plans are required by law to be reviewed at least once every five years, starting from the date of adoption. Such a review is focused on deciding whether plan policies remain relevant and effective in addressing local needs. Where policies are no longer considered to be relevant or effective, the plan should be updated in whole or part. Minerals and waste planning authorities are also required to prepare and maintain a 'minerals and waste plan timetable' which sets out key information relating to the coverage of their minerals and waste plans, as well as a timetable for preparation.

45. There have been numerous national policy and legislative changes since adoption of the Waste and Minerals Plans, including the publication of the Greater Manchester Sustainable Consumption and Production Plan 2022- 2025. The policies in the plans are no longer effective in addressing specific local issues due to these changes.

46. At a meeting held on 28th March 2025[4], the AGMA Executive Board considered options on how to update the two plans and concluded that their replacement with a single, joint plan covering both minerals and waste matters offers benefits in terms of resource efficiencies (economy of scale) and will ensure that Greater Manchester can continue to deliver housing and infrastructure and ensure that

[4] **Greater Manchester Combined Authority** – AGMA meeting information 28th March 2025

recent policy changes relating to the environment and climate change are considered.

47. In order to progress a joint minerals and waste plan, each of the 10 GM authorities was required to obtain council approval. Approval from each Council was obtained in July 2025.

48. GMCA has also produced a monitoring report for the Waste Plan. Further information on monitoring of the Waste Plan can be found in the Greater Manchester Waste Development Plan – Authority Monitoring Report April 2020 – March 2025 (Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan - Greater Manchester Combined Authority)

Appendix 5 Local Housing Statistics

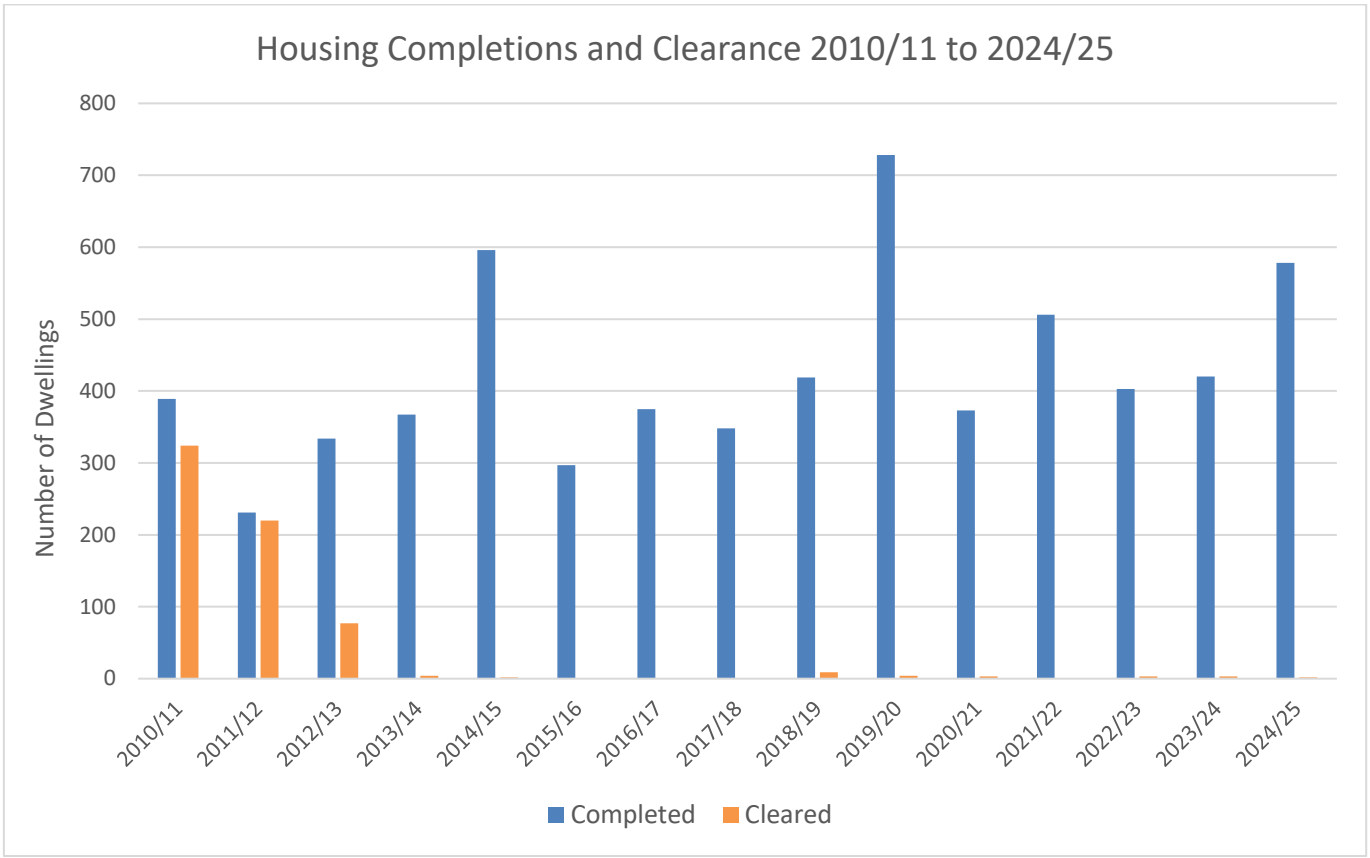
Table 8 - Net House Building 2003/04 to 2024/25

Year	Completed [16]	Cleared	Completed	Variance from Housing Requirement
2003/04	497	227	270	-19
2004/05	285	150	135	-154
2005/06	386	254	132	-157
2006/07	577	262	315	26
2007/08	599	200	399	110
2008/09	505	102	403	114
2009/10	227	307	-80	-369
2010/11	389	324	65	-224
2011/12	231	220	11	-278
2012/13	334	77	257	-32
2013/14	367	4	363	74
2014/15	596	2	594	305
2015/16	297	1	296	7
2016/17	375	1	374	85
2017/18	348	3	345	56
2018/19	410	9	401	-282
2019/20	728	4	724	36
2020/21	373	3	370	-320
2021/22	506	1	505	-177
2022/23	403	3	400	-2
2023/24	420	3	417	13

[16] Since the publication of the SHLAA as at 1 April 2018, completions have been recorded separately to clearance and accounted for in the clearance allowance - they are only shown against annual completions here for consistency within the monitoring report. Some housing data from DLUCH still continues to take clearance off completions, meaning completion data can differ slightly.

Year	Completed [16]	Cleared	Completed	Variance from Housing Requirement
2024/25	578	2	576	172
Total	**9,431**	**2,159**	**7,272**	**-1,316**
Average	429	98	331	-60

Chart A - Dwellings completed and cleared, 2010/11 to 2024/25



Appendix 6 Tracking saved UDP Policies

The UDP was adopted in July 2006. The policies were further `saved` by the Secretary of State in May 2009 (for an unspecified period of time) until replaced by the relevant part of the Local Plan.

The table below lists those 'saved' UDP policies that have remained following the adoption of the Joint DPD, the Greater Manchester Waste DPD, the Greater Manchester Minerals DPD and Places for Everyone. They will continue to be `saved` until replaced by the relevant part of the Local Plan.

Table 9 - UDP 'saved' policies

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan document which may review the UDP policy
B1	BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL LAND ALLOCATIONS	Local Plan review and/or JWDPD and/or JMDPD
B1.1	Business and Industrial Allocations	This policy remains saved, however part of allocation B1.1.24 Royton Moss, Moss Lane, Royton has been superseded and now forms part of JPA 12 Broadbent Moss in PfE. The remainder of the allocations are saved and may be reviewed as part of Local Plan review and/or JWDPD and/or JMDPD
B1.2	Business and Office Allocations	Local Plan review and/or JWDPD and/or JMDPD
B1.3	Mixed Use Allocations	Local Plan review and/or JWDPD and/or JMDPD
D1.12	Telecommunications	To be determined
H1.1	Housing Land Release – Phase 1	Local Plan review
H1.2	Housing Land Release – Phase 2	This policy remains saved, however allocation H1.2.17 Danisher Lane has been superseded and now forms part of JPA 15 Coal Pit Lane in PfE. The remainder of the allocations are saved and may be reviewed as part of Local Plan review.
OE1.11	Farm Diversification	To be determined
TC1.1	Allocated Site	Local Plan review
TC1.2	Allocated Site	Local Plan review

With the adoption of Joint DPD, the Greater Manchester Waste DPD, the Greater Manchester Minerals DPD and Places for Everyone, several 2006 UDP have been superseded. These are detailed in the table below.

Table 10 - UDP Policies superseded

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
Policies superseded in November 2011 following the adoption of the Joint DPD			
B1.4	Business, Office and Industrial Development on Unallocated Land	5 9	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Local Environment
B1.5	Working from Home	9	Local Environment
B1.6	Freight Generating Developments	9 17 25	Local Environment Gateways and Corridors Developer Contributions
B2	EXISTING BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS	13 14	Employment Areas Supporting Oldham's Economy
B2.1	Primary Employment Zones	13 14 25	Employment Areas Supporting Oldham's Economy Developer Contributions
B2.2	Protection of Existing Employment Sites outside PEZs	14 25	Supporting Oldham's Economy Developer Contributions
C1	CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	24	Historic Environment
C1.1	Development Within or Affecting the Setting of Conservation Areas	24	Historic Environment
C1.2	Demolition of Buildings in Conservation Areas	24	Historic Environment
C1.3	Retention of Distinctive Local Features or Structures in Conservation Areas	24	Historic Environment
C1.4	Alterations and Extensions to Buildings in Conservation Areas	24	Historic Environment
C1.5	The Preservation of Historic Shop Fronts	24	Historic Environment

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
C1.6	Advertisements in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings	24	Historic Environment
C1.7	The Re-Use of Historic Buildings	24	Historic Environment
C1.8	Alterations, Extensions and Additions to Listed Buildings	24	Historic Environment
C1.9	Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building	24	Historic Environment
C1.10	Demolition of a Listed Building or Structure	24	Historic Environment
C1.11	The Preservation of the Sites of Important Archaeological Remains and their Settings	24	Historic Environment
C1.12	Preservation or Recording of Archaeological Remains	24	Historic Environment
C1.13	The Protection of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	24	Historic Environment
CF1	NEW AND IMPROVED EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES	2 25	Communities Developer Contributions
CF1.1	Education Facilities	2 25	Communities Developer Contributions
CF1.2	New and Improved Community and Education Facilities	2 25	Communities Developer Contributions
CF1.3	Change of Use from Education and/or Community Facility	2	Communities
CF1.4	Dual Use	2	Communities
CF1.5	Developer Contributions to New Teaching Facilities	2 25	Communities Developer Contributions

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
D1	DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT	20	Design
D1.1	General Design Criteria	20	Design
D1.2	Designing for Energy Efficiency	18	Energy
D1.3	Inclusive Access	9	Local Environment
D1.4	Habitat and Wildlife on Development Sites	20 21	Design Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
D1.6	Landscape Design and Tree Planting	20	Design
D1.7	Designing for Safety and Security	20 9	Design Local Environment
D1.8	Shop Front Design	20	Design
D1.9	Advertisements on Business Premises	20	Design
D1.10	Freestanding Signs and Advertisements	20	Design
D1.11	House Extensions	20 9	Design Local Environment
D1.13	Design of Development Adjoining Main Transport Corridors and at Gateway Locations in Town and District Centres	20	Design
H1	HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT AND SUPPLY	3	An Address of Choice
H1.3	Assessing Non-Allocated Sites	3	An Address of Choice
	and the Renewal of Planning Permissions	11	Housing Density and Mix

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
H1.4	Housing Density	11	Housing Density and Mix
H1.5	Housing Choice and Diversity	11	Housing Density and Mix
H2	MEETING THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING	10	Affordable Housing
H2.1	Providing Affordable Housing	10	Affordable Housing
H2.2	Caravan Sites for Gypsies Or Travelling Showpeople	12	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
NR1	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	9	Local Environment
NR1.1	Protection of Amenity	9	Local Environment
NR1.2	Air Quality	9	Local Environment
NR1.3	Odour	9	Local Environment
NR1.4	Noise and Vibration	9	Local Environment
NR1.5	Light Pollution	9	Local Environment
NR1.6	Contaminated Land	9	Local Environment
NR1.7	Hazardous Installations	9	Local Environment
NR2	WATER RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	19	Water and Flooding
NR2.1	Water Infrastructure	19	Water and Flooding
NR2.2	Flooding & Flood Protection	19	Water and Flooding

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
NR2.3	Protection of Open Watercourses	19	Water and Flooding
NR2.4	Surface Water Run-off and Sustainability	19	Water and Flooding
NR3	RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS	18	Energy
NR3.1	Renewable Energy Developments	18	Energy
NR3.2	Wind Developments	18	Energy
NR3.3	Renewable Energy in Major New Developments	18	Energy
OE1	PROTECTING OPEN LAND	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.1	Criteria for Development in the Greenbelt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.2	New Building in Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.3	Domestic Extensions in the Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.4	Sub-division of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.5	Garden Extensions in the Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.6	Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.7	Re-use of Existing Buildings in the Green Belt	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.9	Land Reserved for Future Development	22	Protecting Open Land
OE1.10	Other Protected Open Land	22	Protecting Open Land

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
OE1.12	New Agricultural or Forestry Buildings	22	Protecting Open Land
OE2	NATURE AND LANDSCAPE	6 21	Green Infrastructure Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
OE2.1	Landscape	6 21	Green Infrastructure Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
OE2.2	Green Corridors and Links	6 21	Green Infrastructure Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
OE2.3	Habitat Protection	6 21	Green Infrastructure Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
OE2.4	Species Protection	6 21	Green Infrastructure Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
R1	MAINTAINING SUPPLY THROUGH THE PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES	2 23 6	Communities Open Spaces and Sports Green Infrastructure
R1.1	Maintaining Supply through the Protection and Improvement of Existing Open Space, and Outdoor Sport or Recreation Facilities	23	Open Spaces and Sports
R1.2	Protection of Indoor Sport and Recreation Facilities	2	Communities
R1.3	The Protection of Playing Fields	23	Open Spaces and Sports
R2	THE PROVISION AND IMPROVEMENT OF OPEN SPACES, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES	20 23	Design Open Spaces and Sports

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
R2.1	Requirement for New and Improved Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Residential Developments	23	Open Spaces and Sports
R2.2	General Criteria Relating to New, or Improved Open Space, Outdoor and Indoor Sport and Recreation Facilities	20	Design
S1	TOWN AND DISTRICT CENTRE SHOPPING AND LEISURE FACILITIES	15	Centres
S1.1	Development Within the Central Shopping Core	15	Centres
S1.2	Development Beyond the Central Shopping Core	15	Centres
S1.3	Primary Shopping Frontages	15	Centres
S1.4	Food and Drink Premises	15	Centres
S1.5	Taxi and Vehicle Hire	9	Local Environment
S1.6	Development Within District Centres	15	Centres
S1.7	Developments Outside the Town Centre and at the Edge of or Outside the District Centres	15	Centres
S1.8	Customer Facilities	15	Centres
S2	LOCAL SHOPPING AND LEISURE FACILITIES	16	Local Services and Facilities
S2.1	Local Shops	16	Local Services and Facilities

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
S2.2	Protection of Local Shop Premises	16	Local Services and Facilities
S2.3	Small Shops Outside the Town and District Centres	16	Local Services and Facilities
S2.4	Local Leisure Facilities	16	Local Services and Facilities
T1	THE TRANSPORT NETWORK	5 17	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Gateways and Corridors
T1.1	Transport Infrastructure	17	Gateways and Corridors
T1.2	The Road Network	17	Gateways and Corridors
T1.3	The Network of Routes for Non-Motorised Travel	17	Gateways and Corridors
T1.4	Canal Corridors	21	Protecting Natural Environmental Assets
T1.5	Disused Rail Infrastructure	17 25	Gateways and Corridors Developer Contributions
T2	THE ACCESSIBILITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT	5 17	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Gateways and Corridors
T2.1	Public Transport Accessibility	5	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices
T3	TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT	5 17	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Gateways and Corridors
T3.1	Access to Development	5 25	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Developer Contributions
T3.2	Developments with Significant Transport Implications	5 25	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
			Developer Contributions
T3.3	Parking	5 25	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Developer Contributions
TC1	THE ROLE OF THE TOWN CENTRE	15	Centres
TC1.3	Town Centre Parking	5 15	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices Centres
TC1.4	Town Centre Parking	5	Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices
TC1.5	Pedestrian Permeability and the Public Realm	20	Design
TC1.6	Diversity and Vitality	15	Centres
TC1.7	Residential Development within the Town Centre	15 3	Centres An Address of Choice
Policies superseded 1 April 2012 following the adoption of the Greater Manchester Waste DPD			
W1	WASTE	7	Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management and JWDPD
W1.1	Waste Management Options	7	Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management and JWDPD
W1.2	Provision of Sites for Waste Management Facilities	7	Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management and JWDPD
W1.3	Criteria for Assessing Proposals for Waste Management, Treatment and Disposal Facilities	7	Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management and JWDPD

UDP Policy No.	UDP Policy Name	Local Plan Policy Number	Local Plan Policy Name
W1.4	Provision of Civic Amenity and other 'Bring' Recycling Sites	7	Sustainable Use of Resources - Waste Management and JWDPD
Policies superseded 26 April 2013 following the adoption of the Greater Manchester Minerals DPD			
NR4	THE NEED FOR MINERALS	8	Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals and JMDPD
NR4.1	Prevention of Mineral Sterilisation	8	Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals and JMDPD
NR4.2	Primary, Secondary and Recycled Aggregates	8	Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals and JMDPD
NR4.3	Criteria for Assessing Proposals for Mineral Working and Processing	8	Sustainable Use of Resources - Minerals and JMDPD
Policies superseded 21 March 2024 following the adoption of Places for Everyone			
D1.5	Protection of Trees on Development Sites	JP-G7	Trees and Woodland
OE1.8	Major Developed Site in the Green Belt	JPA 13	Chew Brook Vale (Robert Fletchers)
B1.1 – B1.1.24	Business and Industrial Allocations – Royton Moss, Moss Lane Royton (partial)	JPA 12	Broadbent Moss
H1.2 – H1.2.17	Housing Land Release – Phase 2 – Danisher Lane	JPA 15	Coal Pit Lane

Appendix 7 UDP Phase 1 Housing Allocations

Table 11 - Status of Phase 1 Housing Allocations in the Unitary Development Plan as at 1 April 2025

Reference in UDP	Site	Land Type	Size (hectares)	Indicative Capacity (dwellings)	Current Status of Site
H1.1.2	Land off Fields New Road / Ramsey Street, Chadderton	PDL	3.41	136	Site completed. 133 dwellings provided, including 20 affordable units for discounted sale.
M3	Land at Oldham Road / Hardman Street, Failsworth	PDL	1.56	14	Mixed-use allocation including residential development. Site is Council owned in part. Site completed for 14 dwellings (on part of site).
H1.1.6	St Mary's Way, Oldham	PDL	2.56	180	Site completed. 93 dwellings provided. All affordable units with a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership.
H1.1.10	Athens Way, Lees	PDL	0.55	22	Site completed. 24 dwellings provided.
M2	Lumb Mill, Huddersfield Road, Delph, Saddleworth	PDL	1.4	62	Site completed. 46 units provided.
H1.1.15	Bailey Mill, Oldham Road, Saddleworth	PDL	0.86	50	Application granted permission for 60 units (FUL/350293/22). Within the housing land supply, identified in the short term.
M1	Frenches Wharf / Wellington Road, Greenfield, Saddleworth	PDL	4.76	99	Phases 1 and 2 now complete with 99 dwellings delivered across both phases.

Reference in UDP	Site	Land Type	Size (hectares)	Indicative Capacity (dwellings)	Current Status of Site
H1.1.19	Andrew Mill, Manchester Road / Chew Valley Road, Greenfield, Saddleworth	PDL	1.34	30	Site completed. 41 dwellings have been provided on site as a whole.
H1.1.20	Rose Mill, Coalshaw Green Road, Chadderton	PDL	1.49	45	Site completed. 124 dwellings provided with 42 units offered for affordable housing, with a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership.
H1.1.21	Springhey Mill, Huddersfield Road, Oldham	PDL	0.39	30	Outline planning permission granted subject to the signing of a S106 agreement however not signed. Status reverted back to housing allocation along with associated density. Identified in the long-term housing land supply.
H1.1.22	Vulcan Street, Oldham	PDL	1.23	61	Site completed. 73 dwellings provided, including 27 affordable units for a mix of rent and shared ownership.
H1.1.23	Pretoria Road, Oldham	PDL	0.46	14	Allocation. Identified in the medium-term housing land supply.

Reference in UDP	Site	Land Type	Size (hectares)	Indicative Capacity (dwellings)	Current Status of Site
H1.1.24	Sandy Mill, Royton	PDL	2.2	90	Majority of site completed. 74 dwellings provided, including 8 affordable units for discounted sale. Two small sections of the allocated site are not covered by the permission. A remaining section of the allocation fronting Rochdale Road is included within the housing land supply, identified in the long-term for 22 dwellings.
H1.1.25	Jowett Street, Oldham	PDL	0.66	26	Allocation. Identified in the long-term housing land supply.
M4	Huddersfield Road / Dunkerley Street, Oldham	PDL	2.61	53	Mixed-use allocation including residential development. Part of allocation received full planning permission for 53 dwellings in September 2024. Considered deliverable in the short term.
H1.1.26	Spencer Street, Oldham	PDL	3	150	Site completed. 112 dwellings provided, including 31 affordable units for social rented accommodation.
H1.1.27	Hartford Mill /Land off Milne Street, Oldham	PDL	2.84	158	Mill was demolished in 2021 and future re-development opportunities are being explored. Site has outline planning permission for approximately 285 dwellings (granted February 2025) (also includes land of an adjacent site);

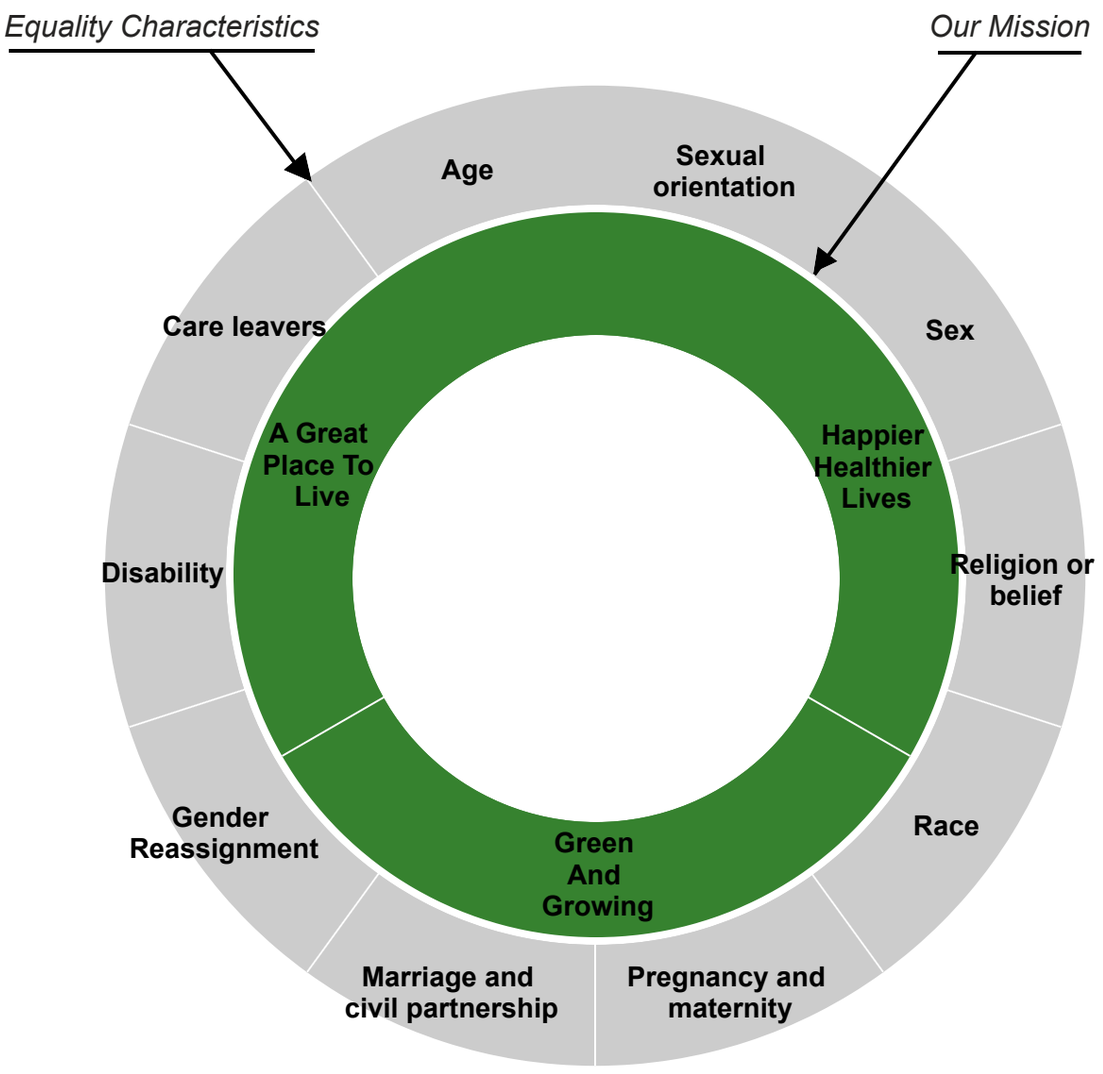
Reference in UDP	Site	Land Type	Size (hectares)	Indicative Capacity (dwellings)	Current Status of Site
					considered deliverable in the medium term.
H1.1.28	Parkside Farm, off Chadderton Park Road, Chadderton	GF	0.94	38	Site completed. 23 units provided.
H1.1.29	Blackshaw Lane, Royton	GF	0.6	15	Outline planning permission granted for 14 dwellings; now expired. Site is Council owned and being promoted for development. Partly identified within 5-year supply.
H1.1.30	Greenfield Bowling Club, Greenfield	PDL	0.5	15	Site complete providing 41 dwellings.
H1.1.31	Tamewater Mill, Delph	PDL	0.51	39	Site completed. 44 dwellings provided.

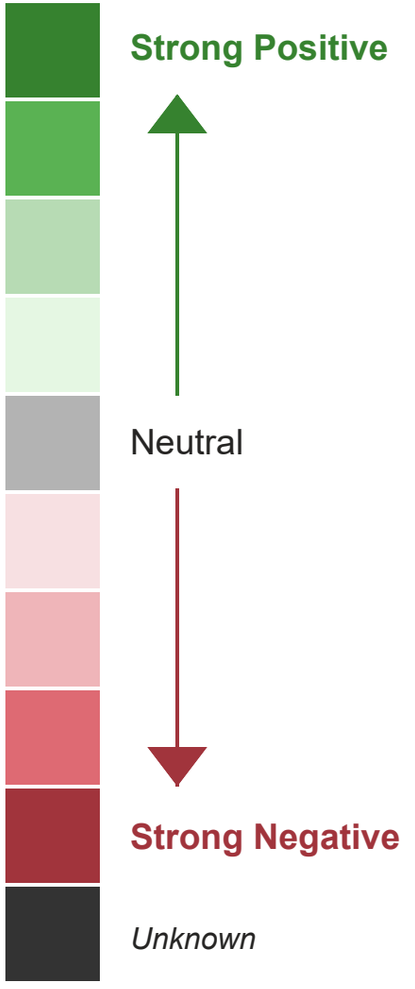
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Oldham's Monitoring Report 2024-2025

Strategic Planning and Information : in progress

Portfolio	**Decent Homes**
Directorate	**Place**
Service/Team	**Economy**
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	**No**





Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Age	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Care leavers	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Disability	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Sex	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Very Likely	Long Term	0	

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Oldham's Monitoring Report monitors the performance of the borough's planning policies. In monitoring these policies, we are ensuring that they have a strong positive effect on residents' ability to feel proud of where they live, connected to their community and create a safer and fairer Oldham for people to live a good life. The Monitoring Report monitors progress against indicators which complement and provide the spatial expression of The Oldham Plan and the council's Corporate Plan and their vision to provide 'opportunities for all'. This includes monitoring planning policies that aim to ensure Oldham residents will have access to good, affordable homes, access to services, protected green belt and open land, protected heritage assets and improved community engagement. This ensures their effectiveness for our residents and any indicators that are seen to be under performing or failing will be identified as needed to improve and appropriate actions will be taken. Effective planning policies enables residents to gain a greater sense of community and pride for Oldham. Underneath the overarching theme of Building a Better Oldham the creation of connected and proud communities is a thread that weaves throughout the Monitoring Report. Planning policies monitored within the Monitoring Report provide a robust framework to understand how indicators encourage and facilitate development in the borough that provides opportunities for affordable homes, safer, more welcoming and more connected communities and sustainable models for heritage.
Green And Growing	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Oldham's Monitoring Report monitors the performance of the borough's planning policies. In monitoring these policies we are ensuring that they have a strong positive effect on resident's access to affordable homes, better quality jobs, opportunities for green investment and carbon neutrality across the borough. The Monitoring Report monitors progress against indicators which complement and provide the spatial expression of The Oldham Plan and the council's Corporate Plan with their vision to provide 'opportunities for all'. This includes monitoring planning policies that cover employment, business and industry, affordable housing, communities, biodiversity, conservation, air quality and waste management. This ensures their effectiveness for our residents and any indicators that are seen to be under performing or failing will be identified as needed to improve and appropriate actions will be taken. Effective planning policies benefit resident's access to affordable homes and opportunities for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Underneath the overarching theme of Building a Better Oldham monitoring planning policies that focus on local business growth and the economy, alongside conservation, and air quality, are indicators that are examined through the Monitoring Report. Planning policies monitored within the Monitoring Report provide a robust framework for ensuring that Green Infrastructure is enhanced whilst also attracting key economic sectors in tandem with ensuring diverse and sustainable housing development.
Happier Healthier Lives	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Long Term	8	Oldham's Monitoring Report monitors the performance of the borough's planning policies. In monitoring these policies, we are ensuring that they have a strong positive effect on residents' ability to get together and access activities that will improve their physical or mental health to live a good life. The Monitoring Report monitors progress against indicators which complement and provide the spatial expression of The Oldham Plan and the council's Corporate Plan with their vision to provide 'opportunities for all'. This includes monitoring planning policies that aim to ensure Oldham residents will have access to key services, and opportunities they need to live a good and healthy life. Planning policies that are monitored focus on health and well-being, access to services, education and participation in sport/recreational activities. This ensures their effectiveness for our residents and any indicators that are seen to be under performing or failing will be identified as needed to improve and appropriate actions will be taken. Effective planning policies enables residents to improve their physical health or mental health and have access to educational opportunities to live a good life.

Negative Impacts

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	What action can be taken to mitigate the potential negative impacts?	Action(s)	Owner(s)	Timescale(s)	If the negative impacts can't be mitigated, why should the project/decision proceed?

Strong Positive Impacts that are Possible

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	What action can be taken to increase the likelihood that positive impacts are realised?	Action(s)	Owner(s)	Timescale(s)

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Report to CABINET

Biodiversity Duty Report

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Cllr Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and Nasir Dad, Director of Environment

Report Author: Georgina Brownridge, Senior Planning Officer
Email: georgina.brownridge@oldham.gov.uk

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

To seek approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report (2026) in line with section 40A of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Recommendations

To give approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report on the Council's website.

Biodiversity Duty Report

1 **Background**

1.1 Oldham Council's Biodiversity Duty Report sets out how the Council's policies and objectives on biodiversity are being implemented.

1.2 The Environment Act 2021 introduced a strengthened 'biodiversity duty' into the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which requires all public authorities in England to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

1.3 Oldham Council as a public authority, must:

- Consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on our consideration.
- Act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives.

1.4 There was a need to complete our first consideration of what action Oldham Council intends to take for biodiversity no later than 1 January 2024 – this report can be viewed here[1].

1.5 Following this initial consideration, Oldham Council was required to agree our policies and objectives as soon as possible after – this report was approved by Cabinet on 24 March 2025 and can be viewed here[2].

1.6 Following on from these reports there is now a requirement to publish a report on how these policies and objectives have been implemented. The first reporting period can include actions that have taken place since 1 January 2023 up until 1 January 2026. The Biodiversity Duty Report must be published by 26 March 2026.

1.7 Future Biodiversity Duty Reports will need to be published at least every five years thereon.

1.8 The Biodiversity Duty Report must explain:

- a summary of the action we have taken to comply with the biodiversity duty;
- how we plan to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period; and
- any other information we consider appropriate

1.9 Reports from local planning authorities must also include the following biodiversity net gain (BNG) information:

- the actions we have carried out to meet BNG obligations;
- details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans we have approved; and
- how we plan to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period

[1] The First Considerations Report is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7821/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_first_considerations_report

[2] The Policies and Objectives Report is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8234/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%93_our_policies_and_objectives_for_thriving_wildlife_in_oldham

1.10 Other information that may be included in the Biodiversity Duty Report as set out in government guidance on reporting your biodiversity duty actions[3] is optional.

1.11 This report links to the Oldham Corporate Plan Green and Growing priority as it seeks to enhance biodiversity and ensure communities and our environment thrive.

1.12 In terms of the purpose of the report there are limited implications for:

(a) Community Cohesion Implications, including crime and disorder implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: N/A
(b) Risk Assessments: The Council is required by law to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report by 26 March 2026.
(c) If relevant, Co-operative Implications, Human Resource Implications, IT implications, Property Implications, Procurement Implications and Environment and Health and Safety Implications: The report will be published on the Council's website.

2 Current Position

2.1 In line with the requirements of section 40A of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Government guidance the Biodiversity Duty Report has been prepared.

2.2 This report summarises progress on actions that have taken place since 1 January 2023 up until completion of this report (1 January 2026).

2.3 The Biodiversity Duty Report sets out Oldham Council's policies and objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham. This summarises the report that was approved by Cabinet in March 2025 - Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham[4]. The policies and objectives are to:

1. Protect and restore core areas of wildlife;
2. Promote nature recovery networks in areas of lower biodiversity;
3. Optimise the Green Infrastructure functionality of existing open spaces to encourage wildlife;
4. Promote multi-functional Green Infrastructure in allocated and potential development sites;
5. Encourage habitat creation and enhancement in the Green Belt;
6. Raise awareness and appreciation of biodiversity; and
7. Consider biodiversity in corporate plans and decisions.

2.4 The Biodiversity Duty Report also summarises other policies and objectives that influence what we do in Oldham in relation to biodiversity. This includes:

- the adopted policies in Places for Everyone (PfE);
- South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);
- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD;
- The Oldham Plan 'Pride, Progress, Partnership';
- The Corporate Plan 'Ready for the Future';
- Oldham Green New Deal Strategy;

[3] Reporting your biodiversity duty actions guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-your-biodiversity-duty-actions

[4] The Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife is available at: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8234/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%93_our_policies_and_objectives_for_thriving_wildlife_in_oldham

- Oldham Local Plan Review; and
- Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy

2.5 The Biodiversity Duty Report then provides a summary of progress against actions that are either fully completed or are underway by the Council or through working in partnership with other stakeholders. The actions were identified in Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham report (2025).

2.6 Many of these actions are completed, underway or are a continued action. Some key outputs between 2023 and 2025 are:

- Increased land designated for nature – 10.9 hectares of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) have been gained since 2023, with two new SBIs
- Habitat Management Plans for Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve and Crompton Fold Wood SBI have been commissioned so that the sites can then be actively managed
- The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA SPD was adopted with effect from 8 May 2025
- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD was adopted with effect from 8 May 2025
- Green Corridor designations have been reviewed for the Local Plan review
- Local Green Space designations are proposed in the Local Plan
- Input has been given to the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and the Council gave approval to being content for the LNRS to be published at Cabinet meeting on 16 June 2025 leading to the launch of the GM LNRS on 5 September 2025
- 1509 trees have been planted between 2023 and 2025
- Over 6 hectares of woodland creation at Crompton Moor, Holts Valley, Glodwick Lows and Bishops Park
- Six 'Leaky Dams' installed at Crompton Moor
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans have been prepared for eight Council countryside sites to support the sites possible function as habitat banks[5]
- Revised policies on biodiversity and green infrastructure and other policies that benefit biodiversity have been prepared for the Publication Local Plan
- Officer support has been given to advise and assist on Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan including policies to enhance biodiversity
- Biodiversity is being embedded into transport schemes and plans
- Volunteering opportunities are available related to nature recovery
- 'Biodiversity for Council's' training embedded into the Council's internal training platform
- Enhanced biodiversity secured through planning obligations and conditions

2.7 In addition, many of the actions form part of the Council's daily statutory planning functions which will be continuous in terms of considering biodiversity in planning decisions and influencing nature recovery as part of pre-application discussions.

2.8 The report includes details of BNG from approved Biodiversity Gain Plans. This is a Defra BNG Reporting template which GMEU have assisted in completing.

2.9 The Biodiversity Duty Report also lists future actions. This mostly includes continuing to carry out the actions already identified. This list does not exclude additional actions from being undertaken.

3 Options/Alternatives

[5] A Habitat Bank is an area of land where new habitats – like meadows, woodlands, hedgerows, and ponds – are strategically added and managed for the long term to help biodiversity flourish.

3.1 Option 1- To give approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report on the Council's website. The advantages of this option is that the Council will fulfil its legal duty set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. There are no disadvantages to this option.

3.2 Option 2 - To not give approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report on the Council's website. There are no advantages to this option. The Council will fail to meet the legal duty set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to publish a report during the time specified.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1- To give approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report on the Council's website. The advantages of this option is that the council will fulfil its legal duty set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. There are no disadvantages to this option.

5 Consultation

5.1 The Report has been inputted into by Countryside Services and Strategic Transport. The report will be available to view publicly.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the publication of the Biodiversity Duty Report.

(Mohammed Hussain)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Section 103 of the Environment Act 2021 inserted a new section 40A into the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requiring local planning authorities to publish biodiversity reports every 5 years. The biodiversity report must be published within 12 weeks of the end of the period covered by the report. (A Evans)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 None
(SKapoor – Commercial Procurement Unit)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 No



IAReport
Biodiversity Duty.pd

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 RBO-19-25

12 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

Name of File: Complying with the Biodiversity Duty: First Considerations Report[6]; and Complying with the Biodiversity Duty – Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham[7]
Records held in: Strategic Planning and Information
Officer Name: Georgina Brownridge
Contact Email: Georgina.brownridge@oldham.gov.uk

13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 - Oldham Council – Biodiversity Duty Report

13.2 Appendix 2 - Appendix 1 – Biodiversity Action Tracker

13.3 Appendix 3 – Appendix 2 – Medlock Valley Restoration Project

13.4 Appendix 4 – Appendix 3 – BNG Quantitative Data

[6] The First Considerations Report is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7821/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_first_considerations_report
[7] Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham report is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8234/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%93_our_policies_and_objectives_for_thriving_wildlife_in_oldham

Oldham Council’s Biodiversity Duty Report 2026



(Photo taken from Oldham GI Strategy by TEP: Landscape near Denshaw)

Oldham Council’s Biodiversity Duty Report 2026 1

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1. About Oldham Council

1.1 Oldham Council is one of ten local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) that make up the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), alongside the Mayor.

1.2 The GMCA work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region.

1.3 The ten councils have worked together voluntarily for many years on issues that affect everyone in the region, like transport, regeneration, and attracting investment.

1.4 Oldham attends the GM Nature Recovery Group which consists of planning and greenspace officers who work together on work relating to nature recovery such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). These are covered later within this report.

1.5 Within Oldham Council, there are many departments, who each play a crucial role in making Oldham a great place to live and work. including:

- Planning;
- Waste;
- Highways;
- Registrars;
- Parks; and
- Libraries.

1.6 Oldham is a co-operative council and over the years has made great strides in improving the town for its 227,000+ residents. A co-operative Council brings together residents, staff, and partners who work alongside each other to ensure the borough is a place people are proud of and want to live and work in.

1.7 Our management board provides senior leadership to the Council and implements the policies agreed upon by elected councillors. They then work with their teams to deliver the very best services for our residents.

1.8 The Cabinet is responsible for strategic decisions and recommends proposals on how the budget of the Council will be spent and how our workforce can continue to support and improve outcomes across the Borough. The Cabinet is made up of a Leader, and up to nine councillors appointed by the Leader, including a Deputy Leader.

1.9 The Cabinet is responsible for strategic decisions and recommends proposals for approval by full Council on the budget, Council Tax levels and the Council's policy framework.

1.10 All public authorities including Oldham Council have a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The biodiversity duty makes sure that biodiversity is embedded

into every part of council life – the services we deliver, policies, decisions, plans, programmes and projects. For example:

- In planning, officers will work to ensure that Biodiversity is considered as part of any development proposals. Planning policies can influence how biodiversity is protected and enhanced, how developments can incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity and how land is protected and used;
- Corporate policies, objectives and priorities could reflect local nature priorities.
- Biodiversity can be enhanced in school grounds;
- In countryside services land can be surveyed, management plans prepared, and land actively managed to achieve the objectives for the site;
- Communications can play a role in using social media to educate and raise awareness of biodiversity; and
- Libraries can help promote material for nature recovery – such as sharing consultation documents leaflets on grants for nature.

2. Purpose of Report

2.1 This report sets out Oldham Council's Biodiversity Duty Report setting out how our policies and objectives are being implemented.

2.2 The Environment Act 2021 introduced a strengthened 'biodiversity duty' into the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which requires all public authorities in England to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

2.3 Oldham Council as a public authority, must:

- Consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on our consideration.
- Act to deliver our policies and achieve our objectives.

2.4 There was a need to complete our first consideration of what action Oldham Council intends to take for biodiversity no later than 1 January 2024 – this report can be viewed here[1].

2.5 Following this initial consideration, Oldham Council needed to agree our policies and objectives as soon as possible after – this report was approved on 24 March 2025 and can be viewed here[2].

2.6 There is now a requirement to publish a report on how these policies and objectives have been implemented to date. The first reporting period is between 1 January 2023 and no later than 1 January 2026 and the Biodiversity Duty Report must be published by 26 March 2026.

2.7 Future Biodiversity Duty Reports will need to be published at least every five years thereon.

2.8 The Biodiversity Duty Report must explain:

- a summary of the action you've taken to comply with the biodiversity duty;
- how you plan to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period; and
- any other information you consider appropriate.

2.9 Reports from local planning authorities must also include the following biodiversity net gain (BNG) information:

- the actions you've carried out to meet BNG obligations;

[1] The First Considerations Report can be viewed at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7821/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_first_considerations_report

[2] Our policies and objectives for Thriving Wildlife can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8234/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%93_our_policies_and_objectives_for_thriving_wildlife_in_oldham

- details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans you've approved; and
- how you plan to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period.

2.10 Other information in government guidance on Reporting your biodiversity duty actions[3] is optional.

[3] Reporting your biodiversity duty actions guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reporting-your-biodiversity-duty-actions

3. The Importance of Biodiversity

3.1 Biodiversity refers to all the various kinds of living organisms within a given area, including plants, animals, fungi, and other living things.

3.2 All species are interconnected; they depend on one another. Forests provide homes for animals. Animals eat plants, which need healthy soil to grow. Fungi helps decompose organisms to fertilize the soil. Bees and other insects carry pollen from one plant to another, which enables the plants to reproduce. With less biodiversity, these connections weaken, and sometimes break, harming all the species in the ecosystem[4].

3.3 Biodiversity has a strong role to play in our lives and offers many benefits as outlined in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy[5] (LNRS).

The benefits for people:

- A green and healthy environment to grow up, get on and grow old.
- More recreation and leisure opportunities.
- Improved air quality and less noise pollution.
- Improved physical health, including better heart health and healthy lifestyles.
- Improved mental health, including reduced stress and mental health conditions.
- More resilience and adaptation to climate change, including flooding, droughts and extreme heat.
- Less water pollution and safer opportunities for water-based recreation.
- Greater connection to our natural and historic environment.
- Stronger communities, proud of where they live and work.
- Healthier soils, ensuring long term sustainability of food supplies.
- Opportunities for more green jobs and careers

The benefits for businesses:

- A more attractive place to work, visit and do business, encouraging local economic growth.
- Increased resilience through reduced risk of, and better adaptation to, environmental hazards.
- A healthier, happier and more productive workforce.
- Higher land and property values.
- Increased green jobs and skills.
- More visitors and sustainable tourism opportunities.

[4] National Geographic
[5] The Greater Manchester LNRS is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/our-plan-for-nature-recovery/what-does-our-plan-for-nature-cover/.

- More productive land for food security and other resources that can be grown locally.

The ecological benefits:

- Protection of rare and threatened species and habitats.
- Repaired natural cycles and natural processes.
- A greater abundance and diversity of wildlife and healthier ecosystems, reversing biodiversity decline.
- Capture and sequestration of carbon, helping tackle climate change.
- More resilience to future changes in climate.
- Greater resilience of species to pests and diseases.

3.4 Quite often when we talk about biodiversity, we talk about it alongside Green Infrastructure (GI) more generally.

3.5 GI is a network of green spaces and water environments that sustains the ecosystems we need for a decent quality of life. We refer to both GI and biodiversity within this report.

3.6 The Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham[6] report gave an outline of Oldham's biodiversity resource – our land designated for nature and notable species.

[6] The Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham report is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/8234/complying_with_the_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%93_our_policies_and_objectives_for_thriving_wildlife_in_oldham

4. Threats to Biodiversity

4.1 Our GI is vital to the quality of life of our residents, workers and visitors. Looking after our GI is part of our goal to become a carbon neutral borough, and plan for climate change.

4.2 Investing in our GI will deliver multiple benefits including environmental enhancements, improved public health and a contribution to Oldham's economy.

4.3 Although GI is extensive, we need to manage it more effectively to better respond to the needs of people and nature and ensure it is resilient to the changing climate.

4.4 The Greater Manchester State of Nature[7] report was compiled to highlight the urgent challenges faced by nature across the city-region, which was reflected in the declaration of a biodiversity emergency in GM in March 2022. The report covers trends in our wildlife, the use of land and pressures on nature, the wider benefits we receive from nature and people's access to nature and engagement with it.

4.5 Some of the headline findings from this report are:

- Echoing national trends, key species of birds and mammals in GM and the North West of England are declining. Individual bird species population show declines of up to 40% over the last 40 years and the abundance of once common mammals has dropped by between 20-40% since 1995.
- Our protected sites provide valuable refuges for nature but cover just 11% of GM and are highly fragmented rather than forming a connected network for nature. Although recovering at present they are not in as good as condition as they could be.
- 80% of our water bodies have been heavily modified by human activities. Currently none of our rivers are in good ecological condition and we are far from meeting national targets for 75% of our waterbodies to reach this status.
- Our tree canopy covers 16% of GM (in Oldham specifically, the tree canopy cover is 13.4% of the borough) and significant efforts are being made to increase the number of trees being planted across the city region. However, our existing woodlands could be much better managed for nature.

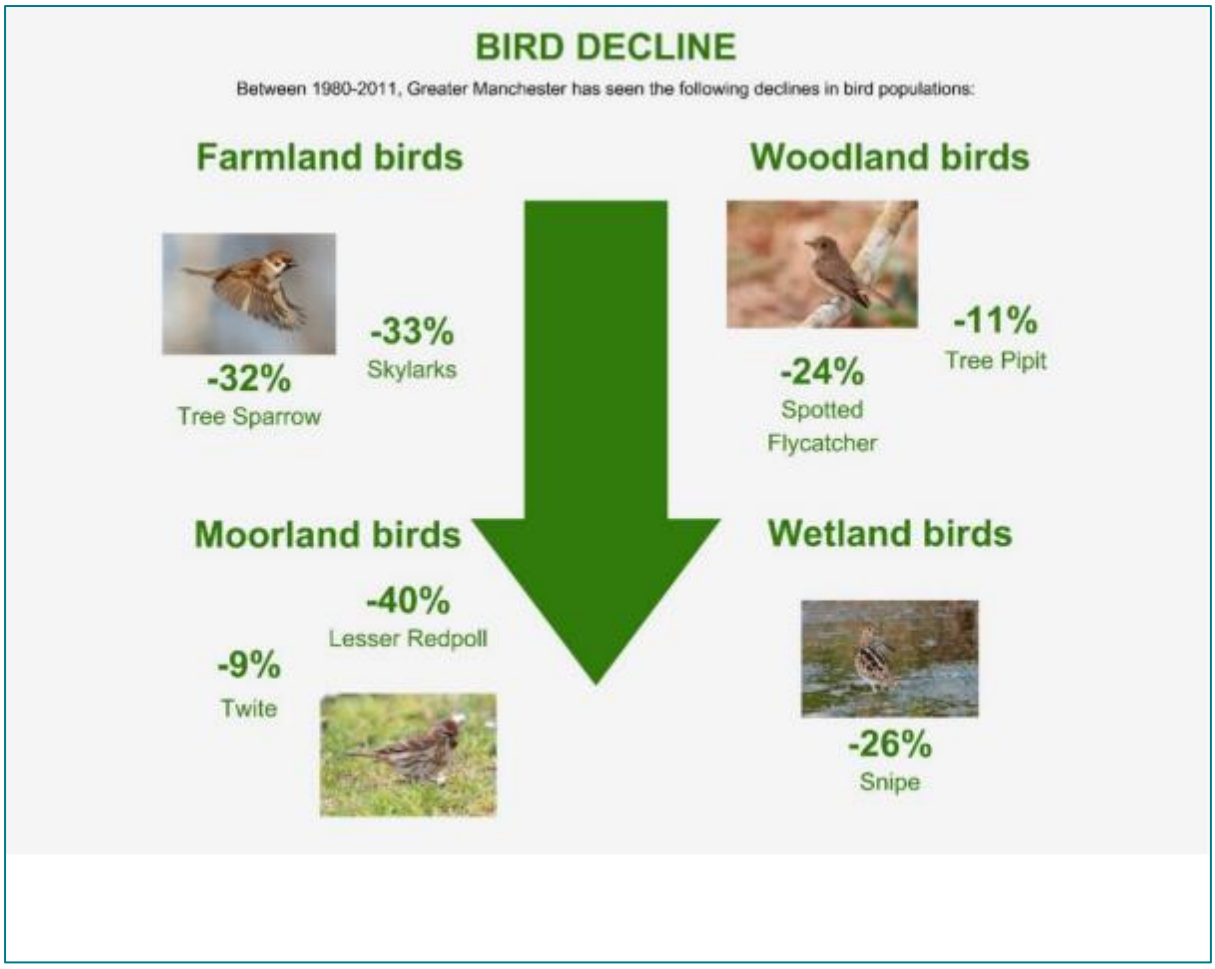
4.6 The report highlights trends for birds and mammals:

Our Birds

4.7 Bird populations are used to provide a good indication of the broad state of wildlife in the UK. Greater Manchester is home to many populations of birds. Mirroring national trends, we have seen some worrying declines in our bird populations.

[7] The State of Nature report is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9526/gm-state-of-nature-report.pdf

Figure 1: Bird Decline (Greater Manchester State of Nature Report)



Our mammals

4.8 The population trends for mammals are relatively poorly known in Greater Manchester and we are reliant on data for the whole of the North West. 25-year trends for the North West show us that we are losing once common species.

Figure 2: Mammal Decline (Greater Manchester State of Nature Report)



Returning Species:

4.9 However, there are signs that nature can recover, and there is evidence that the following species have been returning, which can give hope for future efforts:

- Otters – sights in districts across Greater Manchester;
- Fish and Mayfiles have returned to all sections of the River Medlock;
- Butterflies – Manchester Argus Butterfly (Large Heath Butterfly) has been reintroduced at Astley Moss;
- Birds – Nightjars returning around Chat Moss; and
- Bog plants – Sundew, Lesser Bladderwort, Bog Asphodel and White Beak Sedge all now thrive on lowland peatlands.

Pressures on Nature

4.10 Some of the pressures of biodiversity noted within the State of Nature report are:

- Pressures on land use - Land in GM is limited and is under increasing demand to meet a variety of needs. These needs include providing homes, commercial space, transport and utilities for the city-region; supporting energy generation, carbon sequestration (e.g., tree planting and peatland restoration) and climate adaptation (e.g., nature-based solutions); and food growing and recreation.
- Pressures on water and waterbodies - Water in GM is under pressure from a range of sources. Over 20% of the water in most GM rivers has been discharged from a Wastewater Treatment Works. For some rivers this is as high as 60 to 80%.
- Pathogens and diseases - As well as invasive plant species, microorganisms that cause disease pose a threat to wildlife and ecosystems. The most

significant of these currently affecting GM and the rest of the UK is ash dieback. Other diseases, like avian influenza, may emerge to pose threats to wildlife (in that instance, to birds). And climate change is likely to increase risk of the introduction and spread of pathogens.

- Climate change - Climate change has already impacted biodiversity in GM as species shift northwards. As temperatures increase, climate zones will move northwards at 5km per year by 2050 – equivalent to moving from the south to north of Greater Manchester in 8 years, a process which took 800 years at the end of the last ice age. Risk assessments for species in England show that more species are expected to increase their ranges rather than decrease. However, upland habitat species in the north and east of the city-region are particularly vulnerable to climate change due to northwards and upwards range contraction. Given the importance of uplands to water management and carbon storage, this may have knock on impacts. These effects will be exacerbated further by the projected increase in hazardous fire weather conditions in summer, meaning greater risk of wildfires in the uplands and extension of the wildfire season into late summer and early autumn.

5. Our Policies, objectives and actions

Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham

5.1 Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham report identifies seven objectives, listed below, which have been developed through considering the aims of the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which was draft at the time and the Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy[8].

5.2 To support thriving wildlife in Oldham we will:

1. Protect and restore core areas of wildlife;
2. Promote nature recovery networks in areas of lower biodiversity;
3. Optimise the Green Infrastructure functionality of existing open spaces to encourage wildlife;
4. Promote multi-functional Green Infrastructure in allocated and potential development sites;
5. Encourage habitat creation and enhancement in the Green Belt;
6. Raise awareness and appreciation of biodiversity; and
7. Consider biodiversity in corporate plans and decisions.

5.3 The objectives are then supported by associated actions, the progress on which is discussed later in this report.

Other policies and objectives

5.4 Below is a summary of other policies and objectives relating to the biodiversity duty. Some of these overlap with the actions we have completed or progressed.

Places for Everyone

5.5 Places for Everyone (PfE)[9] is a is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts and came into effect on March 21, 2024.

5.6 The plan determines the kind of development that takes place in the boroughs, maximising the use of brownfield land and urban spaces while protecting Green Belt land from the risk of unplanned development. It also protects important environmental assets across the city region.

5.7 Key policies relating to biodiversity include:

- **Policy JP-Strat13 Strategic Green Infrastructure** – identifies the green infrastructure assets (river valleys and waterways; lowland wetlands and

[8] Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy
[9] Places for Everyone is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/pfe-adoption/

mosslands; uplands and Trees and Woodlands) that will be protected and enhanced which the below policies provide more detail on.

- **Policy JP-G2 Green Infrastructure Network** – sets out that the protection, management and enhancement of green infrastructure will contribute to the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Development should contribute to improvements in Green Infrastructure and development which removes land from the Green Belt is required to deliver compensatory improvements to environmental quality and accessibility.
- **Policy JP-G3 River Valleys and Waterways** – sets out how rivers and waterways will be protected and improved through a number of priorities.
- **Policy JP-G4 Lowland Wetlands and Mosslands** - sets out how lowland wetlands and mosslands will be protected, enhanced and restored through a number of priorities.
- **Policy JP-G5 Uplands** – outlines that our uplands include significant areas of blanket bog priority habitat, Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), woodlands and habitats. The policy sets out what will be considered in making planning decisions and activities.
- **Policy JP-G6 Urban Green Space** – seeks to ensure there is an appropriate scale, type, quality and distribution of accessible urban green space.
- **Policy JP-G7 Trees and Woodland** – seeks to significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland and connect people to the trees and woodland around them.
- **Policy JP-G8 A New Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity –** sets out how a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought including through increasing the quantity, quality, extent and diversity of habitats; improving connections between habitats (including Nature Recovery Networks) and stepping stones; and developments achieving a net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.

  Development will be expected to:

  a. Follow the mitigation hierarchy of:

  i. Avoiding significant harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, through consideration of alternative sites with less harmful impacts, then
  ii. Adequately mitigating any harm to biodiversity, then
  iii. Adequately compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity

  b. Avoid fragmenting or severing connectivity between habitats;

  c. Achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%

d. Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to the development.

- **Policy JP-G9 The Green Belt** – identifies the Green Belt and seeks to enhance the green infrastructure functions within it.

5.8 Other PfE policies also relate to biodiversity such as site allocation policies and transport policies.

5.9 PfE has its own monitoring framework to assess whether the plan is being achieved or whether over time policies need to be updated. In relation to biodiversity the following indicators are monitored:

- Gross area of new habitat created from the application of biodiversity net gain;
- Number, area and condition of sites of biological importance (SBI's);
- Number of trees planted annually; and
- Number of hectares of green infrastructure (metric will consider publicly accessible GI where information is available).

5.10 For information on the indicators please see Oldham's latest Monitoring Report:

https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/263/oldhams_monitoring_report

Oldham Context

5.11 The Oldham Plan 'Pride, Progress, Partnership' (2024-2030)[10], prepared by the Oldham Partnership, sets the direction for the borough including "Green and Growing" and seeks to lead the way on green projects across the country.

5.12 The Council's Corporate Plan 'Ready for the Future' 2024-27[11] sets out the Council's priorities and works in parallel with The Oldham Plan. One of the three missions is "Green and Growing" which seeks to drive economic growth in relation to green technologies.

5.13 In June 2019, Oldham Council declared its ambition to be the UK's first Green New Deal Council. It subsequently declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019.

5.14 The Oldham Green New Deal Strategy was adopted by Oldham Council in March 2020. The Strategy's objective is to 'Future-proof the regeneration of the borough by establishing Oldham as an exemplar Green City on energy, carbon, water and green infrastructure'. Whilst this strategy has links to Green Infrastructure its focus is on carbon neutrality.

Oldham Local Plan Review

5.15 Oldham Council is also progressing work on a new Local Plan.

5.16 The Oldham Local Plan will guide development in the borough up to 2039. The main purposes of the Plan are to:

- Set out the policies through which the council will manage development coming forward and use to determine planning applications;
- Identify designations, such as those for the protection of the borough's environmental and historical assets, our town centres, and employment areas; and
- Facilitate the development of supporting infrastructure, such as transport, education and utilities.

5.17 The Oldham Local Plan will replace the current Local Plan (called the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD) and any saved

[10] The Oldham Plan is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201261/oldham_plan/3207/oldham_plan
[11] The Corporate Plan is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200146/strategies_plans_and_policies/2888/corporate_plan

planning policies from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006, aside from those already replaced through Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

5.18 The Oldham Local Plan will sit alongside PfE, as part of a suite of documents that form the development plan for the borough.

5.19 The purpose and role of the Oldham Local Plan is to provide more detailed local level 'development management' policies that support the strategic policies in PfE to ensure that together they reflect, and support delivery of, our priorities.

5.20 The Publication Plan is available to view here[12]. The Plan has been subject to a final consultation (Regulation 19) and will be submitted for independent examination later in 2026.

5.21 The Local Plan sets out policies to protect and enhance biodiversity. These policies include:

- **Policy OTC4 – Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre** – outlines opportunities to protect, create and enhance multi-functional Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, informed by the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- **Policy CC3 – Sustainable Drainage – Foul and Surface Water** – sets out requirements on foul and surface water management which encourages drainage strategies to be integrated with the landscape strategy and the four pillars of sustainable drainage which includes biodiversity.
- **Policy OL4 Local Green Spaces** – designates Local Green Spaces which are locally significant, which can be due to wildlife.
- **Policy N1- Protecting Nature** – sets out the biodiversity hierarchy which will be safeguarded.
- **Policy N2 Restoring Nature** – sets out how development can have regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and seeks to steer off-site BNG close to the development site. It states:

  Where relevant development has demonstrated, following application of the biodiversity gain hierarchy, all reasonable opportunities to achieve measurable Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% onsite have been exhausted, the following principles apply to the selection off-site areas:

  a. *Proximity to loss – there is an expectation that off-site areas will be located as close as possible to the development site, incentivised by the biodiversity metric's spatial risk multiplier, so that the area experiencing loss of biodiversity through the proposed development benefits from the compensation.*

[12] The Publication Plan is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review/3319/publication_plan

    b. *Best biodiversity value – offsite areas should be chosen in line with local priorities and actions for nature recovery, particularly those set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy.*
- **Policy N3 – Enhancing Green Infrastructure through development** – outlines how development can contribute towards green infrastructure using the Green Infrastructure Strategy and sets Urban Greening Factor targets.
- **Policy N4 Trees** – requires developments to show how trees have been retained and encourages contributing towards increasing the tree canopy cover, where possible. It sets out tree replacement requirements.

5.22 The Local Plan Review does not include site allocations. The plan does designate land however, such carrying forward existing Business Employment Areas.

5.23 The Council has, as part of its evidence base for the Local Plan, undertaken a review of land to determine whether it meets Local Green Space criteria, as set out in National Planning Policy Framework[13] (NPPF), which has considered whether land is rich in wildlife. Rich in wildlife was described as including:

- Presence of SBIs
- Presence of Priority Habitats (dataset from Natural England)
- Likely presence of important populations of protected species

5.24 Oldham Council has also assessed an existing 'Green Corridors and Links' designations (a designation to support the movement of wildlife) to check whether the Green Corridors and Links are still justified and can be carried forward into the new Local Plan.

5.25 The Local Green Space Assessment and Green Corridors and Links review is discussed in more detail later in this report.

5.26 The Local Plan is supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA) which incorporates the requirements of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), alongside Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The role of a SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives (including opportunities for net gain).

5.27 An IA has been undertaken and developed for each stage of the Local Plan review.

5.28 To assess the Local Plan a number of IA objectives are developed. In relation to biodiversity the main IA objectives are:

[13] NPPF is available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

- IA1.To protect, conserve and enhance a high quality multifunctional green infrastructure network, including biodiversity, priority species, habitats and geodiversity to become more ecologically connected; and
- IA13. To ensure communities, infrastructure and biodiversity are resilient to the effects of climate change

5.29 The IA process can result in amendments to the Local Plan which helps secure net gains in social, environmental and economic objectives, including those on biodiversity.

5.30 For example, the IA has resulted in:

- Policy OTC2: Protecting and Enhancing Oldham Town Centre Conservation Area being amended from 'appropriate greening' to 'appropriate multi-functional green infrastructure' to ensure many benefits are delivered from greening at Draft Plan stage;
- OTC4: Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre amended to refer to 'multi-functional' Green Infrastructure at Publication Plan stage; and
- Policy HE5 Canals was amended from referring to open space to green infrastructure at Draft Plan stage.

5.31 The IA also includes a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). A HRA has been prepared for each stage of the Local Plan to assess whether the Local Plan needs to be amended to avoid harm to European nature sites or needs to go forward for further, more detailed Assessment of impacts.

5.32 From the Screening process the following European sites have been screened in owing to proximity to Oldham or because there are pathways between Oldham and the designated sites:

- Manchester Mosses SAC (diffuse air pollution impacts),
- Rochdale Canal SAC (direct and indirect impacts),
- South Pennines Moors SAC/SPAs Parts 1 and 2 (direct and indirect impacts).

5.33 The Screening process identified the following sources as potentially likely to have a likely significant effect (LSE) on European designated Sites:

- direct habitat losses;
- increased habitat and species disturbance;
- increases in diffuse air pollution;
- increases in diffuse water pollution;
- increases in recreational pressures;
- disturbance to functionally linked land;
- visual and noise disturbance; and
- introduction of invasive plant species.

5.34 The appropriate assessment looks at the sources in more detail and identifies mitigation that is available:

- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint SPD;
- South Pennine Moors SAC/ SPA Joint SPD;
- Integrated Plan Policies N1, N2, N3, CC2, CC3 and LE3;
- Places for Everyone Policies including JP-G5 and JP-C8; and
- Project-level HRA for any development proposals which have the potential to cause foul and surface water discharges to water-sensitive designated sites.

5.35 Following consideration of the available mitigation it has been concluded that, providing the available mitigation is applied appropriately, the operation of the Publication Local Plan will not have any effects on the integrity of any European designated sites.

5.36 Therefore, the IA process has directly lead to protection and enhancement of biodiversity in relation to the preparation of the Local Plan.

Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy

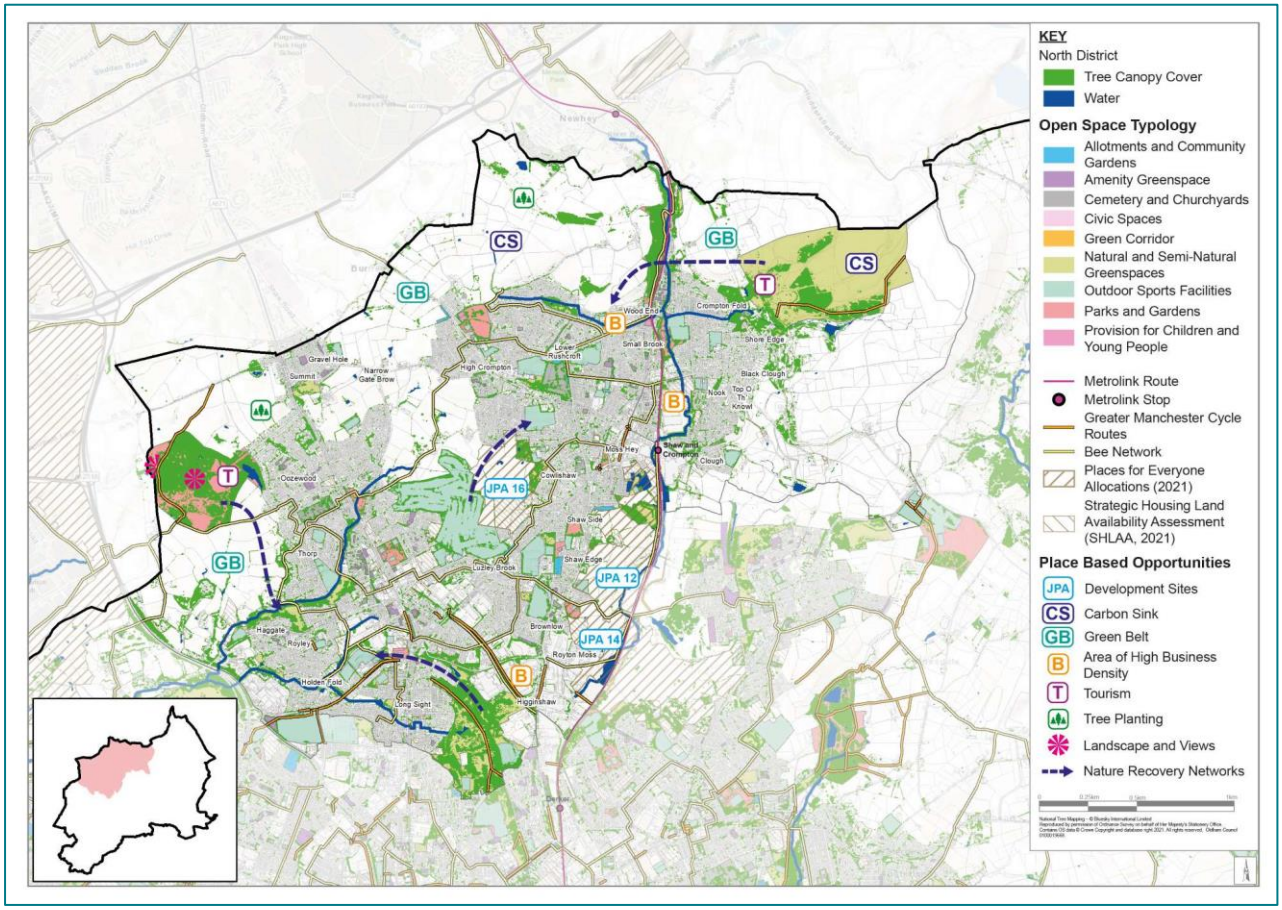
5.37 To support Local Plan evidence, Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy[14] was commissioned and published in 2022. The Oldham GI Strategy sets out a vision that:

"By 2037, Oldham will be a carbon neutral exemplar with a resilient, multifunctional Green Infrastructure network which brings multiple benefits to the natural and built environment and provides a solid foundation for the Council's response to climate change. Oldham will be a greener and healthier place to live, work and visit."

5.38 'Thriving wildlife' is one of the seven priority themes within the strategy. The strategy sets out opportunities for wildlife in each district across the borough. An example is provided below showing GI opportunities in North District.

[14] The Green Infrastructure Strategy is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2183/oldham_green_infrastructure_strategy

Map 1: Green Infrastructure Opportunities in North District



Protected site strategies (PSS) and Species conservation strategies

5.39 Protected Site Strategies (PSS) involves bringing together a variety of relevant stakeholders to look beyond site boundaries at the wider environmental issues that may be impacting protected sites.

5.40 Species Conservation Strategies is a new mechanism to safeguard the future of particular species at greatest risk. The strategies will find better ways to comply with existing legal obligations to protect species at risk and to improve their conservation status. It builds on the success of the district level licensing approach for great crested newts.

5.41 Natural England is in the early stages of considering a South Pennines Protected Site Strategy. Oldham Council will consider the implications of this and any other PSS or species conservation strategies that are prepared.

6. Actions completed

6.1 Actions were identified in Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham report and they broadly follow the same order as the report below.

6.2 Below is a summary of progress against actions that are either fully completed or are in progress either through Oldham Council working alone or working in partnership with other stakeholders.

Objective: To protect and restore areas of wildlife

Action: To increase the amount of land designated for nature:

6.3 The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) periodically surveys Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's) across Greater Manchester as part of a continuous process and notifies the Council when there are changes that need to be made to the designations.

6.4 There may be boundary or grade changes, new sites identified, or existing sites deleted.

6.5 Since January 2023 the following SBI changes have taken place in Oldham.

Table 1 Changes to Sites of Biological Importance in Oldham

Year (SBI notification received)	SBI amends
2023	None received
2024	Feb: Hull Brook net loss 0.6ha Ponds at Cowlishaw Farm gained 0.1ha Overall net loss 0.5ha October: Boardman's Edge – New SBI of 5.8ha Total: +5.3 ha (rounded up)
2025	Ladcastle Heath – New SBI of 4.9ha Armit Road Lodge net loss 0.3ha Medlock Headwater & Strinesdale net gain 0.4ha Moorgate Quarry net gain 0.1ha Total: +5.1ha

Table 2 Net changes in SBIs since 2023

Changes in SBI	Difference
Change in total SBI area for reporting years 2023-2025	+10.4 hectares
Change in total SBI area % for reporting years 2023-2025	+0.2%
Change in total number of SBIs	+ 2
Change in Total number of SBIs %	+5.2%

6.6 The information shows that there has been an increase in land designated for nature in Oldham.

6.7 Therefore, this action has been achieved for this Biodiversity Report.

6.8 There were no cost implications for this action.

Action: Bringing Local Wildlife Sites into active management for nature conservation and enhancement (LNRS has overall target of 50%)

6.9 This action has come from the Greater Manchester LNRS. It has been finalised to read: "*To bring 50% of sites designated for nature into active management for nature conservation by 2035."*

6.10 This revised action / target is what we will report on in future.

6.11 In implementing this action GMCA, GMEU, Natural England and the ten Greater Manchester districts have agreed what the definition of active management means so that the action can be implemented consistently and effectively. The definition is set out below:

Annex: "Site in Active Management" definition

An appropriate management plan, action plan or conservation maintenance programme has been produced AND

- *There is a proactive, on-going, regular schedule of activities taking place (not just one-off, reactive work e.g. repair work after a flood)*
- *The proactive work is being undertaken in line with the management/action plan or equivalent and is:*
- *Recent i.e. work has taken place within the last 12 months (depending on purpose and goals of activity)*
- *Specifically related to habitat or species conservation/restoration (not just general maintenance for amenity/aesthetic purposes)*
- *Progress against the management plan or action plan is regularly monitored and subject to review (at a minimum every 5 years).*

Examples of active management for wildlife could include:

- *Removal or treatment of Invasive, Non-Native Species (INNS) such Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, New Zealand Pygmy weed*
- *Activities undertaken to create, enhance or restore specific habitat types, such as:*
- *Hedgerows – e.g. hedge laying, coppicing, re-planting/filling gaps where necessary, routine trimming*
- *Woodland – planting new native species (where appropriate), coppicing, thinning/creating open areas, retaining dead wood on site*
- *Trees – new native tree planting (where appropriate), pollarding*
- *Grassland, meadows – planting native wildflowers (where appropriate), seasonal mowing/cutting, conservation grazing*
- *Ponds – creating new wildlife ponds (where appropriate), tree and scrub removal, sediment removal, managing surrounding vegetation*

Management Plan definition*

A Plan that has been produced for the purpose of managing land for nature conservation/habitat creation or restoration; goes beyond basic site maintenance or management for amenity/recreation. It would typically include sections outlining the purpose and aims of the management proposed for the site, a description of the site's location, ecological features such as broad habitat types and the current condition of the site. It should also include management goals (e.g. whether the site is being managed for a specific species or habitat), site-specific actions and an identified budget or funding source.

The Plan should have has been produced or updated within the last 5 years, or an older Plan has been reviewed and still considered appropriate.

6.12 The next stage is implementing the agreed definition. GMCA has allocated each Greater Manchester district with a grant of up to £7500 to fund between two to four conservation maintenance programmes, Habitat Management Plans or appropriate equivalent plans during 2025-2026.

6.13 Sites within council ownership have been prioritised as the Council is able to have more control over implementing plans.

6.14 Oldham Council commissioned City of Trees to prepare two Habitat Management Plans for:

- Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve (within council ownership); and
- Crompton Fold Wood SBI (96% within council ownership).

6.15 Site visits were undertaken in September to October 2025, and the final Habitat Management Plans were completed at the end of January 2026.

6.16 Following this the Council needs to consider how the Habitat Management Plans can be implemented and resourced.

6.17 Therefore, this action is underway for this Biodiversity Report, with good progress made.

Action: Prepare, adopt and implement South Pennines SAC / SPA Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

6.18 The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)[15] is applicable to three PfE Plan authorities - Oldham (not including the area covered by the Peak District National Park), Rochdale and Tameside and has been jointly by these three authorities.

6.19 The importance of the South Pennine Moors is reflected in a range of international, national and local habitat designations. It supports important breeding bird populations and is classified as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and two Special Protection Areas (SPA). The SPD relates to the:

- South Pennine Moors SAC;
- Peak District Moors SPA; and
- South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA.

6.20 Through the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) process in support of the PfE Plan new development within parts of these authorities was identified as having the potential to cause an adverse impact on the protected habitats and species on the South Pennine Moors areas listed above. To mitigate against this potential harm, PfE Plan Policy JP-G5: Uplands provides policy which will ensure that new development in these areas will not result in an adverse impact on the protected habitats and species.

6.21 The aim of this jointly produced SPD is to provide further guidance on how parts a and b of criterion 7 of PfE Policy JP-G5 will be implemented.

6.22 Policy JP-G5 parts 7a and 7b seek to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on protected habitats of the South Pennine Moors SAC, the Peak District Moors SPA and the South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA from urban edge effects (within 400m of the SAC and SPAs boundaries) or loss of and/or disturbance to functionally linked habitats (within 2.5km of the SAC and SPAs boundaries).

6.23 The aims of the SPD are to:

- Provide clear advice to developers as to what development may be considered an exception within the “Urban Edge Zone” (within 400m of the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPAs) where development would not normally be acceptable,

[15] The South Pennine Moors SPD is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/joint-supplementary-planning-documents/south-pennine-moors-spd/adoption/

unless as an exception, the development and/or its use would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC or SPAs.

- Provide clear advice to developers as to the type and scope of habitat survey, which applications for development within 2.5km of the South Pennine Moors should be accompanied by. It also details that where such a habitat survey has identified the potential for functional linked habitats to the SPA, further evidence, including species surveys, will need to be provided and avoidance or mitigation measures also provided.

6.24 Oldham Council worked with Tameside Council and Rochdale Council and GMCA, who co-ordinated the process to prepare, consult and finalise the SPD and its supporting documents in consultation with GMEU.

6.25 The SPD was adopted by the three Councils and came into effect on 8 May 2025.

6.26 The SPD is being used by development management when determining relevant planning applications and is being referenced within planning officer reports.

6.27 This action was funded (for Oldham's part) by the strategic planning budget for Local Plan work and has been achieved. Its implementation will continue, however.

Action: Prepare, adopt and implement Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD

6.28 The Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)[16] applies across the whole PfE Plan area and has, therefore, been prepared jointly by the nine PfE Plan authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan).

6.29 Through the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) process in support of the PfE Plan (and also the recently adopted Warrington Local Plan), the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and in particular Holcroft Moss, has been identified as being at risk of harm from increased air pollution caused by the cumulative impact of traffic resulting from development in the Warrington Borough Council (WBC) area and the PfE Plan area. To mitigate against this harm, there is a need for the delivery of long-term ecological resilience works, involving hydrological restoration measures to benefit Holcroft Moss. As Holcroft Moss lies within the area of WBC, it will administer the implementation of the mitigation works on behalf of it and the nine PfE authorities.

6.30 The aim of this jointly produced SPD is to provide guidance on, and to facilitate, the timely provision of required mitigation at Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses SAC. It provides further guidance on how criterion 17 (in particular) of Policy JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development of the PfE Plan will be implemented. Criterion 17 seeks to ensure new development does not have an adverse impact on the protected habitats and species of Holcroft Moss, which lies in Warrington, within the Manchester Mosses SAC. The SPD is applicable to all nine PfE Plan local authority areas (excluding that part of Oldham within the Peak District National Park).

6.31 The SPD sets out the national and local planning policy context before setting out the approach to be taken in seeking developer contributions to mitigate adverse impact(s) on the protected habitats and species of Holcroft Moss.

6.32 The need for, and amount of, financial contributions will be identified at the planning application stage. As set out in Policy JP-C8 of the PfE Plan, where planning applications are required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, they will need to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss, within the Manchester Mosses SAC. Any proposals that would result in increased traffic flows on the M62 past Holcroft Moss of more than 100 vehicles per day or 20 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) per day must devise a scheme-specific range of measures to reduce reliance on cars, reduce trip generation, promote ultra-low emission vehicles, and provide a contribution towards restoration measures at Holcroft Moss.

[16] The Holcroft Moss SPD is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/strategic-planning/places-for-everyone/joint-supplementary-planning-documents/holcroft-moss-planning-obligations-spd/adoption/

6.33 Financial contributions will be negotiated at planning application stage and will be secured through a planning obligation. The planning obligation will specify the amount of the contribution and when it will be paid. The SPD sets out how to calculate the amount of contribution required in each case.

6.34 Working with Natural England and WBC, the nine PfE authorities have established the scope and estimated cost of the mitigation works. The proposed level of contributions is set out in the statement of estimated project costs and required contributions, which is available alongside the SPD. In consultation with WBC, the PfE authorities will keep the mitigation scheme costs, the housing and employment land supply and the level of contributions received under review in calculating the proportionate contribution required from a qualifying development.

6.35 The nine PfE authorities and WBC have agreed that the cost of the mitigation works will be apportioned between the two plans. The apportionment will be based on the potential impact on Holcroft Moss identified in the respective Plan's HRA. On this basis the PfE authorities will be responsible for 53% of the total costs and WBC will be responsible for 47% of the total costs.

6.36 The financial contribution(s) secured via this mechanism will enable the nine PfE Plan authorities, in conjunction with WBC, to fund mitigation works to address air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss from relevant development.

6.37 Each of the nine PfE Plan authorities will monitor progress of individual developments to which this SPD applies. WBC will monitor the implementation of the mitigation scheme, which will be funded by money secured by planning obligations in accordance with this SPD and transferred to WBC as necessary. Regular reporting will be provided by WBC to the nine PfE Plan authorities. The outcome of this monitoring will be included in authority monitoring report(s) as necessary.

6.38 This action was funded (for Oldham's part) by the strategic planning budget for Local Plan work and has been achieved. Its implementation will continue, however.

Action: Application of mitigation hierarchy in planning decisions and planning policy

6.39 This action is a day-to-day task that officers apply to all planning decisions, where relevant. It is therefore difficult to report on but ecology comments within planning officer reports should outline any impacts and if required mitigation / compensation.

6.40 Spatial constraints are included within GIS embedded into Uniform (development management's software for processing planning applications). This includes Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) core areas of biodiversity, nature designations, South Pennines SAC/SPA 400m and 2.5 km buffers (described above) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact zones.

6.41 The following two policies are proposed in the Oldham Local Plan – Publication Plan which relate to this action.

6.42 **Policy N1 Protecting Nature** outlines the hierarchy for designated sites which is to be safeguarded in line with national policy. The hierarchy proposed is:

1. Internationally designated sites including the Peak District Moors SPA; South Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) and South Pennine Moors Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the Rochdale Canal SAC;
2. Nationally designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) at Dark Peak, South Pennine Moors, Ladcastle and Den Quarries, Lowside Brickworks, Rochdale Canal and Standedge Road Cutting;
3. Irreplaceable habitat including ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees and blanket bog;
4. Locally designated sites including Sites of Biological Importance (SBI's), Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) and Local Nature Reserves;
5. Sites that are not designated for nature but contain substantive nature conservation value of local significance including priority habitats and species and other protected species, such as peat which is capable of restoration to support notable habitats, green corridors and recreational routes.

6.43 Development must avoid harm relevant to the hierarchy. An ecological assessment will be required as part of the planning application where a site contains, adjoins or may impact on a site which contains nature as described in the above hierarchy.

6.44 **Policy N2 Restoring Nature** sets out how development can help implement the LNRS (described later in this report). However, it also outlines that core areas of biodiversity will be safeguarded and development will avoid harm.

6.45 In preparing these policies formal consultation has taken place on the Draft Plan in 2024, and the Council has also since informally liaised with Natural England, GMEU and GMCA.

6.46 The revised Local Plan will need to be adopted after examination. The consideration of the biodiversity hierarchy will be a continuous process.

6.47 This action is covered by existing budgets for strategic planning and development management.

Action: Review of Green Corridors and Links designation as part of the Local Plan review to ensure the designation supports nature networks

6.48 Oldham Council has undertaken a review of Green Corridors and Links[17], which is a designation for wildlife corridors. The Unitary Development Plan (2006), a previous local plan, paragraph 11.73 states:

6.49 Green Corridor and Links are a special feature of the Borough, thanks mainly to its river valleys, canals and features such as Oldham Edge, and are valuable both for wildlife and recreation. By linking together habitats they help to support a richer diversity of species than would exist in isolated natural areas and, because of their proximity to major residential areas, they allow local people a break from the pressures of urban living.

6.50 Paragraph 11.814 adds that 'some are identified solely because they assist the movements of wildlife, for example the existing railway lines, while others assist the movement of both people and wildlife'.

6.51 Therefore, Green Corridor and Links served a wildlife role primarily and, in some cases, also a recreational role.

6.52 The Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD[18] (the existing local plan, adopted in November 2011, in addition to PfE) carried these designations forward from the UDP.

6.53 The Green Corridors and Links review, which has been carried out to inform the Oldham Local Plan, seeks to assess whether the Green Corridor and Links are still justified.

6.54 The review has used the final Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)[19] to determine whether the Green Corridor and Links are still considered to be important for connecting areas of biodiversity.

6.55 The LNRS sets out a vision for nature recovery in Greater Manchester and priorities, targets and actions for different habitats and species. Actions that are not mapped are applicable for consideration across the borough wherever they are relevant.

6.56 Maps of a Greater Manchester Nature Network have been developed and are made up of:

[17] The Green Corridors and Links Review is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/2486/green_corridors_and_links_review
[18] The Core Strategy is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/978/joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies_development_plan_documents_dpds
[19] The GM LNRS is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/our-plan-for-nature-recovery/

- Core local nature sites - existing valuable areas for nature which include our nature designations; and
- Opportunity Areas - opportunity areas where action should be focused across the city-region.

6.57 Oldham Council has not determined that the full Greater Manchester LNRS mapped areas are a 'Green Corridor and Link' as this would make the whole of the nature network a development constraint which it was not intended to be. Instead, the review considers whether the existing Green Corridor and Link designations are still justified, informed by whether they fall within the nature network.

6.58 Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies place-based opportunities including Nature Recovery Networks. As part of the Green Corridor and Links review, regard has been had to the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

6.59 The Council has also prepared a Local Green Space Assessment[20] which in some places overlaps with Green Corridor and Links.

6.60 The Green Corridor and Links review has noted where land is being proposed as a Local Green Space due to its wildlife significance informed by the Local Green Space Assessment.

6.61 Boundary amendments have been proposed to reflect the LNRS nature network better either by removing land where there does not appear to be evidence that land would help join up the nature network or by adding land in to reflect areas of the nature network adjoining the existing Green Corridor and Link.

6.62 In some cases, the Green Corridor and Link designation has been amended to reflect changes in land use such as development, including a new linear park, that has taken place at Foxdenton.

6.63 Below is a summary of the proposed changes which are covered in more detail within the assessment.

Table 3: Summary of review of Green Corridors and Links designation

Green Corridor and Link	Designation being taken forward	Boundary changes
Alexandra Park	Yes	No
Ashton Road / Simkin Way	No	N/A
Cemetery rear of Hibbert Crescent, Failsworth	No	N/A
Cemetery / Cricket Ground south of Duchess Street	No	N/A
Chadderton Cemetery	Yes	No

[20] The Local Green Space Assessment is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7043/local_green_space_assessment

Chew Valley Road to Halls Way, Greenfield	Yes	No
Clayton Playing Fields, Broadway	No	N/A
Egerton Street to Shaw Road (Oldham Edge)	Yes	Yes
Foxdenton Hall Park	Yes	Yes
High Crompton Park, Rushcroft Road	No	No
Hill End Road to Gatehead Croft, Delph	Yes	No
Lees New Road to Greenacres Road (1)	Yes	Yes
Lees New Road to Greenacres Road (2)	Yes	No
Lees New Road to Greenacres Road (3)	No	N/A
Long Clough Broadway, Royton	No	N/A
Lydgate Tunnel / Rear Oaklands Park, Grasscroft (1)	Yes	Yes
Lydgate Tunnel / Rear of Oaklands Park, Grasscroft (2)	Yes	Yes
Manchester Road Greenfield to Ryefields Drive, Uppermill	Yes	Yes
Mill Lane / Thorp Road, Royton	Yes	Yes
Northdowns / Rochdale Road, High Crompton	No	N/A
Oaklands Road	Yes	Yes
Railway – Morton Street, Hardman Lane, Failsworth	Yes	Yes
Rear of Broadbent Road / Whetstone Hill Lane (up to here)	No	N/A
Rear of Somerset Road, Failsworth	No	N/A
River Tame from Delph New Road to Mow Halls Lane	Yes	No
Rear of Elk Mill	Yes	Yes
Spurn Lane, Diggle	Yes	No
Stock Lane	No	N/A
Stonebreaks Road, Coopper Street	Yes	Yes

Sholver Lane	Yes	Yes
Wall Hill Road, Dobcross	Yes	No
Wall Hill Road / Hudsteads, Dobcross	No	N/A
Wrigley Head, Failsworth	No	N/A
Wrigley Head, Failsworth (1)	Yes	Yes

6.64 Although this exercise will involve the de-designation of some wildlife corridors having up to date evidence means the Council can justify the safeguarding of Green Corridors and Links where they have an important role to play in nature recovery. In addition, in many cases, where land is not being continued as a Green Corridor and Link it will continue to be protected as open space, where applicable and in one case a Site of Biological Importance.

6.65 This action has been achieved and had no cost implications to the Council.

Action: Designate Local Green Spaces, including where they are important for wildlife

6.66 A Local Green Space Assessment[21] has been published as part of the evidence supporting the Local Plan Review.

6.67 There are 19 existing designated Other Protected Open Land (OPOL) sites allocated in the Core Strategy.

6.68 There is no reference to OPOL in NPPF, however it does set out an approach for Local Green Space (LGS) designation, which the Council considers is similar in its function and purpose as OPOL. LGS is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance. A LGS can only be designated through a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. To align with NPPF it is proposed that all OPOL sites are de-designated (deleted) and designated as LGS where it has met the NPPF and its supporting guidance.

6.69 NPPF states the designation should only be used:

- Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- Where the green space is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.
- Where the green space concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

6.70 The following LGS are proposed to be designated by the Publication Plan:

- LGS 1 Royley Clough
- LGS 2 Ferney Field Road
- LGS 3 Foxdenton Hall Park
- LGS 4 Crossley Bridge Playing Field
- LGS 5 Moston Brook and Hole Bottom Clough
- LGS 6 Simkin Way
- LGS 7 Oldham Edge
- LGS 8 Land at Greenacres
- LGS 9 Thornley Brook
- LGS 10 Stonebreaks
- LGS 11 Dacres Hall
- LGS 12 Wall Hill
- LGS 13 Ryefields Drive

[21] The Local Green Space Assessment is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7043/local_green_space_assessment

- LGS 14 Stoneswood
- LGS 15 Ainley Wood
- LGS 16 Land at Summershades Lane
- LGS 17 Rear of Elk Mill / Cotswold Drive
- LGS 18 Sholver (Land between Pearly Bank and Longfellow Crescent)

6.71 LGS 18 is a new LGS which was suggested by the local community in Sholver.

6.72 The LGS assessment was covered by strategic planning budget and upon adoption as part of the Local Plan Review the action will be complete.

Objective: To promote nature recovery networks in areas of lower biodiversity and optimise the GI functionality of existing open spaces to encourage wildlife.

Actions: To support preparation of the LNRS; and to have regard to the LNRS in planning decisions and land management.

6.73 The Environment Act 2021 introduced the requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) to cover the whole of England, to set out where and how efforts should be focused locally to contribute to halting and reversing the decline in biodiversity.

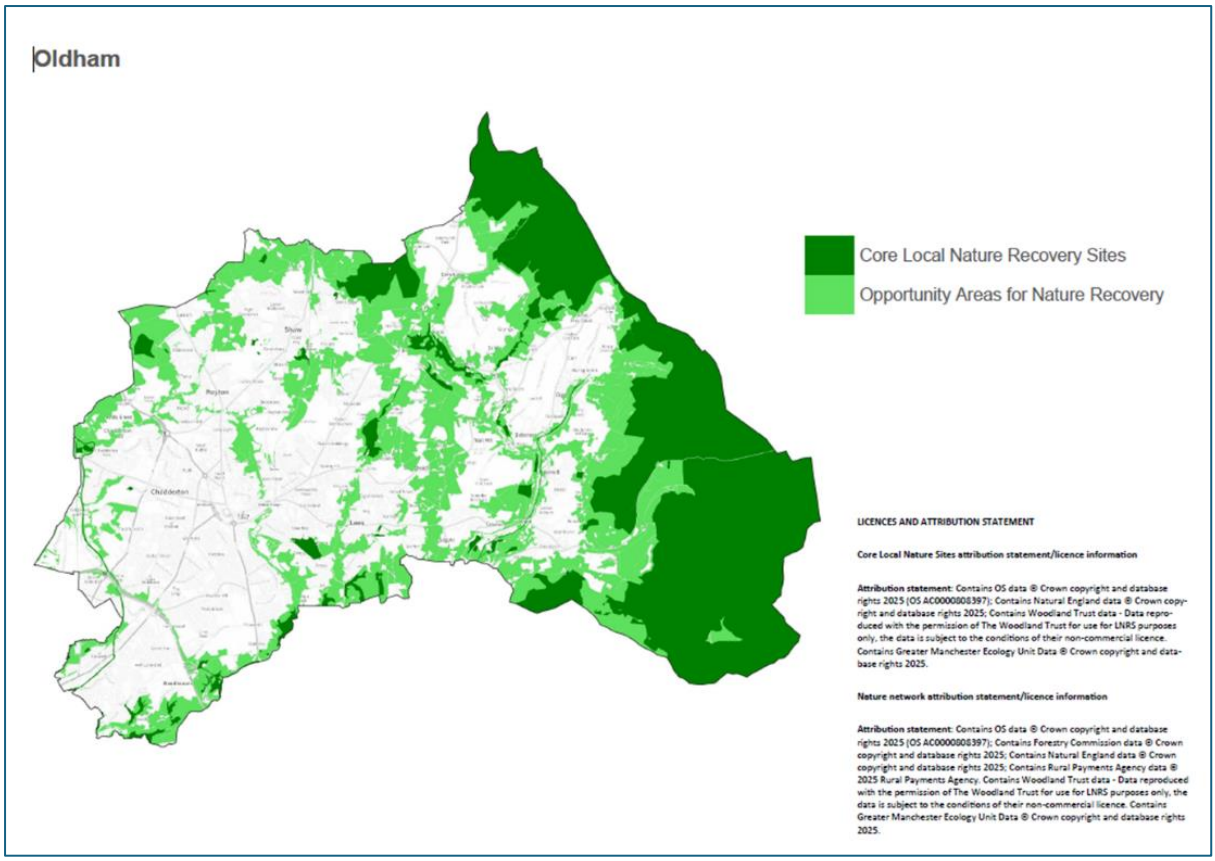
6.74 The Greater Manchester LNRS[22] is an opportunity to set out a long-term vision for a greener city region, where nature is returning, and more people have better access to greenspace.

6.75 The strategy covers the following:

- A shared vision for nature recovery in Greater Manchester
- Shared priorities and targets for nature recovery
- Actions we can all work towards to help deliver them
- Maps of a Greater Manchester Nature Network made up of:
    - Core local nature sites - existing valuable areas for nature
    - Nature Recovery Opportunity Areas - opportunity areas where action should be focused across the city-region

[22] The GM LNRS can be found at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/our-plan-for-nature-recovery/

Map 2: Oldham's Nature Network



6.76 Across the borough of Oldham the LNRS sets out opportunities for:

- Woodlands, Trees, Scrub and Hedgerow;
- Grasslands, Farmland and Lowland Heath;
- River, Canal and Waterbodies;
- Lowland, Wetland and Mossland; and
- Upland Moorland.

6.77 The map of core local nature sites (areas of particular importance for biodiversity) sets out Greater Manchester's existing wildlife sites, including those designated and protected at an international, national and local level, as well as irreplaceable habitats. What to include in this map is prescribed by Defra through statutory guidance and termed "areas of particular importance for biodiversity."

6.78 The nature recovery opportunity area map (areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity) sets out how our core local nature sites can be joined up to create a Nature Network. These are areas where actions to enhance, restore or create different types of habitats (i.e. woodlands, grasslands, moorlands,

waterbodies and wetlands) would expand and better connect our core local nature sites (our “areas which could become of particular importance for biodiversity”).

6.79 What to include in the nature recovery opportunity area map is not prescribed in legislation or statutory guidance: GMCA has taken the following approach, building on previous work by the GMEU and local authorities, comprising three stages:

1. Ecological mapping – used connectivity modelling to map a nature network of how best to join up core local nature sites.
2. Refinement with local views and knowledge – local authorities and other stakeholders inputted to refine the map based on local knowledge.
3. Mapping measures on the nature network map – based on suitable land cover type and any constraints on the site.

6.80 This results in a final map, setting out the priority areas within which to focus action to create a joined-up Nature Network across Greater Manchester. They are spaces that are often used and managed in a range of different ways and for different purposes (e.g. for food production or recreation). These areas are not designated or protected, nor are they barriers to development. Development within these opportunity areas (or where it could have an impact on these areas) should seek to support and deliver on the priorities set out for these areas and help to work towards the wider ambitions of the Nature Network alongside other ambitions.

6.81 The Nature Network does not preclude action elsewhere across the city-region – the strategy sets out the reasons, priorities and actions to support nature and access to it across the city-region.

6.82 In terms of how we have worked and interacted together GMCA has engaged with stakeholders from across the city-region to develop the Greater Manchester plan for nature, supported by the GMEU, Natural England, the ten GM local authorities (Oldham and the other 9 GM LAs were ‘supporting authorities’), the Peak District National Park, and a steering group of partners, including:

- Canals and Rivers Trust
- Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- City of Trees
- Forestry Commission
- Groundwork Greater Manchester
- Irwell Catchment Partnership
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- National Farmers Union
- National Trust
- NHS Greater Manchester
- Royal Horticultural Society
- Southway Housing
- Environment Agency

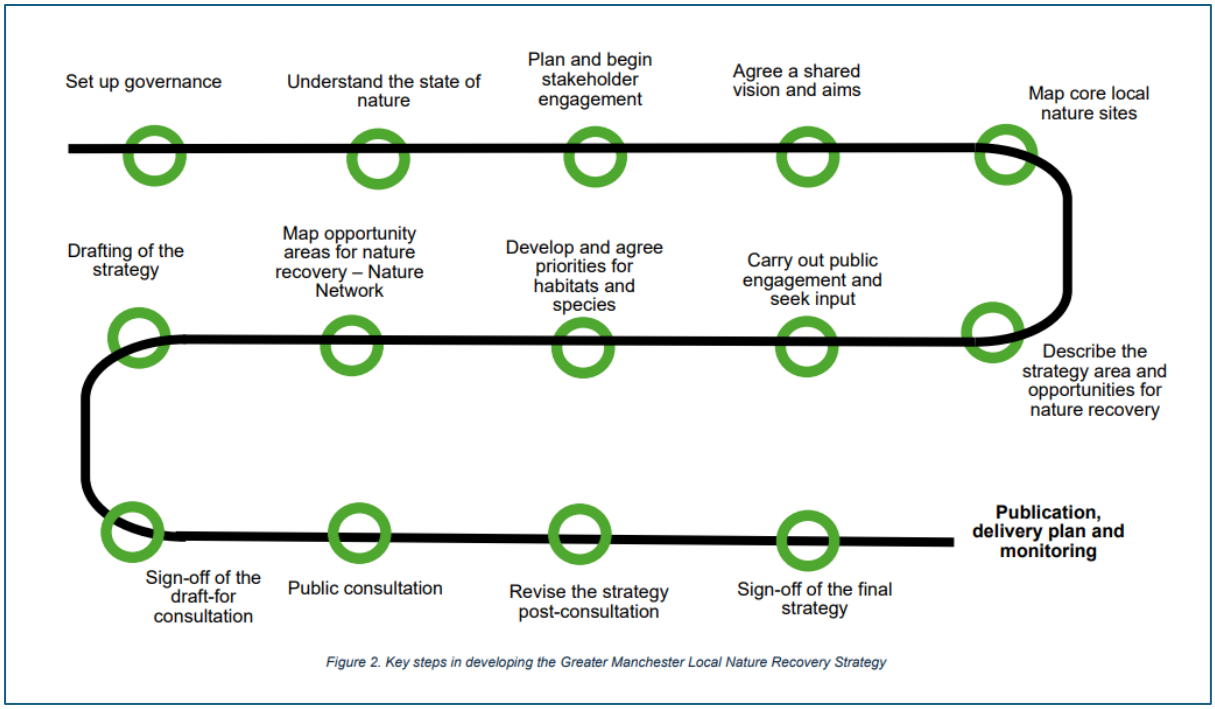
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- United Utilities
- University of Manchester
- Upper Mersey Catchment Partnership

8.83 GMCA:

- setup a local authority officer group, with representatives of all 10 local authorities. This group met regularly and were updated and consulted on key points of the strategy as it progressed. In Oldham there was one main point of contact with further officers across the Council consulted internally to input with different service perspectives;
- held six individual habitat workshops where the local authorities and other partner organisations on our Steering Group could provide feedback on key habitat priorities being developed for the strategy;
- conducted a survey allowing members of the Officer group and Steering Group to provide further feedback on the draft priorities and actions; and
- conducted a series of workshops focused on the opportunity maps, where members of the Officer Group were invited to contribute. Oldham Council officers have suggested additions (such as proposed Local Green Spaces, countryside sites and Northern Roots). Only one deletion has been requested to the core map to reflect a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) that was deleted in 2018 at Royton Moss. Officers have also reviewed and fed back comments on the LNRS strategy, which GMCA considered.

8.84 The image below shows the process map that GMCA followed and within this there were deadlines for feeding back at each stage and officer workshops providing opportunity for each district to engage and feedback on our plan for nature recovery and to contribute local priorities.

Figure 3: LNRS Process Map



8.85 Oldham Council agreed that they are content for the LNRS to be published at Cabinet meeting on 16 June 2025. Each GM district also went through their own decision-making process to confirm the same. GMCA launched publication of the GM LNRS on 5 September 2025.

8.86 The action to support preparation of the LNRS has been completed. There were no cost implications to Oldham Council.

8.87 In terms of having regard to the LNRS in planning decisions and land management the maps from the LNRS have been embedded into uniform, development management's systems for processing planning applications, so that regard can be had to the LNRS.

8.88 The LNRS is also to be viewed as being of 'strategic significance' in the BNG metric. A guidance note[23] has been prepared by GMCA outlining this.

8.89 A LNRS training workshop was held for local authority officers during February 2026.

[23] The BNG Strategic Significance and the LNRS guidance note is available at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/biodiversity-net-gain/biodiversity-net-gain-in-greater-manchester/

8.90 Strategic Planning have been noting opportunities to enhance nature using the LNRS as part of pre-application / planning application / masterplan comments.

8.91 Many of the actions within the LNRS are covered by this report e.g. increase the amount of land designated for nature.

8.92 The management plans for Oldham Council countryside sites will help implement the LNRS. The council is aligning management of land within Oldham with the LNRS.

8.93 The action to have regard to the LNRS is underway and is continuous. Implementing the LNRS will be done through a variety of funding streams. However, having regard to the LNRS in planning decisions has no cost implications.

Action: To expand our tree canopy cover from 13.4% to 15% within a generation and support the LNRS tree canopy cover within the LNRS for GM.

8.94 Oldham Council will work towards this objective and also contribute to the GM LNRS target of expanding the GM tree canopy cover from 15% to 17% of the city region by 2035.

8.95 The GM baseline for tree canopy cover as stated in the LNRS is 15%. The GM LNRS states this will be monitored annually. As the LNRS was only published in September 2025 there is no update on this baseline yet.

8.96 In 1990 Oldham's overall tree cover was around 5%, and with major tree planting and woodland creation projects throughout the 1990's and early 2000's This figure increased to 11.9% by 2017 when it was measured and surveyed again using the i-trees model. Since 2017 between 300 and 1000 standard trees have been planted each year as well as between 2 and 4 hectares of new woodland created annually.

8.97 The Oldham Green Infrastructure Strategy provided an updated position on Oldham's tree canopy as at 2022 which was 13.4%. An initial target of 15% has been set but a longer-term target would move towards 20%. Although in some parts of the borough such as the elevated areas of Saddleworth and Shaw the same levels of tree canopy cover will be difficult to achieve due to the presence of peatland habitat which should take priority. Large areas of tree planting may not be suitable within these areas.

8.98 Alongside Oldham Council's partners and groups the Council has since 2022 partnered with the conveyancing team at Pearsons' solicitors on the Future Roots project, where the Council supplies a new tree for every house in Oldham upon which the conveyancing is completed. Any trees that are not required by the new homeowners are pooled together and planted out on Oldham's public open space to create new copses and woodland. On average there are approximately 20 to 30 trees a month supplied for homeowner's new gardens and a further 30 to 40 trees each quarter to be planted out on Oldham's public open space.

Action: Explore and support offsite BNG / Habitat Banks within Oldham

8.99 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory on 12 February 2024 for major developments and 2 April 2024 for minor developments. Most developments are expected to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%. Where possible, this net gain should be provided within a development site, but there will be situations where this is not possible, and so a developer will need to look at options for off-site which may involve purchasing BNG credits for off-site delivery of appropriate habitat improvements.

8.100 Considering the desire to retain BNG within Oldham, the Council commissioned Greater Manchester Environment Fund (GMEF) to prepare Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMPs) for the following eight countryside sites within Oldham Council ownership:

1. Bank Top;
2. Calf Lane;
3. Constantine Street;
4. Crompton Moor;
5. Daisy Nook;
6. Friezland;
7. Oldham Edge; and
8. Tandle Hills.

8.101 The work carried out by GMEF consisted of:

- Baseline Habitat Surveys - UK Habitat Classification (UKHAB) surveys to establish habitat type and condition;
- Baseline Unit Assessment - Metric 4 baseline unit assessment pre-intervention;
- Development of the Management Plan – this involved meeting with the council's wider countryside team to discuss and agree target habitat via BNG agreements;
- Unit Uplift Assessment - Completion of metric 4 post intervention; and
- Costed Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

8.102 The HMMPs show the planned activities for each site.

8.103 These were completed in summer 2024 and were funded by a BNG grant.

8.104 As part of exploring how Oldham Council can use its own land for BNG, Oldham Council has been engaging with GMCA on an Off-Site Responsible Body Service.

8.105 GMCA are proposing to establish an Off-Site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Responsible Body Service for the Greater Manchester local authorities. The service is designed to help the GM local authorities meet the Environment Act 2021

requirement for a 10% biodiversity uplift in new developments, particularly when this cannot be achieved on-site.

8.106 The new Responsible Body status will enable GMCA to enter Conservation Covenants with all GM local authorities, facilitating the registration of habitat banks and the sale of BNG units locally, raising revenue for the local authority. The service will operate on a cost-neutral basis, funded through administrative fees and a subscription model.

8.107 The Responsible Body Service has been designed in conjunction with GMEU, with support from the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities.

8.108 There are three main aspects to the service – validation, verification and auditing –which require different activities to be carried out. These activities require different expertise – including legal and ecological input – under the oversight of GMCA as the Responsible Body.

8.109 The management of the Responsible Body Service will be included in GMCA's Environment Directorate, with a dedicated GMCA Project Manager post (part time) to be in place to meet demand, particularly the validation and verification stages. GMCA will commission GMEU to deliver key aspects of the service over the required 30-year duration of the Conversation Covenant.

8.110 More information on the service is available here[24].

8.111 Once the Responsible Body service has been fully established, and potential sites have been assessed in detail, Oldham Council will be able to register land on Natural England's biodiversity gain site register. The Council will then be able to sell biodiversity units for off-site BNG schemes. Not only will this contribute to wider nature recovery objectives in establishing new and enhanced habitats, it will also support a local habitat bank market. This will help to encourage any new habitat required through development taking place in Oldham's planning boundary to be replaced within the borough.

8.112 This work is still ongoing and there would be some cost implications. A separate report for approval would be sought.

[24] Further details of the Responsible Body Service is available at https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/documents/s41394/10A%20Off-Site%20BNG%20Responsible%20Body%20Service%20-%20Final.pdf

Action: Explore and support offsite BNG / Habitat Banks within Oldham

Entering into legal agreements with landowners to secure land for BNG

8.113 In addition to the work on off-site BNG on Council owned land to create Habitat Banks (explained above), GMCA has published off site BNG guidance[25] to help assist landowners who want to legally secure and register a site as a habitat bank. Securing a Section 106 with a local authority is one of the ways for third parties to legally secure their sites for off-site BNG.

8.114 This would allow landowners then to enhance the biodiversity value of the land for a fee which a developer(s) would pay for to meet their BNG requirements or to meet the landowner's own BNG requirements from a development site elsewhere.

8.115 The guidance sets out the process for verifying and auditing habitat banks that come forward for S106 agreements in Greater Manchester, detailing the roles the Local Planning Authority and GMEU (or in-house ecologists) will play to ensure successful delivery of offsite BNG. Its purpose is to provide consistent guidance to be used in the absence of any district specific guidance which may be available.

8.116 The Council would be able to charge for this service.

8.117 The Council has not yet signed any Section 106 with a third party to legally secure the landowners site for off-site BNG but would positively enter discussions as opportunities arise.

Supporting other Habitats Banks within Oldham

8.118 In addition to the above, other habitat banks may be established within Oldham that have used the service of a Responsible Body elsewhere to legally secure the land.

8.119 The Council will have minimal involvement in the establishment of habitat banks in this case but will be required to register the habitat banks with Land Charges, as was the case with the below two habitat banks.

Shaw Habitat Bank:

- National Character Area (NCA): Southern Pennines
- Biodiversity gain sites register number: BGS-130325001

8.120 Biodiversity Units available to buy:

[25] The council has provided a link to the off-site BNG guidance available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200399/applying_for_planning_permission/3300/biodiversity_net_gain

- Very high distinctiveness habitats: Lowland meadows
- High distinctiveness habitats: Ponds (priority habitat)
- Medium distinctiveness habitats: Rural trees and Other neutral grassland

8.121 The Habitat Bank sits beside the Crompton Moor Site of Biological Importance (SBI) – providing a valuable opportunity to connect habitats across the area.

Newhey Habitat Bank:

8.122 This habitat Bank mostly falls within Rochdale, with a smaller proportion in Oldham.

- National Character Area (NCA): Southern Pennines
- Biodiversity gain sites register number: BGS-130325001

8.123 Biodiversity Units available to buy:

- Very high distinctiveness habitats: Lowland meadows and Fens (upland and lowland)
- High distinctiveness habitats: Ponds (priority habitat):
- Medium distinctiveness habitats: Rural trees; Mixed scrub; Upland acid grassland; and Other neutral grassland

8.124 The Newhey Habitat Bank is just beside the Crompton Moor Site of Biological Importance (SBI), a designated site that will benefit from connectivity to our Habitat Bank.

Action: Implement the GI Strategy and open space audit through Local Plan review Policies

8.125 The Local Plan review is underway and consultation on the Publication Local Plan[26] took place between 4 February 2026 and 20 March 2026.

8.126 Within the Plan, Policy N3 'Enhancing Green Infrastructure through development' has embedded the Green Infrastructure Strategy into a policy. The policy requires new development to make an appropriate contribution to addressing local needs and opportunities for Green Infrastructure provision.

8.127 The policy sets out criteria for development to consider. Larger developments of 20 homes or more or non-residential development of 1,000 square metres or more is required to consider further criteria.

8.128 Major developments should also use the national Urban Greening Factor calculator to demonstrate that the scores set out in the policy have been met.

8.129 Householder and change of use applications are not required to meet the policy criteria but are expected to incorporate practical measures to support biodiversity such as incorporation of swift bricks.

8.130 Policy N4 Trees also links to the Green Infrastructure Strategy and encourages developments to contribute to increasing the borough's tree canopy cover.

8.131 The Green Infrastructure Strategy has also been incorporated into Policy OTC4 – Green Infrastructure within and around Oldham Town Centre, making reference to the creation of active travel routes across the town centre, linking it to Northern Roots and Oldham Edge, and PfE JPA12 Beal Valley and JPA14 Broadbent Moss and beyond; and the use of greenspaces as stepping stones to promote nature recovery networks linking Alexandra Park, Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve and Oldham Edge.

8.132 The updated open space audit has been incorporated into Policy CO1 The Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision and Policy CO2 New and Improved Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision.

8.133 Therefore, much of the work related to this action has been completed. However, the Local Plan is subject to independent examination before it can be adopted. This action is therefore ongoing.

8.134 The action is funded through existing strategic planning budget.

[26] The Oldham Publication Plan is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review/3319/publication_plan

Actions:

Production of a Local Cycling, Walking & Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and opportunities to enhance biodiversity; and

Progression of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) schemes and opportunities to boost biodiversity e.g. through rain gardens[27].

8.135 Work on the LCWIP continues, with biodiversity enhancement opportunities being incorporated as the plan develops.

8.136 Delivery of the CRSTS programme is ongoing. Biodiversity improvements such as the inclusion of rain gardens are consistently considered as part of scheme development.

[27] an area of natural greenery or foliage which helps soak up excess rain water to help prevent flooding

Objective: To promote multi-functional Green Infrastructure in allocated and potential development sites

Action: Implement PfE allocation and thematic policies relating to biodiversity

8.137 PfE was adopted and came into effect on March 21, 2024. The policies and objectives section of this report outlines some of the thematic policies within PfE. Within PfE there are also site allocation policies with detailed site-specific criteria that must be considered.

8.138 Officers consider which Local Plan policies apply when determining a planning application.

8.139 Sometimes a policy will be considered because it links to a ‘constraint’ associated with the site. For example, our constraints will identify when a site boundary is within 2.5km of the South Pennines SAC / SPA. In this case the officer knows that PfE Policy JP-G5 Uplands would apply as well as its supporting South Pennine Moors SAC / SPA Supplementary Planning Document.

8.140 This action is therefore continuous and there are no cost implications as PfE has been adopted.

Action: Liaise on production of masterplan / design codes for strategic allocations in PfE and seek to enhance GI.

8.141 PfE policies in relation to JP Allocation 10: Beal Valley; JP Allocation 12: Broadbent Moss; JP Allocation 13 Chew Brook Vale (Robert Fletchers); JP Allocation 14: Cowlishaw; and JP Allocation 15: Land South of Coal Pit Lane (Ashton Road) requires that development is in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan and design code as agreed by the local planning authority.

8.142 Oldham Council has been liaising with landowners on the production of masterplans and design codes where work is underway on each of the sites. Where this has taken place, the Council has provided informal and / or formal comments on these considering the site-specific criteria for the site as well as any other relevant policies.

8.143 A website showing the draft masterplan, including provision for GI, for Broadbent Moss and Beal Valley is available at https://bvbm-masterplan.co.uk/. This is subject to change.

8.144 In addition, the masterplan for Beal Valley and Broadbent Moss is now being prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which means that Oldham Council will lead on taking the SPD through the relevant stages.

8.145 Details of the SPD is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/256/supplementary_planning_documents.

Action: Establish wetland catchment area at Broadbent Moss / Beal Valley

8.146 PfE Policies for JP Allocation 10: Beal Valley and JP Allocation 12: Broadbent Moss require development to include provision for a wetland catchment area to provide net gains for flood storage, integrating it with the wider multi-functional green infrastructure network and incorporating sustainable drainage systems.

8.147 The draft masterplan indicates where two wetland catchment areas / flood storage areas will be located linked to the green infrastructure network. This will help provide new wetland habitats. Existing habitats will be incorporated in the development including the woodlands, grasslands, scrub, watercourses and wetlands to form the structure of the ecological network.

8.148 Details of the wetland catchment are available in the SPD being prepared (see above).

Action: Encourage multi-functional GI in other development sites through the Local Plan review policies and consideration of mapped measures in the LNRS

8.149 The Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan is not allocating sites for development. However, as part of discussing and determining development proposals regard will be had to the PfE policies and the Local Plan policies when adopted to encourage multi-functional Green Infrastructure.

8.150 In addition to Local Plan policies N3 and N4 outlined above and PfE policies outlined in the policies and objectives section the Local Plan review also encourages multi-functional Green Infrastructure and consideration of mapped measures in the LNRS through Policy N2 Restoring Nature. This requires development to have regard to the LNRS and seek to support and deliver on the priorities and actions for nature recovery.

8.151 Development on land within an opportunity area should seek to:

1. Protect and enhance existing habitats; and
2. Restore and create habitats in a way that significantly improves connectivity within the development site and beyond.

Action: Support neighbourhood planning groups in preparing policies to enhance biodiversity in neighbourhood plans.

8.152 Through the Localism Act 2011, Parish Councils or neighbourhood forums were given powers to develop a shared vision and planning policies through a Neighbourhood Plan.

8.153 A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan prepared by a community guiding future development and growth. The plan may contain a vision, planning policies, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. Neighbourhood Plans should address the use and development of land and relate to social, economic and environmental issues with the aim of promoting sustainable development.

8.154 Oldham Council has a statutory duty to give advice or assistance on neighbourhood planning.

8.155 Currently there are two neighbourhood planning areas designated in Oldham borough – Saddleworth[28] and Chadderton[29].

8.156 The New Chadderton Partnership has been designated as a neighbourhood forum with the purpose of preparing a neighbourhood plan. They are at the initial stages of plan making.

8.157 Saddleworth Parish Council have now formally submitted the Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan to Oldham Council and the Peak District National Park Authority.

8.158 Oldham Council has informally and formally provided comments on draft versions on the Neighbourhood Plan as it has progressed. This includes providing comments on policies that seek to protect and enhance biodiversity.

8.159 The Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan includes the following policies relating directly to biodiversity:

- Policy 1: Green Infrastructure
- Policy 2: Biodiversity
- Policy 3: Protected Species
- Policy 4: Local Green Space

8.160 Oldham Council has also provided comment on the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) prepared by GMEU and have screened the Neighbourhood Plan against the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations.

[28] Details of the designation of Saddleworth Neighbourhood area is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201235/neighbourhood_planning/2936/saddleworth_neighbourhood_plan

[29] Details of the designation of Chadderton Neighbourhood area are available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201235/neighbourhood_planning/2937/chadderton_neighbourhood_plan

8.161 Oldham Council has also advised on the Local Green Space Assessment to support the four proposed Local Green Spaces at Diggle Fields, Dawson's Field (Scouthead), Playing Fields at Ashfield, Springhead and Church Fields, Dobcross. These include land within Oldham Council's ownership and their wildlife significance has been considered.

8.162 The Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a formal consultation in during 2026 (Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations).

8.163 It will then be submitted to an independent examiner before a referendum can be held and the plan made (adopted). Once made, the plan will be used to assess development proposals within the Parish Council area.

8.164 This action is therefore in progress. There will be some cost implications to this action, however this is being dealt with under a separate Cabinet report (RBO-04-25).

Objective: To encourage habitat creation and enhancement in the Green Belt

Action: Implement Green Belt policy in PfE (JP-G9 The Green Belt) on enhancing the remaining Green Belt in relation to habitat restoration.

8.165 As part of working with developers on the PfE Allocations enhancing the remaining Green Belt will be discussed as part of the pre-application / masterplan stage and at planning application stage. The Council would expect this to be addressed within the masterplan and planning application documents.

8.166 As masterplans are published and planning applications submitted detail on this will become available.

8.167 This action is ongoing and has no cost implications to the council.

Objective: To raise awareness and appreciation of biodiversity

Action: Volunteering opportunities related to biodiversity

8.168 This action was not listed in the Policies and Objectives report, however Oldham Council allows staff up to three days per year to take time away from their normal duties to volunteer. There are a range of volunteer opportunities however current opportunities include working with Groundwork Oldham. Staff could currently:

- Help protect nature in the Medlock Valley - The Medlock Valley Partnership are working in Manchester, Oldham and Tameside to preserve and restore vital habitats in the River Medlock Valley to halt species decline. The partnership is working improve grassland, woodland and wetland habitats; and
- Help green Oldham's Town Centre – Groundwork Oldham are working with the Council to install nature-based solutions such as rain gardens and an abundance of native plants.

Action: Keep a log of work undertaken by Environmental Services, Partners and Volunteer Groups and celebrate successes through Communications

8.169 A 'Biodiversity Tracker' (see appendix 1) has been created and shared across Oldham Environment Team where specific projects and ad hoc actions are added that contribute to improving biodiversity and contributing to the LNRS. This is a working document that will continue to develop and is not exhaustive as many minor actions can contribute to enhancing biodiversity.

8.170 In many places across the Council's countryside estate, we have adopted a non-intervention or a re-wilding approach which we are monitoring.

8.171 A summary of some of the achievements captured in this tracker since 2023 are highlighted below:

- Six Leaky Dams[30] installed at Crompton Moor and four more planned;
- Peatland restoration at Crompton Moor;
- Over six hectares of Woodland creation at Crompton Moor, Holts Valley, Glodwick Lows and Bishops Park;
- Woodland improvement work at Donnelly's Hollow;
- New and restored habitats created at Leesbrook Park;
- Restored habitats at Crime Lake, Bardsley Canal and Sammy's Basin;
- A new park (Tommyfield Park) and green infrastructure in Oldham Town Centre underway;
- Invasive weed control across the borough;
- Sowing of wild flowers across the borough;
- 1509 trees planted; and
- Remove Rhododendron and self-seeded birch in heather at Moorgate Quarry.

8.172 At Lees Brook Nature Park, work is underway to naturalise the riverbank using monies form the Species Survival Grant. This is an ongoing project resulting from the Medlock Valley Nature Partnership group which is a cross border and multi-agency project.

[30] Leaky Dams are a natural, permeable barrier to slow water flow and mitigate downstream flooding

Figure 4: Outputs from the Medlock Valley Restoration Programme (Groundwork Greater Manchester)



8.173 Appendix 2 includes a presentation on the Medlock Valley Restoration project by Groundwork Greater Manchester.

Action: Identify, advise and assist community / voluntary groups

Action: Include the public /interest groups in projects such as town centre linear park, Northern roots and leaky dams

8.174 Below is a list of the partners that Oldham Council works with to create and restore biodiversity. Working with such partners and voluntary groups the Council will advise and assist where possible. Many of these groups will involve the public where volunteering is sought.

Organisations and Third Sector Partners

City of trees

Woodland creation, natural flood management (NFM), moorland/peatland restoration, species recovery and monitoring, academic projects, fundraising, engagement and education.

Groundwork

Species survival, woodland management, habitat creation, infrastructure work, fundraising, engagement and education.

Natural England

High level feasibility work, group working, oversight and fundraising.

Canals and Rivers Trust

Group working, project collaboration, Infrastructure work and water quality.

Environment Agency

Group working, collaboration, water quality, in channel works and fundraising.

United Utilities

NFM, water quality, group working, collaboration and fundraising

Pearsons Solicitors

Tree planting (future roots)

Garfield Weston

Fundraising

Life for a Life

Tree planting, woodland and grassland management.

Northern Roots

Group working, collaboration, education and training, woodland and grassland management, NFM and water quality.

Moors for the Future

Moorland and peatland restoration, group working, collaboration and engagement.

Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Community engagement, small infrastructure projects, group working and collaboration.

Probation Service

Environmental projects and small-scale infrastructure projects.

Volunteers and Friends' Groups

Oldham Countryside Volunteer Ranger Service

Small scale infrastructure projects

Friends of Crompton Moor

Small scale infrastructure projects, fundraising, species reporting and monitoring, peatland/moorland restoration, woodland creation, dry stone walling, NFM, habitat management, biodiversity improvements and collaboration.

Friezland User Group

Small infrastructure projects and collaboration.

Hunt Lane and District Residents Association

Collaboration

Friends of Royton Linear Park

Biodiversity improvements, tree planting and small infrastructure projects.

Friends of Tandle Hills

Collaboration

Medlock Valley Fishing Club

NFM, water quality and collaboration.

Action: Consider staff training courses to consider how biodiversity can be enhanced in all our roles

8.175 Oldham Council has obtained a free course ‘Biodiversity for Council’s’ from the Local Government Association and embedded this into ‘Me Learning’, Oldam Council’s internal training software.

8.176 The course looks at:

- what biodiversity is and why it is important to councils and local communities;
- the current biodiversity crisis and how this links to climate change and sustainable development;
- International agreements and legislation which shape action on biodiversity;
- the roles of councillors and council officers in conserving and protecting biodiversity; and
- how councils can have a positive impact on biodiversity, including case studies.

8.177 This action has therefore been completed. However, consideration could be given to how this course is promoted to increase take up, such as targeting specific teams.

Objective: To consider biodiversity in corporate plans and decisions

Action: Consider biodiversity implications in decision making reports and through the Oldham Impact Assessment Tool

8.178 Liaison has taken place with Oldham Council's Strategy and Performance team and text highlighting the Our Policies and Objectives for Thriving Wildlife in Oldham has been added to the Impact Assessment Tool homepage and linked to the aims of Our Future Oldham in terms of a clean and green environment.

8.179 Therefore, progress has been made. The Council could work towards getting consideration of enhancing biodiversity fully embedded within the tool.

8.180 There are no cost implications to this action.

Other actions:

Review and monitoring of key biodiversity data

Monitoring of biodiversity in Local Plan Monitoring Reports

8.181 Oldham's Monitoring Report[31] is part of the Local Plan.

8.182 The report monitors:

- The progress of documents identified for production as part of the Local Plan
- The implementation of the borough's planning policies

8.183 Policies are monitored to find out whether:

- They are achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development
- They have unintended consequences
- The assumptions and objectives behind policies are still relevant
- The targets are being achieved.

8.184 The monitoring report includes local indicators including:

- Change in areas of biodiversity importance; and
- Improved local biodiversity

8.185 The monitoring report is available on the council's website[32] and is published annually.

8.186 Last year's Monitoring Report (2023-2024) shows that an update to the borough's Sites of Biological Importance was received in October 2024 and was approved in December 2025 which included a new SBI at Boardman's Edge (Grade B), resulting in a net gain of 5.8 ha.

8.187 It also reported that 100% of local sites (41) are under positive conservation management. Positive management includes wetland creation and management, leaking dams, woodland creation and management, pollinators, non-intervention and invasive weed control. Habitat piles, standing and fallen deadwood. Wildlife reporting, tackling ASB, species protection and monitoring.

8.188 When the revised Local Plan is adopted, the indicators that will be used to monitor the Local Plan and biodiversity include:

- Single data list 160-00 Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being or has been implemented
- Change in areas of biodiversity designations (i.e. SBI updates)

[31] The Monitoring Reports are available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/263/oldhams_monitoring_report
[32] The monitoring report can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201230/monitoring/263/oldhams_monitoring_report

- Percentage of sites designated for nature in active management for nature conservation
- Percentage of tree canopy cover

Positive biodiversity outcomes achieved through planning decisions (in addition to BNG)

8.189 The following table details Section 106 obligations related to biodiversity excluding mandatory BNG since 1 January 2023. Please note these have been summarised for the purposes of this report.

Table 4 Section 106 obligations relating to biodiversity

Planning application Number	Section 106 obligation
349943	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £55,050 towards off site biodiversity improvements within Greater Manchester. This is not related to mandatory BNG.
349943	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £3,900 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.
352791	Open Space Contribution of £4,269.79 towards the improvement of existing public open space in the vicinity of the Site, specifically improvements to Berriesfield Park.
349826	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to: 1. Pay a commuted sum of £365,736.80 towards the enhancement of the existing open space provision in Diggle at: a) Ward Lane Play Area - New play area to replace old/existing tree works path improvement works and fencing; b) Diggle Fields - New adventure play/trim trail to replace old/existing new outdoor gym tree work path improvement works drainage improvement works fencing renewal of story trail and new additional timber seating; c) Diggle Pond - Pond clearance improvement works and path and landscape improvement works; and d) Sunfield Avenue Play Area - New play area to replace old existing; 2. Pay a commuted sum of £55,000 towards the improvement of habitats for the Long Eared owl and both woodland and water habitats within the local area.
346447	The Planning Obligation requires Replacement Trees Commuted Sum for the replacement of trees on the site in accordance with to the following formula: Trees to be Replaced x 3 x £300 = Replacement Trees Where the Council confirms that a deficiency exists in open space the Owner shall calculate the amount of the Open Space Commuted Sum for the provision of off site open space
346950	The Planning Obligation requires the landowners to pay the Council a commuted sum of £5400 for the planting and maintenance of 18

	replacement trees on Council owned land immediately to the north of site.
350748	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to: 1. pay a commuted sum of £8,000 (indexed) to the Council to be used for the purposes of biodiversity mitigation (biodiversity net gain) 2. pay a commuted sum of £38,700 (indexed) to the Council to be used to plant new trees within the Council's local authority area.
348321	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £1200 towards the provision of trees on land at Abbey Hills Road and Holts Lane.
351514	The Planning Obligation requires the adjoining landowner to submit and implement the Linear Park Scheme Phase 2 relating to the development of the. The adjoining landowner is not obliged to spend more than £132,000 on the construction of the Linear Park Scheme Phase 2.
347782	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £3825 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.
347783	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £18,675 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.
350525	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay £10,800 to the Council towards the provision of trees on land within the vicinity of the site in the Borough of Oldham.
351515	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £12,900 for the provision of 43 trees to be planted off site within the Borough of Oldham.
350819	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £61,220.04 as a contribution towards the reinstatement and improvement of public open space at George Square Oldham.
351228	£7,486 towards amenity greenspace enhancement, enhancement of provision for children and young persons and outdoor sports facilities within the vicinity of the land.
352533	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay the Council a commuted sum of £2,400 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham
346949	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £1500 towards the provision of trees within the Borough of Oldham.
349938	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay a commuted sum of £800 towards the provision of 2 replacement trees within the vicinity of the site on the completion of the Planning Obligation.
353295	The Planning Obligation requires the landowner to pay £2,400 towards the provision of 6 replacement trees within the vicinity of the Site.

8.190 In addition, often proposals will involve on site creation or enhancement of habitats and nature-based solutions. Oldham Council ensure that developments put

in additional ecological enhancements wherever possible, in line with GMEU advice. This may sometimes be secured through a planning condition.

9. Biodiversity Net Gain information

9.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to include information on Biodiversity Net Gain.

Monitored biodiversity gains and the results of this monitoring

9.2 Oldham Council has secured the services of GMEU to provide consultation responses on all planning applications and development plan documents which could involve ecological considerations and BNG. This involves:

- providing pre-application advice on ecology and BNG matters;
- reviewing and making recommendations on BNG metrics and other BNG-related documents, such as draft biodiversity gain plans and draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMPs) submitted as part of planning applications;
- Making recommendations and negotiating with developers on the best outcomes for BNG, such as identifying the most suitable locations and forms of habitat provision;
- Reviewing post-permission BNG documents, including final metrics, gain plans and HMMPs and making recommendations on the appropriateness of final proposed BNG schemes and discharges of BNG-related conditions.

9.3 Oldham Council has also arranged for GMEU to undertake post-permission BNG monitoring (or “auditing”) of relevant schemes, such as those involving “significant” on-site BNG. This service involves tracking on-going habitat creation/enhancement on relevant sites, requiring regular monitoring reports from habitat managers, site visits, reviewing and making recommendations on submitted reports, providing advice on any necessary mitigation, supporting enforcement action (if necessary), keeping a register of all habitat banks (and unit allocations) in Greater Manchester and providing BNG data.

Quantitative data

9.4 Table 5 below shows the number of planning applications validated and granted permission (including subject to legal agreement) between 12 February 2024 to 4 December 2025 and that required BNG and where an exemption to the BNG condition applied.

Table 5: Planning applications requiring BNG or exempt from BNG

Planning applications	Number
Total number of planning permissions granted permission that require biodiversity net gain in the reporting period	39
Total number of planning permissions granted in the reporting period where an exemption to the biodiversity net gain condition	993

9.5 The reasons for exemption to the BNG condition are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 reasons for exemption to BNG condition

Reason for exemption to BNG condition	Number
Householders	701
S73 applications	23
De Minimis	228
Temporary non-major exemption	41

9.6 The Defra BNG Reporting spreadsheet has been completed as much as practicable by GMEU and this is shown below and in Appendix 3. A summary is shown in Tables 7 to 9 below.

Table 7: Quantitative BNG data: general data Feb 2024-1 January 2026

Consented applications requiring net gains	Number	Proportion
Number of biodiversity gain plans approved	6	n/a
Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved securing BNG through on-site units only	4	67%
Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through off-site units only	0	0%
Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through statutory credits only	0	0%
Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site and off-site units	2	33%
Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of on-site units and statutory credits	0	0%

Total number of biodiversity gain plans approved in the reporting period securing BNG through a combination of off-site units and statutory credits	0	0%
Number of approved biodiversity gain plans that impact on irreplaceable habitat	0	0%

Table 8: Location and number of approved offsite biodiversity units (figures rounded up)

Location of off-site biodiversity units	Total	Proportion
Number of off-site biodiversity units located inside LPA boundary or NCA of impact site.	0.2	4%
Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside LPA or NCA of impact site, but in neighbouring LPA or NCA	0	0%
Number of off-site biodiversity units located outside of LPA or NCA of impact site and neighbouring LPA or NCA	5.1	96%

Table 9: Quantitative BNG data: overall expected gains and losses across all biodiversity gain plans approved Feb 2024-1 January 2026 (figures rounded up)

Overall expected gains and losses	Area Habitats	Hedge-rows	Water-courses	Total
Total number of pre-development biodiversity units approved on-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	39.9	8.7	1.7	50.3
Total number of post-development biodiversity units approved on-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	14.2	1.0	0.2	15.4
Total net unit change in biodiversity units, on-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	21.3	3.0	0.2	24.5
Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, on-site	0.5	0.4	0.1	1.0
Total number of baseline biodiversity units approved off-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	1.6	0	0	1.6
Total number of post-intervention biodiversity units approved off-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	5.3	0	0	5.3
Total net unit change in biodiversity units, off-site broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	3.7	0	0	3.7
Average percentage (%) change in biodiversity units, off-site	2.4	0	0	2.4
Total number of biodiversity units offset using statutory credits broken down by area/hedgerow/watercourse	0	0	0	0

Total net unit change in biodiversity units (including any units offset using credits)	21.3	3.0	0.2	24.6
Average percentage (%) change (including statutory credits)	0.5	0.3	0.1	1.0

How Oldham Council plans to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period.

9.7 It is expected that for the next reporting period a significantly higher number of Biodiversity Gain Plans will have been approved, and there will be more data on trends in biodiversity outcomes as a result of development. This will enable Oldham Council to identify gains or losses in specific habitats and more data on where offsite gains are being achieved.

9.8 Auditing and the enforcement of the statutory condition, where necessary, is going to be essential to enable the local planning authority to carry out its statutory duty in relation to biodiversity net gain.

9.9 Oldham Council will continue working to explore the opportunity to secure habitat banks within the local authority area and assist third parties to secure their land as habitats banks, where requested.

10.Future actions

10.1 Many of the identified actions will continue over the next five years, when the next mandatory Biodiversity Report is due to be published.

10.2 The list below includes both actions that have not yet progressed and actions that have progressed but will continue.

- To increase the amount of land designated for nature
- Bringing Local Wildlife Sites into active management for nature conservation and enhancement (LNRS has overall target of 50%)
- Implement South Pennines SAC / SPA Supplementary Planning Document SPD
- Application of mitigation hierarchy in planning decisions and planning policy
- Designation of Local Green Space and Green corridors as part of Local Plan review
- To have regard to the LNRS in planning decisions and land management.
- Baseline review / Management Plans for countryside sites that are not designated / other Green Infrastructure assets in council ownership.
- To expand tree canopy cover
- Explore and support offsite BNG / Habitat Banks within Oldham
- Preparation of an Oldham Design Code which integrates biodiversity
- Implement PfE and Local Plan policies relating to biodiversity
- Liaise on production of masterplan / design codes for strategic allocations in PfE and seek to enhance GI.
- Establish wetland catchment area at Broadbent Moss / Beal Valley
- Encourage multi-functional GI in development sites
- Support neighbourhood planning groups in preparing policies to enhance biodiversity in neighbourhood plans
- Implement Green Belt policy in PfE (JP-G9 The Green Belt) on enhancing the remaining Green Belt in relation to habitat restoration
- Explore and support offsite BNG / Habitat Banks within Oldham, which may include Green Belt land.
- To develop an Oldham Mapping tool to make information about designations and wildlife more accessible and digital.
- Encourage residents to provide more wildlife friendly gardens
- Volunteering opportunities related to biodiversity
- Keep a log of work undertaken by countryside officers and celebrate successes through Communications
- Raise awareness of funds such as the Greater Manchester Green Space Fund
- Identify, advise and assist community / voluntary groups
- Include the public /interest groups in nature recovery projects

- Raise awareness of Biodiversity for council’s course
- Consider inclusion of biodiversity duty when preparing and updating other internal plans and policies (such as the Corporate Plan).
- Consider biodiversity implications in decision making reports and through the Oldham Impact Assessment Tool.
- Consider biodiversity implications as part of impact assessment when considering disposal of land.
- Continue implementing mandatory BNG in relation to determining planning applications
- Commence preparation of Spatial Development Strategy and seeking to enhance biodiversity (new)

11.Our Top Achievements

11.1 During the reporting period (1 January 2023 – 1 January 2026) some of our top achievements are highlighted below.

Figure 5: Top achievements for Biodiversity

Oldham's Top Achievements for Biodiversity

1. 10.4 hectares of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) have been gained since 2023;
2. Habitat Management Plans for Glodwick Lows Local Nature Reserve and Crompton Fold Wood SBI have been completed;
3. The South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA SPD was adopted with effect from 8 May 2025;
4. Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD was adopted with effect from 8 May 2025;
5. Local Green Space designations are proposed in the Local Plan;
6. The Greater Manchester LNRS which has since been published;
7. 1509 trees have been planted;
8. Over six hectares of Woodland created;
9. New and restored habitats created;
10. Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans have been prepared for eight Council countryside sites to support the sites' possible function as habitat banks;
11. Revised planning policies benefitting biodiversity have been prepared for the Publication Local Plan;
12. Officer support has been given to Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan and its policies to enhance biodiversity;
13. Volunteering opportunities are available related to nature recovery;
14. 'Biodiversity for Council's' training embedded into the Council's internal training platform; and
15. Enhanced biodiversity secured through planning obligations and conditions.

12. Conclusion and Next Steps

12.1 This report fulfils the requirements in ‘Reporting your Biodiversity Duty’ and shows the great progress that Oldham Council has made to the enhanced Biodiversity Duty.

12.2 Many actions have been completed or are in good progress.

12.3 Between now and the next Biodiversity Duty Report the Council will continue to progress actions identified in this report and its statutory BNG duties.

Site Name	Measures
Crompton Moor	Installation of 6 x Leaky Dams with 4 more planned
Crompton Moor	Peatland restoration (planting Sphagnum Moss)
Crompton Moor	Woodland creation
Friezland Scheme	Hedgerow planting
Alexandra Park	Meadow creation (Cut and Collect)
Leesbrook - Species Survival Project	Woodland Management, In Channel River works, INNS Control, Deep Cleanse, NFM
Holts Valley	Woodland Creation
Glodwick Lows	Woodland creation
Bishops Park	Woodland Creation
Leesbrook - Species Survival Project	Artificial bird and batroost creation in standing stems
Leesbrook Pond	Clearing horsetail and balsam
Crime Lake, Bardsley Canal and Sammy's Basin	Removal of invasives and water quality improvements
Tommyfield Park/Snipe Gardens/Town Centre	Creation of new park and smaller open green spaces including, green/bule infrastructure and Suds
Invasive weed control (boroughwide)	Removal of invasive weeds across the Borough including; JKW/Balsam/Giant hogweed
Wild Flower	Sowing of wild flower in grass verges and other spaces across Oldham
Tree Planting	Annual tree planting programme
Tree Planting	Annual tree planting programme
Tree Planting	Annual tree planting programme
Donnelly's Hollow	Woodland improvement work - removal of invasive Rhododendron
Moorgate Quarry	Remove Rhododendron and self seeded birch in heather

Date (from)	Date (to)	Outcome
2023	Ongoing	Rewetting Peatland/moorland. NFM, Creation of new wetaland habitats
2023	2023	Peatland restoration, Water and carbon storage, Habistat creation, protection of existing habitate features
2023	2024	Creation of new habitat, NFM, Carbon Storage.
Jan-24		100m of new mixed native hedge to replace fence. Habitat creation
2024	Ongoing	Allowing fine cut grass to grow into meadow - cut and collect once per year. Habistat creation.
2024	2026	Woodland work to diversify and improve woodland structure. Drainage ponds and scrapes for NFM and habtate creation. Removal of wiers and manmade structure from river medlock (fish passage). INNS Control.
2023	2024	3 hectares of new woodland. Habitat creation, NFM, Carbon storage/reduction
2024	2025	1 hectare of new broadleaved native trees
2025		2 Hecatres of new broadleaved native woodland
2025	2026	New Habitats created
2025		Better quality waterbody and restored habitats
2025	ongoing	Better quality waterbody and restored habitats
2024	2027	New green and blue habitats that did not exist before
2025		Removal of invasives to allow more benefitial natives to colonise.
2025		Flowering pants for polinators where largely sterile grass or wasteground once existed
2023		Improving Oldhams tree cover, diversity, resilience in the urban forest
2024		Improving Oldhams tree cover, diversity, resilience in the urban forest
2025		Improving Oldhams tree cover, diversity, resilience in the urban forest
Feb-26		Removal of Rhododendron and diseased ash. Leaving logs on site and standing deadwood. Plant understorey of flowering and fruiting natives.
Feb-26		Removal of Invasive Rhododendron and self seeded birch from heather.

Approximate Area (hectares) Improved	LNRS Theme	
6 Hectares	Upland moorland	
13.5 Hectares	Upland moorland	
3 hectares	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
100m2		
1.5 hectares	Grasslands, farmlands and lowland heath	
10.2 Hectares	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
3 hectares	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
1 Hectare	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
2 Hectares	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
1 hectare	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
250m2	Rivers, canals and waterbodies	
1500m2	Rivers, canals and waterbodies	
2 hectares	Rivers, canals and waterbodies	Green and Blue habitats
4 hectares	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
1 hectare	Grasslands, farmlands and lowland heath	
613	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
511	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
385	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
0.5 Hectare	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	
1 hectare	Woodlands, trees, scrub and hedgerow	

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Medlock Valley Restoration Project

Project Closure

AGENDA

- Project Highlights
- Project Outputs
- Project Report
- Next Steps



OLDHAM

1 weir removed

2130m footpaths improved

5014 trees planted

2.15ha INNS controlled

48 events

664 attendees

205 young people

1363 volunteer hours contributed

















MANCHESTER

0.26ha wetland managed

5.67ha woodland improved

232m riverbank managed

2.94ha INNS controlled

179 events

2171 attendees

772 young people

7453 volunteer hours contributed

















TAMESIDE

1 pond created

2.42ha woodland improved

468m2 scrub managed

50 trees planted

20 events

268 attendees

87 young people

887 volunteer hours contributed















ASHTON & ROCHDALE CANAL

1.68ha grassland managed

2.98ha wetland improved

0.79ha INNS managed

550m hedgerow improved

42 events

605 attendees

61 young people

3600 volunteer hours contributed













STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

I'm looking forward to seeing the wildflower meadows next year

Working with schools to plant hedges and teach hedgelaying

The Green Skills Training cohort has become a core group of people learning together, sharing knowledge and supporting each other

We had a lovely home schooled family who lived local to Lees Brook and attended all our tree planting events.

The tree veteranisation work has been eye-opening!

It's been great learning loads of new skills from everyone

I loved that we were able to do lots of different woodland management activities across a site which felt like we really made a difference!

Connecting with local community groups like Safety4Sisters and The Shaw Centre, facilitating sessions for them to connect with nature

Loved working with all our partners!

The Spring Festival was great to see how many people will be positively impacted by the work we've done

I really enjoyed working with Back on Track as a community group

Seeing the ranger team grow in skills, knowledge & confidence

Chainsaw training

Constructing the footpath at Lees Brook

Getting to know the locals at Lees Brook, taking a real ownership of the whole site

The sense of community and shared learning at GST has been amazing!

Having the satisfaction of completing so many improvements that will have strong, positive and lasting impacts to the area

Seeing the changes since we first started the project and over the seasons

Collaborating TCV and GGM together at Clayton Vale

Tree felling at the Manchester sites

LAND MANAGED

44%



Grassland
5.7ha

107%



Woodland
14.69ha

167%



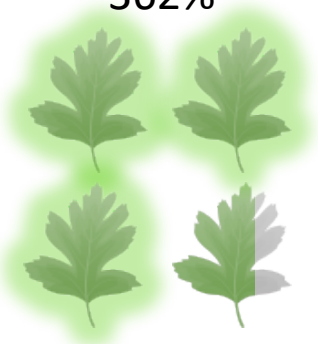
Wetland
3.35ha

257%



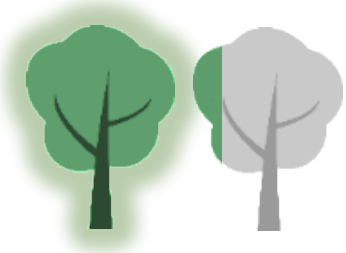
INNS
7.85ha

362%



Scrub
1.81ha

115%



Trees Planted
5992

134%



Hedgerow
550m

119%



Riverbank
1187m

146%



Footpaths
2910m

103%



Total Blue & Green Habitat
33.16ha

OUTREACH

859%



Young People
1717

627%



People with Long Term Health Conditions
188

360%



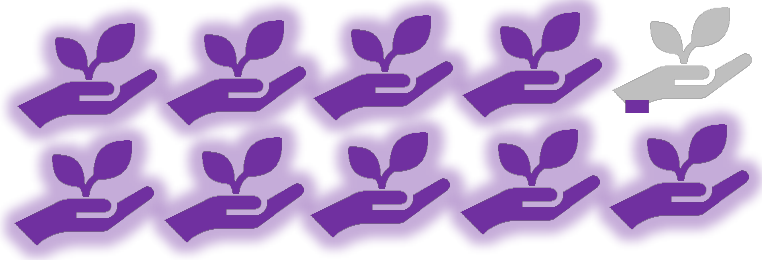
People of Ethnic Minority
468

428%



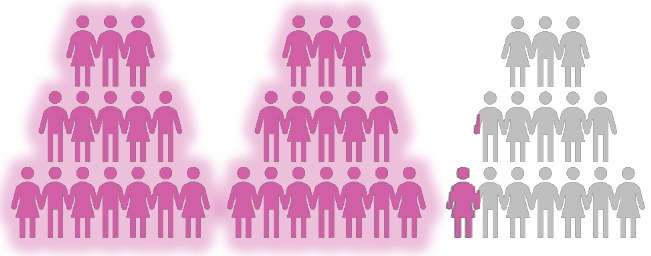
People experiencing unemployment
513

915%



People looking to improve their health and wellbeing
915

218%



Total Outreach
3937

PROJECT REPORT

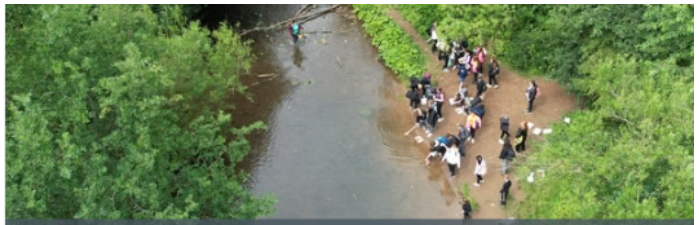


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WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

Our team have been working with local schools, whose pupils often live within walking distance of the Medlock Valley, hosting activities which create a deeper appreciation and connection with nature.

Find out more

Cannon Burrows Primary School

Cannon Burrows's outdoor space had become overgrown and unusable. In November 2024, Groundwork and corporate partner Razor Blue organised a clean-up event. Over 10 volunteers worked with Urban Rangers to clear the area, making it safe and accessible for pupils.

Laurus Ryecroft Secondary School

We worked with over 100 year 7 geography students at Laurus Ryecroft school. This full day of activity in the Medlock Valley was designed in partnership with teaching staff so that the sessions linked in with the national curriculum, and aimed to create long-term guardians for local nature.



Propps Hall Primary School

Groundwork's Community Engagement Lead, Fran, began working with Propps Hall after arranging a guided visit to the river, providing students with the chance to take part in water testing and learn more about the species who lived there.



10

CANAL STORIES

Meet Carole



Volunteering has increased my confidence, and I've met some great people. Rain or shine, it's great fun!"

After being made redundant, Carole was looking for a way to stay active and engaged, which led her to volunteering with the Canal & River Trust.
During her time volunteering, Carole took part in a wide range of hands-on activities that support the maintenance and protection of the canal network.

Read Carole's Story

Meet Nick

Nick took early retirement and began volunteering with the Canal & River Trust on the Medlock Valley Project. Through this role he gained practical ecological skills, including training in brushcutter use, identifying invasive species, and understanding habitat management.

Read Nick's Story



"Working with an ecologist has allowed me to question the why as we undertake tasks and I have learned lots as we work."

18

NEXT STEPS

END OF PROJECT REPORT

EVALUATION REPORT – SIMON LEES

LEES BROOK INTERPRETATION BOARD

MEDLOCK VISION BOARD



THANK YOU!



PART A

Report to CABINET

Princes Gate – Development Update (St Mary's)

Portfolio Holder: Councilor Arooj Shah – Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth

Officer Contact: Emma Barton – Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Report Author: Bryn Cooke – Head of Housing Delivery
Email: bryn.cooke@oldham.gov.uk

March 2026

Reason for Decision

To provide an update on overall scheme progress and to obtain approval for the Council to enter into the necessary Grant Funding Agreements and to complete all other necessary agreements/documentation to allow the development of 331 new homes at Princes Gate to commence on site.

Recommendations

- To grant delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Place Oldham, the Director of Finance and the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring officer to agree final terms and to enter into a Grant Funding agreement with Muse in respect of the Community Regeneration Partnership grant funding as outlined in the Part B report
- To grant delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Place Oldham, the Director of Finance and the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring officer to agree final terms and to enter into a Grant Funding agreement with Muse in respect of the proposed Council match funding contribution as set out in the Part B report
- To grant delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham, the Director of Finance and the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring officer to agree final terms and to enter into a Grant Funding agreement with Legal and General Affordable Homes in respect of the Council affordable housing contribution (if required) and as set out in the Part B report, which will ensure that the new homes are let at a social rent level.

- To grant delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham, the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring officer to enter into any associated documentation or agreements that may be required in connection with the above matters and to enable a phased drawdown of the site, which will result in a start on site at the earliest opportunity.
- To grant delegated authority to the Director of Legal Services or his/her nominees to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report.
- To note that following consideration by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 19th March 2026 the report is exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

Princes Gate Development Update

1 Background

1.1 By virtue of a previous Cabinet Report considered on the 24th March 2025, Council approval was obtained to accept a Community Regeneration Partnership Grant funding offer from MHCLG.

1.2 Delegated authority was granted to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham, the Director of Finance and the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring officer to oversee and approve: the expenditure of grant funding for the selected projects, the onward award of grant and any associated partnership or programme activity. The policy intervention list for Grant Award Projects, identified by MHCLG for Oldham, covered seven areas of activity, which included Town Centre Housing Delivery. This consisted of a specific capital contribution to accelerate development and to support delivery of the four key Town Centre housing sites, including the Civic Centre, former Magistrates Court site, former Leisure Centre site, and Princes Gate.

1.3 All of these key sites are being progressed by way of the Council's previously approved long-term Strategic Delivery Partnership with Muse, which resulted in a Master Development Agreement (MDA) between the parties being entered into in September 2023. Under the terms of the MDA Muse were required to progress a comprehensive Development Framework for the Town Centre, which was endorsed by Cabinet in November 2024 with planning approval being granted on 2 July 2025.

1.4 The Framework included outline planning approval to bring forward up to 231 new homes on the former Leisure Centre and 219 at the Magistrates Court sites, plus hybrid approval to deliver in the region of 838 new homes on part of the Civic Centre, plus a full detailed consent to deliver 331 new homes at Princes Gate.

1.5 In parallel with the Development Framework being progressed, Cabinet approval was granted in January 2025 to proceed with the formal inclusion of the Princes Gate site into the MDA with Muse, as a Core site (and as permitted under the terms of the MDA), given that the Council had not been in a position to include the site at the time the original strategic partnership agreement was being entered into. This process has therefore now been formally completed by virtue of a Deed of Variation to the MDA, which was completed in March 2026.

2 Current Position

2.1 Given the availability of the site at Princes Gate and the awarding of detailed planning consent, this location was selected as the preferred site to commence delivery of new homes in the Town Centre and an application for the required viability gap grant funding was therefore drawn up, in conjunction with Muse, and submitted for consideration to the GM Good Growth Fund in October 2026. The partners were delighted to hear in December 2026 that a provisional award of GMCA grant funding to the project had been approved (in addition to the MHCLG grant already secured), plus an offer of GMCA patient capital equity, which in combination means that the scheme is now in a position to proceed.

2.2 As a result, it is anticipated that the Council will need to enter into the following funding agreements to enable the scheme to progress to a start on site at the earliest opportunity: -

- To enter into a Grant Funding agreement with Muse in respect of the Community Regeneration Partnership grant funding as outlined in section 1.2 of the report and set out in the Part B report.
- To enter into a further Grant Funding agreement with Muse in respect of the proposed Council match funding contribution, as set out in the Part B report.
- To enter into a Grant Funding agreement with Legal and General Affordable Homes in respect of the Council affordable housing contribution (if required) and as set out in the Part B report, which will ensure that the new homes are let at a social rent level.

2.3 Affordable/Social housing proposals – due to the increased costs of delivering Social Rent homes (compared to Affordable Rent), it is proposed that the Council allocates capital receipts that have been received from the sale of properties sold under the Governments Right to Buy Policy. These must be used to provide further affordable housing within the borough, and if not spent within a specific period, they are taken by the Treasury. The additional contribution (if required) will mean that all 75 homes in Phase 1 will be let at the more affordable Social Rent level.

2.4 Development Update – The detailed planning consent obtained for Princes Gate comprises of a new neighbourhood of up to 331 homes (set across 3 residential blocks to be delivered in two phases), including 75 new homes in Phase 1 to be let at social rent, alongside mixed-use ground-floor spaces intended to support activity in the surrounding area.

2.5 Since obtaining consent in July of last year, Muse have been extremely proactive in going out to market to secure both a preferred main contractor and a residential delivery partner for Phase 1. In addition, an enabling works package has been agreed with a local contractor and is set to commence shortly. Muse have also negotiated with statutory undertakers and relevant third parties, which essentially means that work could start on Phase 1, as soon as the necessary grant funding and any other required legal agreements have been entered into.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 To not enter into the Grant Funding Agreements – This would mean that the scheme remains unviable, and MUSE would not be able to deliver it. It would also cause reputational damage to the Council in the event that the already secured GMCA Grant was not drawn down. It is highly likely that the grant would be re-allocated outside of the borough.

The council could also decide not to contribute towards the Socially Rented Homes, which would mean that the 75 new homes in Phase 1 would be let at Affordable Rent levels only.

3.2 To enter into the Grant Funding Agreements – This option would mean that Muse, as the Council's selected strategic partner, would be in a position to deliver the 331 new homes at Princes Gate, as the first phase of residential development in the town centre. The homes form an integral part of the Council's Creating a Better Place Regeneration Programme.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 To enter into the relevant Grant Funding Agreements set out within the report and at Para 3.2 is the Preferred Option for the reasons outlined above.

5 Consultation

5.1 This report will be shared with the Corporate Property Board and the MUSE Partnership Steering Group.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 Contained within the Part B Report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Contained within the Part B Report.

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 No immediate procurement implications in this report. The team will continue to provide procurement support to the development programme when required.

Tom Pyne – Head of Procurement

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 N/A

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 RBO-18-25

12 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act :

File Ref : [insert]
Name of File : [insert]
Records held in [insert] Department, [insert address]
Officer Name : [insert]
Contact Email: [insert]

13 Appendices

13.1 None

Report to CABINET

Sale of Land at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill (Medlock Vale)

Portfolio Holder: Councilor Arooj Shah – Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth

Officer Contact: Emma Barton – Executive Director (Place)

Report Author: Ben Hill – Housing Delivery Team Leader
Email: ben.hill@oldham.gov.uk

March 2026

Reason for Decision

To approve the sale of a small area of land to the Vistry Partnership to enable them to provide access to a 72 home residential development that obtained Detailed Planning Permission (**FUL/354869/25)** in December 2025.

Recommendations

To approve the freehold disposal of a strip of land (shown red in Appendix A) at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill to the adjoining landowner – Vistry Partnership.

Sale of land at Rosary Road, Fitton Hill

1 Background

1.1 Following the selection process for a developer partner for vacant land at Fitton Hill, Cabinet approved the selection of Countryside Properties UK in March 2020. This included the former CPD / Marland Primary School site located on Rosary Road.

1.2 As part of this disposal, a thin strip of land was retained by the Council (shown red at Appendix A) as it provided access to a privately owned field that was allocated as suitable for development under the Places for Everyone (PfE) Policy.

1.3 Countryside obtained Planning Permission (**FUL/347540/21**) for 365 dwellings across two parcels of land together with other associated works including the laying out of road and footways, car parking, other infrastructure, public open space, footpaths and landscaping. This included 70 homes on the former CPD/Marland School site located off Rosary Road (also known as Parcel A). This development is under construction.

1.4 Countryside Properties UK merged with the Vistry Partnership in 2022.

1.5 Vistry Partnership purchased the PfE site and obtained detailed Planning (**FUL/354869/25)** permission for 72 homes in December 2025. The scheme layout can be seen at Appendix B and includes a residential development with associated access, parking, amenity spaces and landscaping. The scheme is 100% affordable with a high number of Social Rent homes.

1.6 Both development sites (Ful/347540/21 and Ful/354869/25) are owned by the Vistry Partnership with the access point between them owned by the Council.

2 Current Position

2.1 Under the Council's Land and Property Protocols, a directed disposal to an adjoining landowner is permitted providing an independent valuation of the land is obtained. The Council and Vistry Partnership appointed Roger Hannah to provide this assessment.

2.2 The valuation has been accepted by both parties (subject to Council Approval). The costs for the Valuation will be met in full by Vistry.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Do not dispose of the land – this option would mean that Vistry would be unable to develop the site and the Council would not benefit from 72 affordable homes being built. The Council will also forgo a capital receipt.

3.2 Dispose of the land – The Council would have full nomination rights for the affordable homes which would be let to those in need from Oldham's Housing Register. The new homes will also help meet our PfE Housing Targets.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Disposing of the land to Vistry (3.2) is the preferred option given the benefits of a capital receipt and ne affordable housing.

5 Consultation

5.1 This report will be shared with the Corporate Property Board.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 Covered in the PART B Report.

(James Postle)

7 **Legal Implications**

7.1 By virtue of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has statutory powers of disposal of land.

7.2 On a disposal of land under Section 123 the Council is under a statutory obligation to obtain the open market value of the interest and best consideration that can reasonably be obtained unless the consent of the Secretary of State is obtained, or an exemption applies. Generally, best consideration will be achieved by offering the land for sale subject to open competition. In cases where land has not been exposed to the open market it is considered prudent for an independent surveyor's valuation to be obtained and/or other appropriate market testing. Due to the nature and location of this piece of land, the obligation to obtain best value has been satisfied by the steps taken as referred to above and the report author has confirmed that best value has been achieved.

7.3 It is recommended that the terms for disposal include any additional matters suggested by the legal officer acting for the Council which are in the Council's best interests

7.4 The report author has confirmed that the provisions of the Council's Land and Property Protocol have been complied with

(Rebecca Boyle - Corporate Group Solicitor).

8. **Procurement Implications**

8.1 None as this report relates to the sale of land.

(Sandeed Kapoor – Senior Category Manager)

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

9.1 No

10 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 RBO-02-26

12 **Background Papers**

12.1 None

13 **Appendices**

13.1 Appendix A – Plan Showing Council owned retained land

Appendix B – Vistry's Scheme Layout (FUL/354869/25)



Key

- Oldham Borough Council retained land
- Parcel A land

Rev	Date	By	Description	Chk'd
A	29.11.22	SMc	Key added	

COUNTRYSIDE
Places People Love

Countryside Properties (UK) Limited
Regeneration North
301 Bridgewater Place, Birchwood Park, Birchwood
Warrington WA3 6XG
Tel: 01925 240500 Fax: 01925 240501
www.countryside-properties.com

site:
Fitton Hill
Parcel A

title:
Contract Plans
Oldham Retained Land Strip

Certificate Number 15907
ISO 9001
ISO 14001

drawn by: SMc
checked:
scale: @A1 1:200
date: 02.11.22

drawing no: SK679-CP-17 (q)
sheet no: Sheet 1 of 1
revision: A

© This drawing is copyright of Countryside Properties (UK) Limited and must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part, nor used in conjunction with any project without Countryside's written consent.

g:\1. p&d\1. sites\0. manchester & cheshire east\sk679 - fitton hill, oldham\1.cad drawings\2. planning\11. title plans\contract plans\sk679-cp-01-contract plans.dwg

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FOXTON CLOSE

Mills Farm Close

Road 3

Connection to existing Footpath

Demountable Bollards to Emergency Link

UU Right of Access/ Vehicle Turning Area.

Existing UU Station with 2m High Palisade Fence.

Substation

Pump Station Size and Location TBC

POS and Landscape buffer to Bankfield Clough SBI and woodland

Attenuation Basin Size and Location TBC

Boundary to be defined by timber stock proof fence with hedge planting

Path (um)

BCP

ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE

	Number	SqFt	Bed Nos.	Total SqFt	Ends	Mids	Det	Total
Affordable Housing								
Atkins	37	763	2	28231	26	11		37
Hazel	16	932	3	14912	16			16
Asher	12	1019	3	12228	10	2		12
Spruce	7	1100	3	7700			7	7
Total	**72**			**63071**				
Gross Site Area	6.53	Acres						
Undevelopable/POS	2.33	Acres						
Total Nett Area	4.2	Acres						
Total Coverage	15.017	SQFT/Acre						
Total Density	17.1	UPA						

KEY:

- 1800mm HIGH BRICK WALL, SEE VISTRY EXTERNAL WORKS DETAIL 0218.
- 1800mm HIGH CLOSE BOARD FENCE SEE VISTRY EXTERNAL WORKS DETAIL 0213.
- 1100mm HIGH STOCK PROOF FENCE SEE DETAIL NSD9118.
- 1800mm HIGH CLOSE BOARDED GATE SEE VISTRY EXTERNAL WORKS DETAIL 0213.
- SHARED DRIVEWAYS IN BLACK BITUMEN ASPHALT WITH RED CHIPPINGS, REFER TO CIVIL ENGINEERS DRAWINGS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- UU EASEMENTS
- EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED

D	16-10-25	JW	Radius access indicated to private drive of plots 24-26. Plot 27 parking bay position amended. Plots 27-30 position amended. Key Updated. Emergency Link connection to Mills Farm Close amended.
C	07-10-25	JW	Alignment of highway serving plots 2-13 amended. Shared driveways and private parking courts shown with contrasting final surface. Boundary treatments changed to 1.8m high brick wall - plots 23, 26, 27, 30, 46, 50. Service margin increased to 750mm. Parking allocation & position amended - Plots 3-7, 8-11, 18-23, 27, 31-46, 62-63. Spruce (plot 1, 14, 17, 34, 39, 57 & 68) handing updated following a review of working drawings.
B	10-09-25	JW	Turning head amended adjacent to plots 21-26. Emergency Link to Mills farm close amended. Parking Bay size/allocation amended to All plots. Plots 4-7 rotated. Plots 29-30 & 53-54 position amended.
A	24-06-25	JW	Red Edge to West boundary amended to follow fence line position shown on Topo survey CP.TS.29.

Vistry

Partnerships North West
301 Bridgewater Place
Birchwood Park, Birchwood
Warrington WA3 6XF
Tel: 01925 248900 Fax: 01925 248901

site: **Rosary Road Oldham**

title: **PLANNING LAYOUT**

scale: @A2 **1:500**
date: **10-06-25**
drawn by: **JW**
checked:

drawing no: **SKPMCE26-PL-01**

sheet no: **Sheet 1 of #**
revision: **D**

k:\1. p&d\1. sites\0. manchester & cheshire east\skpmce26 - rosary road, fitton hill\1. cad drawings\1. design\2. detailed layout\3. wip\skpmce26-pl-01 - planning layout - rev d.dwg

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Report to CABINET – PART A

Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant Acceptance

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Building a Better Oldham

Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Value for Money and Sustainability

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Report Author: Gail Aspinall, Capital Programme and Special Projects Manager

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

Cabinet Members are asked to approve and accept the Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant Programme (ED&RFG) grant allocation, previously known as the Local Growth and Place Flexible Grant (LG&PFG), following confirmation of award from the Integrated Settlement Fund and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in February 2026. The final allocation is to be confirmed however it could be up to £2,171,726.

Executive Summary

Oldham's final allocation could be up to £2,171,726 grant from ED&RFG. The ED&RFG priority activity areas are:

- Improving public spaces to support vibrant communities
- Unlocking additional floorspace
- Enhancing cultural activity and engagement
- Driving business productivity to support local growth

Oldham's proposed activity programme is drawn from the Creating a Better Place strategy and action plan and will support a range of projects that will meet the core 3 interventions, namely:

- Accessible Oldham
    - Tommyfield Park Phase 1 – increase accessibility into and around the town centre park.

    - Town Centre Park Staff Members – facilitate the expansion of the town centre green space that has been created in the Town Centre
- Town Centre Infrastructure and Cultural Events Programme
    - Co-design cultural events to support Oldham's Place Marketing approach, a core element of the Cultural Strategy and will support the emerging Creative Improvement District and Night-Time Economy strategy and action plan. Creating a safe, welcoming and vibrant town centre with wayfinding and town centre wardens / ambassadors.
- Town Centre Business Grants and Support
    - Providing financial assistance to owners and tenants. Supporting local business growth, improves the local shopping environment, and raises the town's appeal.

Recommendations

Cabinet Members are asked to:

i) Approve the acceptance of an allocation up to £2,171,726 ED&RFG grant against the three interventions approved for funding by GMCA broken down as follows:

- Accessible Oldham
    - Tommyfield Park Phase 1 – increase accessibility into and around the town centre park.
    - Town Centre Park Staff Members – facilitate the expansion of the town centre green space that has been created in the Town Centre
- Town Centre Infrastructure and Cultural Events Programme
    - Co-design cultural events to support Oldham's Place Marketing approach, a core element of the Cultural Strategy and will support the emerging Creative Improvement District and Night-Time Economy strategy and action plan. Creating a safe, welcoming and vibrant town centre with wayfinding and town centre wardens / ambassadors.
- Town Centre Business Grants and Support
    - Providing financial assistance to owners and tenants. Supporting local business growth, improves the local shopping environment, and raises the town's appeal.

ii) Note that as accountable body for ED&RFG, GMCA will issue a Funding Agreement in respect of the grant, which will be reviewed by the Council 's legal services.

iii) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to agree the terms of the Funding Agreement issued by GMCA in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Directors of Finance and Legal Services and approve appointments of professional teams and contract award in respect of the agreed budgets.

iv) Delegate authority to Director of Legal Services or their nominated representative to finalise and enter into the Funding Agreement issued by GMCA in respect of the grant award subject to the completion of any necessary due diligence on subsidy control compliance and authority to agree and complete any project change requests under the Funding Agreement.

v) Delegate authority to the Director of Legal Services or their nominee to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation referred to and/or required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report.

vi) Delegate authority to the Director of Economy or their nominated representative to agree approval of spend, works or individual grants for the Accessible Oldham projects,

Town Centre Infrastructure and Cultural Events Programme projects and Town Centre Business Grants and Support project.

vii) Delegate authority to the Director of Economy or their nominated representative to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2026–2027.

viii) Note and endorse that the internal governance and administration for the ED&RFG grant will be performed via the Creating a Better Place Programme Board (CaPB) structures.

1 Background

1.1 As part of the Governments Integrated Settlement fund, GMCA were awarded £43.2m for the LGPFG for local investment from April 2025 to March 2026. The ED&RFG Programme will replace the LGPFG Programme.

1.2 GMCA are the accountable body for the ED&RFG Investment proposals. GMCA invited local authorities to submit proposals in March 2026 to ensure projects are compliant with Government guidance and will collectively meet the required outputs and outcomes as set out in the Integrated Settlement Investment Plan for the ED&RFG Investment Priorities.

1.3 The ED&RFG priority activity areas are:

- Improving public spaces to support vibrant communities
- Unlocking additional floorspace
- Enhancing cultural activity and engagement
- Driving business productivity to support local growth

1.4 Oldham's final allocation could be up to £2,171,726 from ED&RFG. The proposed programme is drawn from the Creating a Better Place strategy and action plan and will support a range of projects that will meet the core 3 interventions, namely:

- Accessible Oldham
    - Tommyfield Park Phase 1 – increase accessibility into and around the town centre park.
    - Town Centre Park Staff Members – facilitate the expansion of the town centre green space that has been created in the Town Centre
- Town Centre Infrastructure and Cultural Events Programme
    - Co-design cultural events to support Oldham's Place Marketing approach, a core element of the Cultural Strategy and will support the emerging Creative Improvement District and Night-Time Economy strategy and action plan. Creating a safe, welcoming and vibrant town centre with wayfinding and town centre wardens / ambassadors.
- Town Centre Business Grants and Support
    - Providing financial assistance to owners and tenants. Supporting local business growth, improves the local shopping environment, and raises the town's appeal.

2 Current Position

2.1 Oldham's funding proposals will be submitted to GMCA in March 2026 after seeking the views of the Members and the Council's senior leadership.

2.2 GMCA will issue a Grant Funding Agreement setting out the terms of the ED&RFG Payment and Reporting requirements. The Council's legal services and finance officers will review this document.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1: Do nothing. Failure to accept the grant allocation of ED&RFG would reflect negatively on the perception of the town and its ambitions. It would have significant

implications for delivery of the project budgets and, therefore, the achievement of regeneration ambitions and objectives.

3.2 Option 2: Formally accept the ED&RFG allocation of up to £2,171,726 and enter into the Grant Funding Agreement as set out in this report.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 2 is the preferred option to help ensure delivery of the projects to original timescales and budgets and, therefore, the achievement of regeneration ambitions and objectives.

5 Consultation

5.1 Views from Members and the Council's senior leadership will be sought before proposals are submitted to GMCA.

5.2 Consultation and engagement work has taken place over the few years with stakeholders, partners, Council teams and services, elected members, public sector organisations and different voices from our local communities to help clearly define regeneration ambitions, and to ensure that the projects referenced in this report align with local priorities, ideas and suggestions.

5.3 Specific detailed project consultation will take place at the applicable time in conjunction with standard practice for project development considerations.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 Details contained within Part B report.

7 Legal Services Comments

7.1 Details contained within Part B report.

8 Equality Impact, including Implications for Children and Young People

8.1 Yes (see Appendix 1)

9 Key Decision

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision Reference

10.1 RBO-08-26

11 Background Papers

11.1 None

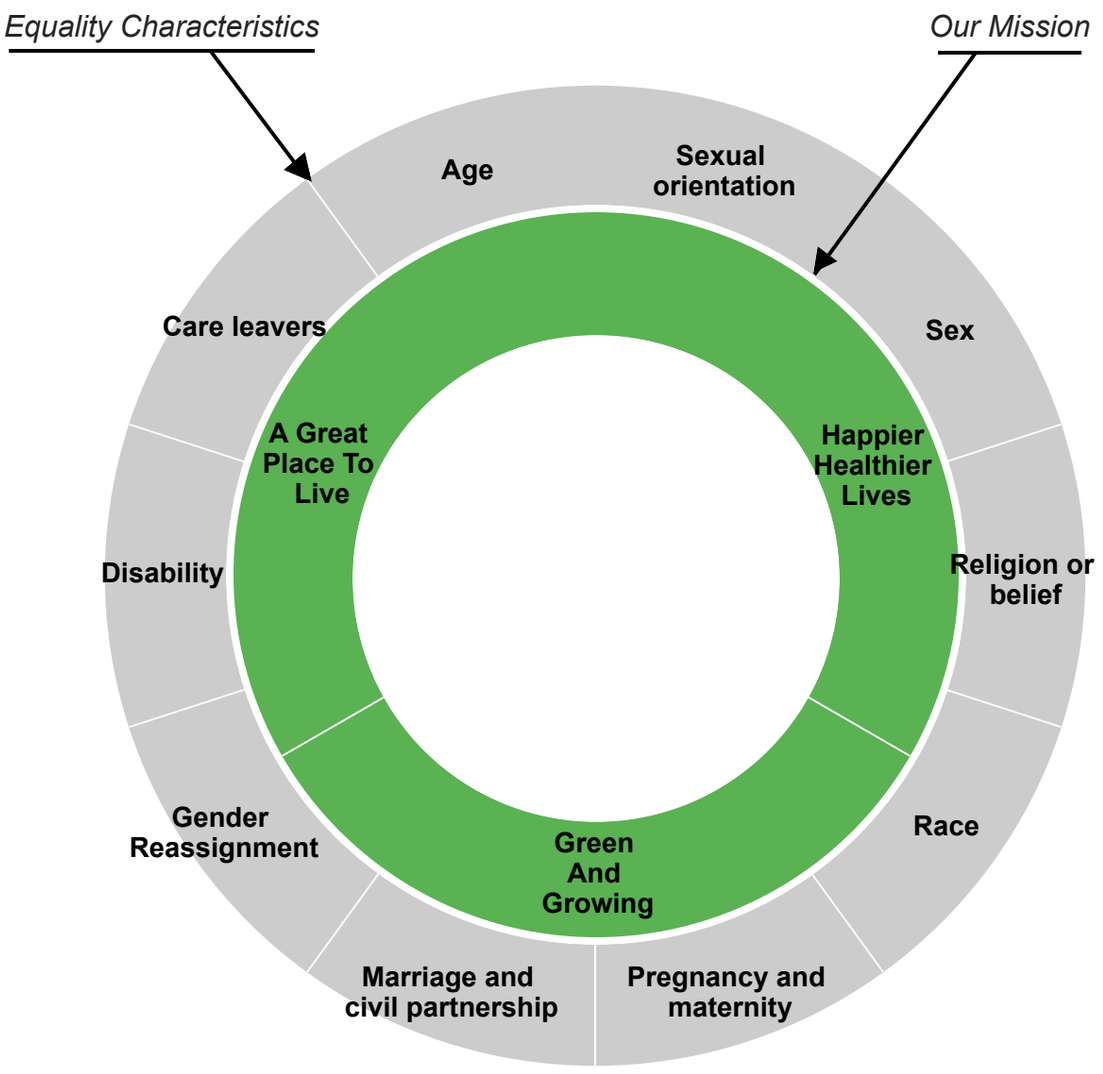
12 Appendix

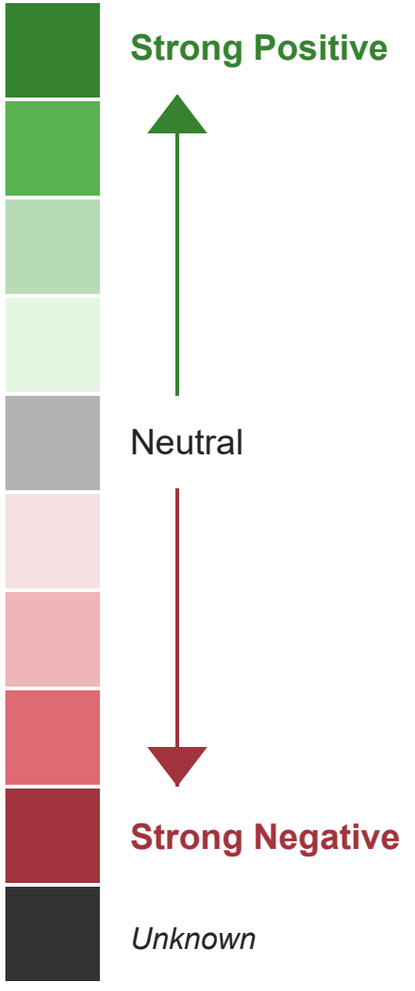
12.1 Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment for Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant

Economic Development and Regeneration Flexible Grant

completed/last updated by Gail Aspinall on 25/02/2026

Portfolio	**Building a Better Oldham**
Directorate	**People**
Service/Team	**Economy**
Is this IA related to a Budget Reduction proposal?	**No**





Equality Characteristics

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
Age	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Care leavers	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Disability	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Race	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Religion or belief	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Sex	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	0	

Our Mission / Corporate Priorities

Category	Impact	Likely	Duration	Impact Score	Comment
A Great Place To Live	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Short Term	4	The ED&RFG grant will help to develop Town Centre infrastructure, cultural events and supporting local businesses.
Green And Growing	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Short Term	4	The ED&RFG will help to develop Jubilee Park and support the Town Centre park team.
Happier Healthier Lives	Strong Positive	Very Likely	Short Term	4	The ED&RFG will help to develop Jubilee Park and support the Town Centre park team.

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Report to Cabinet

Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26
Month 10 – January 2026

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact: Lee Walsh, Director of Finance

Report Author: Vickie Lambert, Finance Manager

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

The report provides Cabinet with an update as of 30 January 2026 (Month 10) of the Council's 2025/26 forecast revenue budget position alongside the financial position of the capital programme together with the revised capital programme 2025/26 to 2029/30 (at Annex 2).

Executive Summary

Revenue Position

The forecast adverse position for 2025/26 at the end of Month 10 is estimated to be £4.946m (£15.199m at the end of Quarter 3).

The details within this revenue monitoring report for Month 10 follows on from the Quarter 3 report previously presented. A forecast adverse position based on the Month 10 revenue controllable budget is £4.946m which is a favourable movement of £10.253m from the position previously reported. As highlighted within the Quarter 3 report, the Council has explored opportunities in conjunction with its external treasury advisors to look at our current policy on capitalising interest costs for assets under construction. The outcome of this work has resulted in a forecast one-off benefit to the Council's General Fund Balance of £10.056m for 2025/26.

Given, the in-year financial position of the Council, the level of reserves available, the approved budget reductions for 2026/27 and the budgetary gaps reported within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), work continues across the organisation to reduce this forecast adverse variance by the financial year end. The recent publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement has provided some additional support to the Council as a result of the Fair Funding Review and the continuation of the Recovery Grant

for another 3 years. Whilst this funding is welcomed, the Council must deliver within the financial resources allocated for 2026/27 onwards. The Council's strategy to transfer much needed resources to reserves to increase the reserve position is a positive movement in ensuring the organisations financial resilience over the medium term. Further details of the current estimated position is included at Annex 1.

Capital Position

The report outlines the most up to date capital spending position for 2025/26 to 2029/30 for approved schemes. The revised Capital Programme budget for 2025/26 is £70.818m at the close of month 10 which incorporates the changes made from the annual review of the programme. Actual expenditure to 31 January 2026 was £43.927m (62.03% of the forecast outturn).

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the contents of the report.
2. Notes the forecast revenue position at the end of Month 10 at £4.946m as detailed at Annex 1.
3. Notes the general revenue usable reserves position for 2025/26.
4. Approves the revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 including the proposed virements and notes the forecast for the financial years to 2029/30 as at the end of Month 10 as outlined in Annex 2.

Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2025/26 Month 10 – January 2026

1 Background

1.1 The Authority's 2025/26 revenue budget was approved by Council on 6 March 2025 at a sum of £322.928m to be met by Government grants, Council Tax and Business Rates. This report sets out the updated revenue financial position at the end of Month 10.

1.2 As the year progresses the monthly and outturn projections will reflect the evolving position of the impact of management actions put in place to mitigate in-year pressures, new developments and changes in the profile of planned expenditure and any additional grants that are announced from the Government.

2 Current Position

2.1 This revenue monitoring report for the period to the end of January 2026 details a projected adverse position based on the Month 10 controllable budget of £4.946m, which is a favourable movement of £10.253m from the position previously reported. As stated within the previous monitoring report presented to this meeting, the Council has been working with its External Treasury Management advisors to explore any opportunities with regards to the capitalisation of interest costs for assets under construction. This work has now concluded with current calculations indicating that an estimated benefit to the Council's General Fund Balance of £10.056m can be achieved based on the current capital forecasts.

2.2 Close financial management continues at all levels of the organisation with early actions having been undertaken by the Executive Team to mitigate this position, to limit the impact on setting the budget for 2026/27 and reduce any unbudgeted use of general revenue reserves.

2.3 The main areas of concern identified within this monitoring report are:

- Adult Social Care forecasting an unfavourable position of £8.928m to the financial year end;
- Children's Services with an unfavourable position of £5.476m; and
- Place with an unfavourable position of £4.576m to the end of March 2026.

2.4 As detailed within the previous monitoring reports presented to this meeting, enhanced spending controls across recruitment and expenditure were implemented by Senior Leaders to mitigate the estimated significant adverse variances that have been reported during the financial year. The impacts of these actions to date are included within this revenue forecast position and have had a positive impact on the adverse variance reported. The Council must continue its efforts to reduce the forecast variance by the year end to mitigate any potential impact on the Council's financial resilience.

2.5 The original Capital Programme for 2025/26 totalled £108.501m. The revised capital programme as at Month 10 taking into account any approved carry forwards, approved new funding, new schemes and variations and proposed variations/ re-phasing as a result of the annual review gives projected revised expenditure of

£70.818m. Actual expenditure at the end of Month 10 was £43.927m (62.03% of the forecast outturn). Further details of expenditure and schemes within the capital programme can be found in Annex 2.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 The options that Cabinet might consider in relation to the contents of this report are;

a) agree the recommendations
b) to not agree the recommendations and propose alternative forecasts

4 Preferred Option

4.1 The preferred option is that Cabinet considers the forecasts and changes within this report; option (a) at 3.1.

5 Consultation

5.1 Consultation with the services within the Council and the Director of Finance.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The full financial implications are detailed in the report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal issues at this time.

8 Procurement Implications

8.1 There are no procurement issues.

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 There are no Equality, Community Cohesion and Crime implications.

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 Key Decision Reference

11.1 FCR-20-25

12 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: Revenue Background Papers are contained in Annex 1 including, Appendices 1

Officer Name: Lee Walsh and Vickie Lambert
Contact: lee.walsh@oldham.gov.uk / Vickie.lambert@oldham.gov.uk

File Ref: Capital Background Papers are contained in Annex 2 including Appendices A to I

Officer Name: James Postle
Contact No: james.postle@oldham.gov.uk

13 Appendices

Annex 1 **Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26 Month 10 – January 2026**

Appendix 1 2025/26 Directorate Summary Financial Positions at 30 January 2026

Annex 2 **Capital Investment Programme Report 2025/26 Month 10 – January 2026**

Appendix A SUMMARY – Month 10 - Community Health & Adult Social Care
Appendix B SUMMARY – Month 10 - Children's Services
Appendix C SUMMARY – Month 10 - Communities
Appendix D SUMMARY – Month 10 – Heritage, Libraries & Arts
Appendix E SUMMARY – Month 10 - Place
Appendix F SUMMARY – Month 10 – Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Appendix G SUMMARY – Month 10 – Resources / Information Technology
Appendix H SUMMARY – Month 10 – Capital, Treasury and Technical Accounting
Appendix I SUMMARY – Month 10 – Funding for Emerging Priorities

Annex 3 Equality Impact Assessment- Financial Monitoring 25-26 (Mth 10)

ANNEX 1

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2025/26
Month 10 – January 2026

1 Background

1.1 The Authority's 2025/26 revenue budget was approved by Council on 6 March 2025 at a sum of £322.928m to be met by Government grants, Council Tax and Business Rates. This report sets out the updated revenue financial position at the end of month 10.

1.2 Under established budget procedures all services are required to monitor and review their approved budgets during the financial year. As part of this process, a forecast of the year-end position has been prepared by all services. The services forecasts include all known commitments, issues, and any planned management actions required.

2 Current Position

2.1 The current net revenue budget is £325.744m which has increased since the base budget was set as result of additional unringfenced grant income being received by the Council. Since Quarter 3, there has been an additional £0.258m allocated as detailed in the table below:

Movement in Funding	£000
DATRIG (inc Rough Sleeping Drug & Alcohol Grant	89
Public Health Grant	(32)
Smoke Free Generation Grant	(315)
Net Movement in Funding	**(258)**

2.2 The forecast position at Month 10 of £15.002m is detailed in the table below which is a £0.197m positive movement from the position reported at the end of Quarter 3.

2.3 As stated within the previous monitoring report presented to this meeting, the Council has been working with its External Treasury Management advisors to explore any opportunities with regards to the capitalisation of interest costs for assets under construction. This work has now concluded with current calculations indicating that an estimated benefit to the Council's General Fund Balance of £10.056m can be generated through this approach. This would reduce the Council's projected adverse variance to £4.946m for this financial year.

2.4 This projected benefit includes current estimates for assets under construction during 2025/26 which will only be finalised as part of the year end close down, with the actual benefit to be reported as part of the Council's 2025/26 outturn report.

2.5 Any reduction in the projected unfavourable position will reduce the call on revenue general usable reserves and protect the Council's financial resilience.

2.6 The projected position including the capitalisation estimate is shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Summary of Month 10 Forecast Revenue Budget Position

Directorate	Annual Budget £000	Annual Forecast £000	Annual Variance reported at Month 10 £000	Annual Variance reported at Quarter 3 £000	Change in Variance between periods £000
Adult Social Care	82,901	91,828	8,928	8,996	(69)
Children's Services	88,569	94,046	5,476	5,407	70
Public Health	25,087	24,852	(235)	(327)	92
Place	71,774	76,351	4,576	4,563	13
Resources	35,481	34,111	(1,370)	(1,067)	(303)
Capital, Treasury and Technical Accounting	21,932	19,559	(2,373)	(2,373)	-
NET EXPENDITURE	**325,744**	**340,746**	**15,002**	**15,199**	**(197)**
Financed By:					
Locally Generated Income	(181,158)	(181,158)	-	-	-
Government Grants	(145,616)	(145,616)	-	-	-
Collection Fund Deficit	1,030	1,030	-	-	-
TOTAL FINANCING	**(325,744)**	**(325,744)**	**-**	**-**	**-**
OVERALL PROJECTED VARIANCE	**-**	**15,002**	**15,002**	**15,199**	**(197)**
Capitalisation of interest costs estimate - (General Fund Balance)	-	(10,056)	(10,056)	-	**(10,056)**
REVISED PROJECTED VARIANCE	**-**	**4,946**	**4,946**	**15,199**	**(10,253)**

Significant revenue variances by Directorate

Table 2 – Summary of Month 10 Revenue budget variance analysis

2.7 There are significant variances contained within the projected net adverse position and a breakdown of these across type of variance is shown below.

Directorate	Non-Delivery of Savings (Red & Amber) £000	Expenditure Variance £000	Income Variance £000	Annual Variance reported at Quarter 3 £000
Adult Social Care	2,373	9,721	(3,166)	**8,928**
Children's Services	2,339	2,976	161	**5,476**
Public Health	-	789	(1,024)	**(235)**
Place	639	1,269	2,668	**4,576**
Resources	-	(6,657)	5,287	**(1,370)**
Capital, Treasury & Technical Accounting	-	(1,949)	(424)	**(2,373)**
NET EXPENDITURE	**5,351**	**6,149**	**3,502**	**15,002**
Capitalisation of interest costs estimate - (General Fund Balance)				(10,056)
REVISED PROJECTED VARIANCE				**4,946**

2.8 As reported over the last two financial years, there are three areas which continue to forecast significant pressures;

- Adult Social Care is reporting a pressure of £8.928m at the end of Month 10 (£8.996m at the end of Quarter 3).
- Children's Services is reporting a pressure at the end of Month 10 at £5.476m (£5.407m at the end of Quarter 3).
- Place is reporting a pressure of £4.576m at the end of Month 10 (£4.563m at the end of Quarter 3).

2.9 Approved at Budget Council in March 2025, significant growth was added to the revenue base budget at £43.185m of which Adult Social Care was allocated £15.264m (35%) and Children's Services was allocated £16.831m (39%). At the same Council meeting budget savings were approved across all Directorates. When these savings are applied, the overall net increase was £6.776m for Adult Social Care and £13.170m for Children's Services.

2.10 Further growth for each of these areas has been included within the Council's Revenue Budget for 2026/27 which was approved at Budget Council on 4 March 2026.

Adult Social Care adverse variance at the end of Month 10 at £8.928m (Quarter 3 at £8.996m)

2.11 As shown at Table 2, the forecast adverse position for this directorate can be broken down as follows:

- Non- Delivery of Budget Reductions (Red and Amber) £2.373m
- Expenditure Variance £9.721m
- Income Variance (£3.166m)

Further details for the expenditure and income variances are included in the following paragraphs, with details on budget reductions included at Section 3.

2.12 The Community Health and Social Care service is reporting significant pressures forecast to be £3.940m at the end of this reporting period (£3.943m at the end of Quarter 3). The small change between periods is due to vacant posts. These pressures predominantly relate to clients with physical disabilities accessing care at home (£2.821m), short stays following a hospital stay (£0.550m), costs for supported living placements (£0.601m), clients with nursing placements (£0.087m) and clients with residential placements (£0.540m).

2.13 The Learning Disability service is reporting an unfavourable a year end forecast of £2.743m at the end of Month 10 (£2.742m at the end of Quarter 3). The largest contributing areas to this estimated position are Care at Home which is an adverse position of £1.462m with £1.586m for Supported Living. There is a pressure against the available budget for residential care at £0.139m and direct payments at £0.315m with other smaller variances across this divisional area.

2.14 The Mental Health service is reporting an estimated adverse position of £1.626m by the end of the financial year as reported at the end of Month 10 compared to £1.637m at the close of Month 9. The costs for Supported Living being the largest contributing factor to this position which is estimated to be £1.201m. There are other smaller variances for nursing and short stay placements which drive the overall position, and which are being offset by favourable variances due to vacant posts and additional income across this service area.

2.15 While activity levels across the Directorate have remained broadly consistent with the previous year, as reported throughout this financial year costs have continued to rise. This is driven by:

- Increasing complexity of care packages
- Constrained availability within the care market
- A growing number of double-cover care packages, particularly for those supporting hospital discharges

2.16 These trends indicate a higher level of acuity among individuals requiring care.

Adult Social Care – Mitigations

2.17 The Directorate has developed a number of mitigations throughout the financial year which have had a contributing favourable impact to the adverse position since the beginning of the financial year, with a positive movement of £1.237m since the position reported at Quarter 1. Work will continue to deliver on the mitigations already implemented or those in train as the Council moves towards the financial year close and into the new financial year.

2.18 It should be noted that the complexity of need for clients accessing this statutory service remains high and whilst the directorate is working hard to reduce this adverse variance, other factors such as demand and need are impacting the financial position. As mentioned

earlier within this report, whilst there is an adverse position reported for this Directorate area, additional resource has been allocated within the 2026/27 base budget based on best information and estimates at the time of budget setting.

Children's Services adverse variance at the end of Month 10 at £5.476m (£5.407m at the end of December 2025)

2.19 The forecast unfavourable position for this directorate area as at the end of January 2026 can be broken down as follows:

- Non- Delivery of Budget Reductions (Red and Amber) £2.339m
- Expenditure Variance £2.976m
- Income Variance £0.161m

Further details for the expenditure and income variances are included in the following paragraphs, with details on budget reductions included later within this report.

2.20 Children's Services are reporting a £5.476m forecast adverse variance for the financial year as at the end of Month 10 of which £2.339m is due to the non-delivery of budget reductions, namely the Children's Investment Plan (£2.202m).

2.21 The largest pressure within Children's Services is the cost of external placements which at the end of Month 10 is projected to be £7.574m more than the budget provision available. To mitigate placement pressures the service is continuing the focused reviews of residential care packages however, there was a net £0.319m increase in placements costs for January 2026, £0.248m additional cost for new placements with an increase of £0.071m for existing packages of care.

2.22 The adverse position for placements is being offset overall by vacant posts and additional income across services within Early Help, Preventative Services and Children's Safeguarding areas.

Children's Services – Planned Mitigations

2.23 Throughout the financial year, the Directorate has implemented and embedded various mitigations to reduce its projected unfavourable position for the financial year. A summary of these mitigations is as follows:

- Children with Disabilities – package reviews with parents and carers.
- Reduction in agency staffing engagements.
- Placements review particularly around those that are high cost.
- Step Forward Foster Care to step down placements from external residential.
- Focused recruitment of foster carers, kinship carers and special guardians.
- Working on over 18's accommodation through commissioned provision for UASC and housing direct matches for care leavers.
- Launch of the partnership offer across First Choice Homes and Leaving Care.
- Careful placement matching to occupy all internal beds in children's homes and semi-independent accommodation.

- Service review of legal fee commitments has resulted in forecast reduction in this area. Further proposal under development to look at reducing costs further.
- One Education review of operating model for the Music Service.

Public Health favourable variance of (£0.235m) as at the end of Month 10 ((£0.327m) at the end of Quarter 3)

2.24 Public Health is projecting a favourable position by the financial year end of £0.235m. This position is due to vacancies held across Public Health and Leisure services.

Place Directorate is reporting adverse variance by year end of £4.576m (£4.563m at the end of Month 9) as at the end of January 2026

2.25 The forecast unfavourable position for this directorate area as at the end of Month 10 can be broken down as follows:

- Non- Delivery of Budget Reductions (Red and Amber) £0.639m
- Expenditure Variance £1.269m
- Income Variance £2.668m

Further details for the expenditure and income variances are included in the following paragraphs, with details on budget reductions included later within this report.

Environment

2.26 The Environment service area is forecast to be in an adverse position of £1.922m by the financial year end, an increase of £0.272m from the position reported at the end of Quarter 3. Expenditure pressures across the division for staffing costs including agency and additional backfill due to sickness alongside additional fleet costs are being forecast in this area. The largest movement between reporting periods is due to an increase in ad-hoc staffing costs due to adverse weather. Favourable variances in other areas such as parking, street lighting, environmental health and traffic management are offsetting these main pressures.

Growth

2.27 The Growth Division is reporting a £4.138m projected adverse variance by the financial year end which has reduced by £0.031m from the previous reporting period. The largest contributing factor behind the forecast budget pressure within this area relates to the whole Town Centre Property portfolio. This pressure relates to reductions in rent as reduced rent agreements are currently being sought by both prospective and sitting tenants. In addition, rent agreements currently being proposed, regularly include service charge caps or service charge costs that are included within a cumulative rent figure. An increased Council footprint and voids within the Spindles Shopping Centre have also led to increased service charge payable and foregone rent.

2.28 Running costs and Repairs and Maintenance costs for the Council's property portfolio are also causing pressure on the budget. The Council is incurring costs for assets within the

Council's disposal programme where there has been a delay in sale or a change to the future of the asset. Energy costs, Business Rates and Cleaning costs being the key pressure points within the Corporate Landlord budget. As previously reported, additional costs are being incurred for both the Spindles Workspace and the JR Clynes building that are exceeding the current budget, with an example being the Business Rates valuation determined by the Valuation Office Agency for Spindles Office space. This has now been backdated to May 2024 and has led to a forecast for Business Rates far exceeding initial budget expectations.

2.29 Favourable variances in other areas such as Development Control and Housing Delivery are dampening the pressures noted above.

Communities

2.30 The Communities division is forecasting a favourable position by the end of the financial year of (£1.482m), an increase from the end of Quarter 3 of £0.226m. The largest contributing factor is within Housing Needs which is reflective of falling placements in temporary accommodation coupled with the sourcing of cheaper accommodation provision. It is worth noting, that this area is particularly volatile and a small increase in the number of placements could lead to a significant rise in current forecasts.

Place - Planned Mitigations

2.31 During the 2025/26 financial year, several mitigations have been implemented across the services within this Directorate which have positively impacted on the year end adverse position. The Directorate continues its work in this regard to positively impact the financial position by the end of 2025/26 and as the Council moves into the new financial year. A summary of some of the implemented mitigations for this area are as follows:

- Rigorous weekly reviews of placement costs, partner performance and priority placements for Temporary Accommodation.
- Recruitment freeze and stopped all non-essential spend.
- Weekly rent review meeting to review feedback and pressures on retail sector in the town and district centres, and to assess the risks to Oldham from national announcements.
- Removed / terminated contracts for costly technical specialists from the Spindles and Old Town Hall management arrangements.
- Continuous review of property repairs and assessment of urgent / essential works to support service delivery and ensure compliance.
- Asset review and proposals for disposal under consideration versus community impact.
- Deep dive into First Response review to further reduce / stop agency use and determine potential impact of further academisation on Service Level Agreements and contract income.
- Waste & Cleansing - weekly review of agency usage versus service delivery / leave / sickness, plus time and investment into frontline health and wellbeing to improve sickness and retention.

Resources forecast favourable variance at the end of Month 10 of (£1.370m) ((£1.067m) favourable variance previously reported)

2.32 The forecast favourable position for this directorate area as at the end of January 2026 can be broken down as follows:

- Non- Delivery of Budget Reductions (Red and Amber) — All achieved
- Expenditure Variance — (£6.657m)
- Income Variance — £5.287m

Further details for the expenditure and income variances are included in the following paragraphs, with details on budget reductions included at Section 3.

2.33 The key driver for this forecast favourable position is due to slippage on vacant posts across the directorate as a whole but particularly in Transformation and Reform, Finance, HR services and Commissioning & Procurement. Additional income received as a result of successful prosecution cases is also contributing towards this position. These favourable variances are offsetting the net pressure of £0.601m in legal services due to the use of agency workers to cover vacant posts.

Resources – Planned Mitigations

2.34 Whilst the directorate is forecast to end the financial year with a favourable financial position, the Directorate continues to deliver on identified mitigations such as the transfer of agency workers from off contract engagements to on contractor providers or permanent contracts.

Capital, Treasury and Technical Accounting – (£2.373m) favourable variance at the end of Month 10

2.35 The Capital, Treasury and Technical Accounting directorate holds the budgets associated with the Council's Treasury Management activities including interest payable on borrowing and interest receivable on investments and is reporting a favourable variance of £2.373m as at the end of January 2026.

2.36 Additional income received as part of treasury activities is the largest contributing factor of the favourable variance reported. Additional dividends have been received from the Council's investment portfolio. Furthermore, due to the enhanced spend controls implemented by the Executive Team, reduced expenditure has resulted in the Council being able to further maximise its investment opportunities to generate additional income. Additional income has also been received as part of the Annual Leave Purchase Scheme with higher than budgeted applications for 2025/26.

Capitalised Interest costs for Assets Under Construction

2.37 As detailed earlier within this report, the Council has been working with its External Treasury Management advisors to explore any opportunities with regards to the capitalisation of interest costs for assets under construction. This work has now concluded

with current calculations indicating that an estimated benefit to the Council's General Fund Balance of £10.056m can be generated through this approach. This is a one-off adjustment and has been estimated based on previous expenditure incurred and projected expenditure on assets under construction for the 2025/26 financial year.

2.38 Based upon current estimates, the Council's projected adverse variance would reduce to £4.946m for this financial year which would significantly reduce the requirement for the Council to use general revenue usable reserves to support day to day expenditure, therefore protecting its financial resilience.

2.39 A detailed revenue table is attached at Appendix 1.

3 Progress on the delivery of the 2025/26 Approved Budget Savings

3.1 Table 3 below presents the progress on the delivery of the 2025/26 approved Budget savings which has been updated to reflect the position as at the end of Month 10. For savings rated as Red and Amber, work continues wherever possible to achieve the agreed saving or an alternative delivery.

3.2 In terms of savings, £21.233m (£21.304m at Quarter 3) of the £26.584m approved budget reduction targets are either delivered or on track to be delivered (Green) representing 80% of the total savings target. The movement between periods is due a change in the delivery of the Children's Investment Plan resulting from the increase in external social care placements required. £1.094m of which 4% are off track but with continued targeted work could be achieved (Amber) and a further 16% or £4.257m with a high risk of not being achieved within this financial year (Red). The table below summarises the progress by Directorate:

Table 3 – Summary on progress on delivery of 2025/26 Approved Budget Reductions

2025/26 Impact of Approved Budget Reductions	Green £000	Amber £000	Red £000	Total £000
Adult Social Care	(6,115)	(1,000)	(1,373)	**(8,488)**
Children's Services	(3,524)	0	(137)	**(3,661)**
Place	(3,474)	(94)	(545)	**(4,113)**
Public Health	(465)	0	0	**(465)**
Resources	(4,394)	0	0	**(4,394)**
Capital, Treasury & Technical Accounting	(4)	0	0	**(4)**
TOTAL	**(17,976)**	**(1,094)**	**(2,055)**	**(21,125)**
Children's Investment Plan	(3,257)	0	(2,202)	**(5,459)**
TOTAL	**(21,233)**	**(1,094)**	**(4,257)**	**(26,584)**
Qtr 3 Position	(21,304)	(1,059)	(4,221)	**(26,584)**

3.3 Included within the Council's approved revenue budget for 2026/27, £3.614m of revenue resource was allocated for those 2025/26 budget reductions that were reported as off track at the end of Quarter 3. This does not mean that delivery of these budget reductions is no longer being actively pursued but allows services to start the new financial year with a

robust base budget. Any further delivery of these budget reductions as the Council moves to this financial year end and into 2026/27 will result in this allocated resource being realigned to the Council's volatility base budget provision.

Significant Budget reduction variances by Directorate

Adult Social Care

3.4 Of the £8.488m of budget savings approved for the Adult Social Care Directorate, £1.373m of them are rated Red and off track. Three budget savings drive this variance as follows:

- Achieving Better Outcomes £0.583m
- Adults, Health & Wellbeing £0.290m
- Focused Transitions Team £0.500m

Children's Services

3.5 As detailed in Table 3, £2.339m (£2.253m at Quarter 3) of Children's Services budget reductions are rated Red with 94% relating to the Children's Investment Plan. The non-delivery of the Children's Investment Plan is predominately due to pressures around the reduction of high-cost placements and release of agency staff. The other Red rated saving is as follows:

- Social Work Services £0.137m

Place

3.6 For this Directorate, 13% of the total approved budget reductions for this area are rated Red and relates to Environment - Service Review / Income Generation at £0.545m.

Resources

3.7 All approved budget reductions for 2025/26 have now been achieved.

4 Mitigation of Current forecast Budget Position

4.1 Throughout this report, corporate and service mitigations have been detailed with the aim of reducing the forecast adverse variance from the position reported, with enhancement of these controls implemented as an early action by the Executive Team to bring down the forecast position. As a result of these management actions the forecast position at the end of Month 10 has improved by £15.876m since the position originally reported at the end of Quarter 1.

4.2 The effectiveness of all management and corporate actions will continue to be closely monitored by the Executive Team with the final position being reported to this meeting as part of the Council's outturn report.

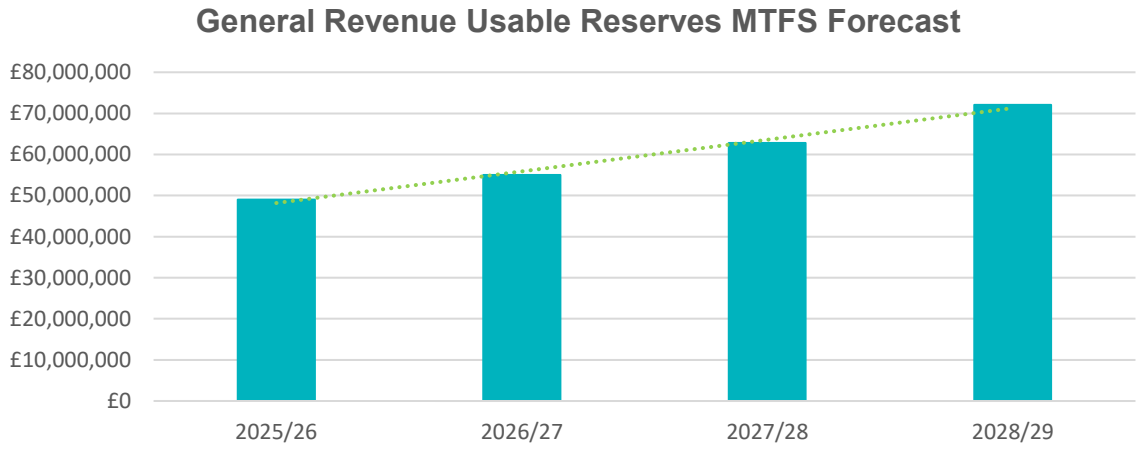
5 Reserves and Balances

5.1 On 1 April 2025, general reserves totalled £33.774m, split between Earmarked Reserves of £31.564m and Revenue Grant Reserves of £2.210m. The General Fund Balance stood at £18.865m.

5.2 Reserves and Balances are a key element of the Council's financial resilience and it is important that their use is kept to an absolute minimum. There have been no further requests for reserve usage in this reporting period.

5.3 It should be noted by Members, that whilst there are a number of management actions being implemented to address the projected in year deficit and the delivery of all budget reductions, to the extent that mitigations do not cover the deficit, there would need to be a unbudgeted call on reserves.

5.4 Whilst there is a potential call on revenue reserves to support the 2025/26 revenue position, included within the Council's approved Medium Term Financial Strategy is a planned and budgeted transfer to reserves, alongside a policy to transfer any one-off returns of funding. This strategy will result in general revenue reserves increasing over the medium term by 32% and thus increasing the Council's financial resilience as shown below:



5.5 The capitalisation of interest costs for assets under construction at £10.056m as detailed earlier within this report will be a benefit to the Council's general fund balance by the financial year end. As such the financing of the Council's forecast adverse position for 2025/26 is expected to be as follows:

	£000
OVERALL PROJECTED VARIANCE at Month 10	**15,002**
Financed By:	
General Revenue Usable Reserves	(4,946)
General Fund Balance	(10,056)

5.6 The Council must continue to mitigate wherever possible the forecast adverse variance for 2025/26 to reduce any call on general revenue usable reserves.

6 Summary

6.1 The current projected position as at the end of Month 10, shows an adverse position by the end of the financial year but which has improved from the position previously reported. The Council has explored opportunities in conjunction with its external treasury advisors to look at the current policy on capitalising interest costs for assets under construction which, after calculation, could generate a potential revenue adjustment to the Council of £10.056m which would reduce the forecast adverse variance for 2025/26 to £4.946m.

6.2 Whilst 84% of savings delivered or with the potential to deliver after targeted intervention, given the overall financial pressures facing the Council, the uncertainty around the deliverability of the remaining 16% of savings continues to be of concern. Any non-achievement of savings not only impacts the current year position but has implications on future years budgets. For future years, the Council has taken the necessary steps to reduce pressures on the 2026/27 base budget as a result of any non-delivery of 2025/26 approved budget reductions.

6.3 The increasing need for use of the Council's services from residents and businesses, the complexity of the support needed, and inflationary costs continue to put pressure on service budgets and is demonstrated by the forecast outturn position detailed within this report. These pressures, in the main are driven by escalating costs in essential statutory services supporting the most vulnerable residents, reflects the broader challenges the Council and numerous Councils across the country are facing. This is particularly acute in statutory and heavily inspected services where there is little flexibility to mitigate rising costs, for example increasing pressures on social care budgets due to the support needs of vulnerable children and complexity in the needs of adult requiring support. There is also an increasing need to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and whilst significant work has been done in the last 12 months, homelessness presentations and use of temporary accommodation is still of concern given the numbers accessing this service.

6.4 This position is not specific to Oldham. Councils across the country continue to warn of financial distress and the risk of Section 114 notices if insufficiency of funding and areas of budget pressure are not addressed by Government. For 2026/27, 36 authorities have had Exceptional Financial (EFS) support from the Government agreed in principle, with one of these authorities requiring the support for its Housing Revenue Account. EFS is temporary financial assistance provided by the government to Councils that are facing severe financial difficulties.

6.5 The recent publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement has provided some additional support to the Council as a result of the Fair Funding Review and the continuation of the Recovery Grant for another 3 years. Whilst this funding is welcomed, the Council must deliver within the financial resources allocated for 2026/27 onwards. The Council's strategy to transfer much needed resources to reserves to increase the reserve position is a positive movement in ensuring the organisations financial resilience over the medium term.

6.6 In view of the adverse variance reported the Council must continue to embed mitigations to address the in-year position and protect reserves.

APPENDIX 1 – 2025/26 Directorate Summary Financial Positions at 30 January 2026

DIRECTORATE	SERVICE AREA	Month 10 Annual Budget £000	Month 10 Annual Forecast £000	Annual Forecast Variance £000
Adult Social Care	Commissioning	15,718	15,672	(46)
	Community Business Services	893	763	(130)
	Clusters	3,427	3,745	318
	Community Health & Social Care	31,153	35,092	3,940
	Director Adult Social Care	1,442	1,789	347
	Learning Disability	17,886	20,629	2,743
	Mental Health	11,521	13,147	1,626
	Clusters	277	421	144
	Safeguarding	584	569	(15)
Adult Social Care Total		**82,901**	**91,828**	**8,928**
Children's Services	Children in Care	53,265	60,332	7,066
	Childrens Safeguarding	3,571	3,042	(529)
	Fieldwork & Family Support	11,655	11,732	76
	Children's Services Intergration	4,815	4,518	(297)
	Central Education Services	833	833	0
	Community / Adult Learning	301	301	(0)
	Inclusion Service	(427)	(428)	(0)
	Learning Services	257	258	1
	Learning Services - Early Years	(194)	(194)	(0)
	Post 16 Service	44	45	1
	School Support Services	76	(34)	(109)
	SEND Services	7,938	7,968	30
	Skills and Employment	86	84	(1)
	Early Help	4,410	3,898	(512)
	Troubled Families	1,938	1,689	(249)
Children's Services Total		**88,569**	**94,046**	**5,476**
Public Health	Public Health (Client and Delivery)	21,708	21,437	(271)
	Leisure Services	3,379	3,415	36
Public Health Total		**25,087**	**24,852**	**(235)**
Place	Building Control	69	373	304
	Strategic Planning	18,015	18,014	(1)
	Development Control	70	(5)	(75)
	Housing Delivery	296	278	(18)
	Facilities Management	494	524	30
	Corporate Estates	583	2,451	1,868
	Property Services	(1,509)	(1,547)	(38)
	Town Centre	529	2,597	2,068
	Creating a Better Place	(253)	(253)	0
	Structures	141	141	0
	Operations	1,918	1,707	(211)
	Traffic Management & Maintenance	1,870	1,800	(70)
	Parking Admin & Enforcement	(1,018)	(924)	94
	Health & Safety	277	231	(46)
	Environmental Health	1,042	958	(84)
	Licensing & Trading Standards	(6)	(37)	(31)
	First Response	(155)	341	496
	Street Lighting	4,316	4,256	(60)
	Waste & Cleansing	24,672	26,338	1,666
	Parks / Ground Maintenance	4,965	5,070	105
	Arboriculture	588	583	(4)
	Emergency Planning	62	128	66
	Fleet	(252)	(252)	0
	Community Safety & Cohesion	651	581	(70)
	Districts	1,051	935	(117)
	Culture	6,393	6,372	(21)
	Youth Services	908	890	(18)
	Housing Needs	6,060	4,803	(1,257)
Place Total		**71,774**	**76,351**	**4,576**

DIRECTORATE	SERVICE AREA	Month 10 Annual Budget £000	Month 10 Annual Forecast £000	Annual Forecast Variance £000
Resources	Partnership Support (Borough and GM)	1,947	1,946	(1)
	Strategic Customer Service	137	137	0
	Chief Executive Management	2,231	2,023	(208)
	Communications and Research	587	602	16
	Customer Services	2,273	2,235	(38)
	ICT	5,951	6,104	153
	Democratic and Civic Services	331	377	46
	Audit	2,993	2,958	(35)
	Commissioning and Procurement	633	453	(180)
	Democratic and Civic Services	464	433	(32)
	External Funding	(26)	(27)	(1)
	Finance	2,641	2,238	(403)
	Housing Benefit Payments	1,848	1,731	(117)
	Revenues and Benefits	4,118	3,692	(427)
	Transformation and Reform	259	(46)	(306)
	HR Strategy	2,850	2,675	(175)
	Organisational Development	416	425	9
	Democratic and Civic Services	2,950	2,725	(225)
	Legal	1,982	2,583	601
	Registrars	(87)	(134)	(47)
	ICT	740	785	45
	Strategy and Performance	242	195	(47)
Resources Total		**35,481**	**34,111**	**(1,370)**
Capital Treasury and Technical Accounting	Corporate Expenses	9,226	9,154	(72)
	Interest and Investment Expenditure and Income	11,305	9,004	(2,301)
	Corporate and Democratic Core	1,003	1,003	0
	Parish Precepts	400	400	0
Capital Treasury and Technical Accounting Total		**21,934**	**19,561**	**(2,373)**
Grand Total		**325,746**	**340,748**	**15,002**

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26 MONITORING REPORT Month 10 – January 2026

1 Background

1.1 The original capital programme for 2025/26 reflected the priorities outlined in the capital strategy as approved at Cabinet on 17 February 2025 and confirmed at the Council meeting on 6 March 2025.

1.2 The position at the end of Month 10 (January 2026) is highlighted in this report.

1.3 For the remainder of the financial year, the programme will continue to be monitored and revised to take account of any new developments and changes in the profile of planned expenditure.

2 Current Position

2.1 Table 1 below shows the capital programme for 2025/26 and a further four years to 2029/30, and reflects the priorities outlined in the Capital Strategy.

Table 1 – 2025/30 Capital Strategy

Directorate Budget	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	Total £000
Community Health and Adult Social Care	4,106	3,000	3,000	-	-	**10,106**
Children's Services	10,482	3,151	2,000	-	-	**15,632**
Communities	338	-	-	-	-	**338**
Place	80,617	14,997	15,501	2,055	-	**113,170**
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	3,193	206	210	215	219	**4,043**
Resources/Information Technology (IT)	3,165	3,123	2,595	1,877	-	**10,760**
Capital, Treasury & Technical Accounting	3,600	2,628	4,373	2,500	5,000	**18,101**
Funding for Emerging Priorities	3,000	2,885	2,000	-	-	**7,885**
Total Expenditure	**108,501**	**29,990**	**29,680**	**6,647**	**5,219**	**180,037**

Funding	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	Total £000
Grant & Other Contributions	(60,800)	(9,736)	(9,558)	(780)	-	**(80,874)**
Prudential Borrowing	(39,855)	(17,480)	(17,660)	(3,343)	(3,000)	**(81,338)**
Revenue Contributions	(3,193)	(206)	(210)	(215)	(219)	**(4,043)**
Capital Receipts	(4,653)	(2,567)	(2,252)	(2,309)	(2,000)	**(13,781)**
Grand Total	**(108,501)**	**(29,990)**	**(29,680)**	**(6,647)**	**(5,219)**	**(180,037)**

3. 2025/26 – 2029/30 Capital Programme

3.1 Following the approval of the Month 9 capital programme, a number of new funding and contributions approvals have taken place as follows:

Table 2

New Grants/Contributions	2025/26 £000
DFG- 2025/26 Additional Grant	204
DFG- Boroughwide Private Contributions	34
Additional CRSTS funding	335
DfE Grant – AV1 Robots	45
TOTAL	**618**

3.2 Following the approved changes since M09 and assuming grant offers are approved, and rephasing resulting from updating the 5 Year Capital Strategy the revised Capital Programme 2025/26 as at M10 is a net increase of £0.618m.

3.3 2025/26 Capital Programme

The table below shows the movements in the 2025/26 Capital programme since the Capital Strategy was set and all approved virements to date, together with those proposed since the last reporting period.

Table 3 – 2025/26 Capital Programme

Directorate Budget	Capital Strategy 2025-30 £000	Revised Budget (M09) £000	Approved Virements (M10) £000	Proposed Virements (M10) £000	Current Budget (M10) £000	Spend (to M10) £000
Community Health and Adult Social Care	4,106	3,664	238	-	3,902	2,409
Children's Services	10,482	4,325	45	-	4,370	1,552
Communities	338	-	-	-	-	-
Heritage, Libraries and Arts	-	561	-	-	561	511
Place	80,617	56,517	335	-	56,852	38,713
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	3,193	250	-	-	250	3
Corporate/Information Technology (IT)	3,165	1,283	-	-	1,283	739
Capital, Treasury & Technical Accounting	3,600	3,600	-	-	3,600	-
Funding for Emerging Priorities	3,000	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**108,501**	**70,200**	**618**	**-**	**70,818**	**43,927**

3.4 Given that this is the position as at Month 10 and in view of the current challenges being faced including the pressure caused by the economic position, there must remain an element of uncertainty about the forecast position. A further breakdown of Table 3 on a service-by-service area basis is shown at Appendix A to I.

3.5 Actual expenditure to 31 January 2026 was £43.927m (62.03% of the proposed forecast outturn). This is lower than spending profile last year's (67.63%) at the same period. As would be expected the majority of this spend is within the Place directorate which amounts for 88.13% of the total 2025/26 capital programme spend to date. The position will be kept under review and budgets will be managed in accordance with forecasts.

3.6 The revised capital programme for 2025/26 to 2030/31, considering all the above amendments in arriving at the revised forecast position, is shown in Table 4 together with the projected financing profile.

3.7 Contrary to previous updates in the year, the table below includes the current year plus the 5 year capital strategy period.

2024/25 to 2029/30 Current Capital Programme

Table 4 - 2025/26 – 2030/31 Capital Programme @ M10

Directorate Budget	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31 £000	Total £000
Community Health and Adult Social Care	3,902	6,495	3,870	-	-	-	**14,267**
Children's Services	4,370	9,657	6,481	2,209	10	-	**22,727**
Communities	-	125	-	-	-	-	**125**
Heritage Libraries and Arts	560	-	-	-	-	-	**560**
Place							
- Corporate Property	4,274	4,346	3,669	1,744	362	-	**14,395**
- Environment	1,414	2,663	111	-	-	-	**4,188**
- Housing	6,544	4,702	-	-	-	-	**11,246**
- Regeneration	36,199	35,084	9,230	92	-	-	**80,605**
- Transport	8,422	26,158	12,627	4,180	-	-	**51,386**
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	250	6,151	3,849	-	-	-	**10,250**
Corporate/Information Technology (IT)	1,283	3,843	3,336	1,092	-	-	**9,554**
Capital, Treasury & Technical Accounting	3,600	3,240	4,973	3,100	5,600	-	**20,513**
Funding for Emerging Priorities	-	-	902	2,506	-	1,592	**5,000**
Grand Total	**70,818**	**102,464**	**49,047**	**14,923**	**5,972**	**1,592**	**244,816**

Funding	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31 £000	Total £000
Grant & Other	(41,811)	(62,664)	(32,547)	(5,349)	(256)	-	**(142,626)**
Prudential Borrowing	(23,983)	(33,039)	(13,600)	(6,974)	(3,116)	(1,592)	**(82,304)**
Revenue	(310)	(3,010)	-	-	-	-	**(3,320)**
Capital Receipts	(4,714)	(3,751)	(2,900)	(2,600)	(2,600)	-	**(16,566)**
Grand Total	**(70,818)**	**(102,464)**	**(49,047)**	**(14,923)**	**(5,972)**	**(1,592)**	**(244,816)**

Capital Receipts

3.8 The capital programme assumes the availability of £4.714m of capital receipts in 2025/26 for financing purposes. This includes £2.600m to support transformational activity in the General Fund using the flexibility allowed by Government.

3.9 The total net usable capital receipts currently received in year is £1.366m, the first call being against the £4.714m outlined above in respect of use of Flexible Receipts.

3.10 The capital receipts position as at 31 January 2026 is as follows:

Table 5 – Capital Receipts 2025/26

	£000	£000
Capital Receipts Financing Requirement		4,714
Usable Capital Receipt b/fwd.	-	
Actual capital receipts received to date	(1,366)	
Identified in year capital receipts remaining	(4,873)	
Further Required /(surplus) in 2025/26		**(1,525)**

3.11 Given the significant amount of capital receipts needed to finance the capital programme in this and future years it is imperative that the capital receipts/disposal schedule is adhered to. This is monitored at the monthly Capital Receipts meeting and will be subject to on-going review throughout the remainder year. The out-turn position and achievability of capital receipts in 2025/26 is reliant on one large disposal which is being kept closely under review. At the current date it is still anticipated to be realised by the end of the financial year.

3.12 It is of course recognised that the ongoing economic instability with higher interest rates and the impact on borrowing costs, coupled with the increase cost of living will continue to impact on business/economic activities making capital disposals more challenging.

3.12 The Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2025/31 incorporates an expectation of the level of receipts that is anticipated in each of the respective years and therefore an estimate as to the resultant level of over or under programming in order to present a balanced budget. As can be seen below, the most recent review has produced a forecast which is below the financing projections included in Table 3. Should the currently estimated position prevail then the position would be as illustrated in the table below:

Table 6 – Capital Receipts 2025/26 to 2030/31

Capital Receipts	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31 £000
Capital Receipts Carried Forward	-	(1,525)	(5,964)	(5,604)	(3,260)	(660)
Identified Capital Receipts	(4,873)	(7,590)	(2,540)	(256)	-	-
Received in year	(1,366)					
Total Receipts	(6,239)	(9,115)	(8,504)	(5,860)	(3,260)	(660)
Capital Receipts Financing Requirement	4,714	3,151	2,900	2,600	2,600	
Over/(Under) programming	**(1,525)**	**(5,964)**	**(5,604)**	**(3,260)**	**(660)**	**(660)**

3.13 Whilst there is projected to be a surplus of capital receipts over the requirements for the capital programme, the surplus is dependent on a single substantial receipt expected to be received later in the current year. If there are any delays to the receipt and it is not received in year the consequence would be either, a corresponding increase in the level of prudential borrowing and hence an impact on the revenue budget, or a reduction in the overall capital programme.

4 Conclusion

4.1 A detailed review of the capital programme has been undertaken and realigned and reprofiled across the programme. In addition, further reviews have taken place as part of the overall Capital Strategy and Annual Budget Setting process, and we will continue to reflect developments relating to individual projects/schemes, across all years and re-profile accordingly.

4.2 The capital programme is being continually monitored and is reported to Members on a regular basis.

5 Appendices

5.1 Appendix A - Summary - Month 10 - Community Health and Adult Social Care
Appendix B - Summary - Month 10 - Children's Service
Appendix C - Summary - Month 10 - Communities
Appendix D - Summary - Month 10 - Heritage Libraries and Arts
Appendix E - Summary - Month 10 - Place
Appendix F - Summary - Month 10 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Appendix G - Summary - Month 10 - Corporate/Information Technology
Appendix H - Summary - Month 10 - Capital Treasury & Technical Accounting
Appendix I - Summary - Month 10 - Funding for Emerging Priorities

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) - Community Health and Adult Social Care **APPENDIX A**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Adult Services	4,106	3,664	238	-	3,902	2,409
Community Health and Adult Social Care Total		**3,664**	**238**	**-**	**3,902**	**2,409**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) – Children's Services **APPENDIX B**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Children, Young People and Families (CYPF)	1,000	544	-	-	544	383
Schools - General Provision	6,473	1,632	45	-	1,677	670
Schools – Primary	-	1,267	-	-	1,267	221
Schools – Secondary	3,009	604	-	-	604	201
Schools – Special	-	262	-	-	262	46
Schools – New Build	-	16	-	-	16	31
Children's Service Total	**10,482**	**4,325**	**45**	**-**	**4,370**	**1,552**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) – Communities **APPENDIX C**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Local Investment Fund	338	-		-	-	-
Communities Total	**338**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) – Heritage Libraries and Arts **APPENDIX D**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Heritage Libraries and Arts	-	561		-	561	511
Heritage Libraries and Arts Total	**-**	**561**	**-**	**-**	**561**	**511**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) – Place **APPENDIX E**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Asset Management – Corporate Premises	2,670	3,658	-	-	3,658	1,535
Asset Management – Education Premises	1,148	616	-	-	616	749
Boroughwide Developments	28,177	18,964	-	-	18,964	16,354
Boroughwide District Projects	17	-	-	-	-	-
Cemeteries and Crematorium	-	7	-	-	7	11
Countryside	80	39	-	-	39	-
Parks	13	1,308	-	-	1,308	-
Playing Fields & Facilities	-	49	-	-	49	-
Parks & Playing Fields	11	11	-	-	11	535
Private Housing	5,677	6,543	-	-	6,543	53
Strategic Acquisitions	1,647	1,490	-	-	1,490	886
Town Centre Developments	27,593	15,744	-	-	15,744	12,404
Trans - Accident Reduction	744	973	-	-	973	322
Trans - Bridges & Structures	4,107	1,262	-	-	1,262	875
Trans - Fleet Management	175	322	-	-	322	230
Trans - Highway Major Works/Drainage schemes	8,498	5,003	335	-	5,338	4,455
Trans - Minor Works	60	485	-	-	485	238
Trans - Miscellaneous	-	42	-	-	42	66
Place Total	**80,617**	**56,517**	**335**	**-**	**56,852**	**38,713**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) **APPENDIX F**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Housing Revenue Account	3,193	250		-	250	3
HRA Total	**3,193**	**250**	**-**	**-**	**250**	**3**

SUMMARY Month 10 (January 2026) – Corporate/Information Technology (IT) **APPENDIX G**

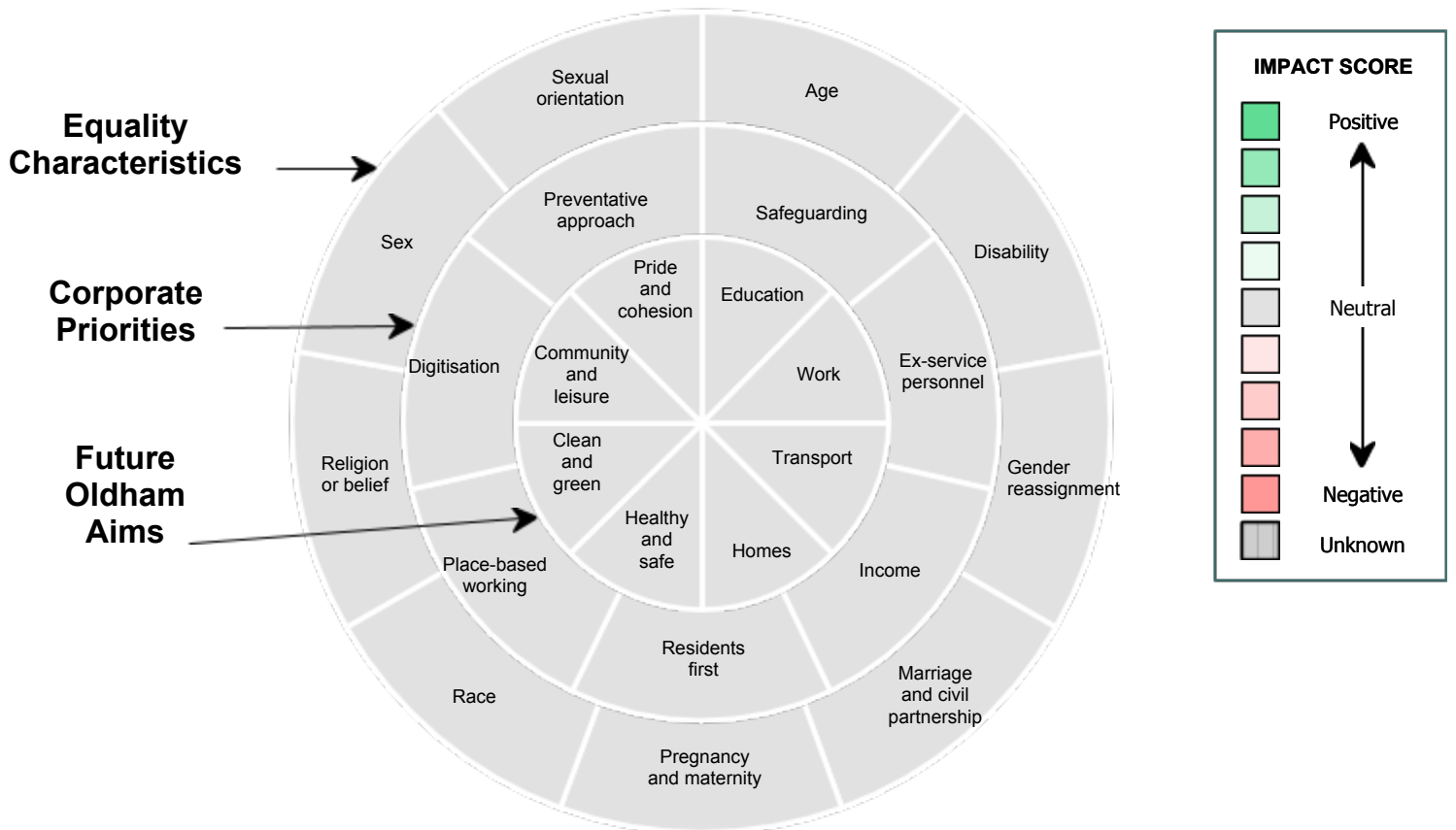
Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Information Technology	3,165	1,283		-	1,283	739
Information Technology Total	**3,165**	**1,283**	**-**	**-**	**1,283**	**739**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) – Capital Treasury and Technical Accounting **APPENDIX H**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Cross Cutting /Corporate	3,600	3,600		-	3,600	-
Capital Treasury and Technical Accounting Total	**3,600**	**3,600**	**-**	**-**	**3,600**	**-**

SUMMARY – Month 10 (January 2026) - Funding for Emerging Priorities **APPENDIX I**

Service area	Capital Strategy £000	Revised Budget M09 £000	Approved Virements M10 £000	Proposed Virements M10 £000	Revised Budget M10 £000	Expend to M10 £000
Funding for Emerging Priorities	3,000	-	-	-	-	-
Funding for Emerging Priorities Total	**3,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**



Click to refresh Table

Annex 3- EIA: Financial Monitoring 25/26 (Mth 10)

	Impact	Likelihood	Duration	Comment
Equality Characteristics				
Age	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	The report considers the 2025/26 financial position of the Council at Mth 10 (30 January 2026) and as such, in isolation has no direct impact on Equality
Disability	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Gender reassignment	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Race	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Religion or belief	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Sex	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Corporate Priorities				
Safeguarding	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	The report considers the 2025/26 financial position of the Council at Mth 10 (30 January 2026) and as such, in isolation has no direct impact on Equality
Ex-service personnel	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Income	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Residents first	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Place-based working	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Digitisation	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Preventative approach	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Future Oldham Aims				
Education	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	The report considers the 2025/26 financial position of the Council at Mth 10 (30 January 2026) and as such, in isolation has no direct impact on Equality
Work	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Transport	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Homes	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Healthy and safe	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Clean and green	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Community and leisure	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above
Pride and cohesion	Neutral	Possible	Short Term	As Above

Report to CABINET

Local Taxation Discretionary Policies 2026/27

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability

Officer Contact: Fiona Greenway, Executive Director of Resources

Report Author: Mark Edmondson, Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits

23 March 2026

Reason for Decision

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for three discretionary policies relating to Council Tax and Business Rates.

Executive Summary

This report provides the full detail of proposed updates to the discretionary policies used to support Local Taxation administration i.e., Council Tax, Business Rates, Council Tax administration.

It is proposed that the policies are updated to reflect current post holder job titles and includes a requirement for an annual review of the policy to be undertaken, and where no substantive changes are proposed (or changes are minor and non-financial), authorisation is delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits

The policies and other proposed changes are

- **The Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy**
    - This policy sets out the Council's approach to the awarding of Council Tax discretionary discounts.

- The policy provides guidance in two areas. Awards of Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHPs) which are available to support residents experiencing exceptional financial hardship in paying their Council Tax. And the award of a Council Tax discount for care leavers.
- There are no other recommended amendments to the policy.
- The proposed Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy is presented at Appendix 1.

- **The Discretionary Rate Relief Policy**

  - Central Government have introduced reliefs for the 2026/27 financial year. They have been incorporated into the proposed Discretionary Rate Relief Policy which is presented at Appendix 2.

- **The Empty Property and Second Homes Premium Policy**

  - The proposed Empty Property and Second Homes Premium Policy is presented at Appendix 3.

Recommendation

It is recommended that;

1) Approval is given to the proposed amendments to the existing Local Taxation Discretionary Policies for 2026/27.
2) Approval is given to delegate the annual review of these policies to the Head of Revenues and authorisation will be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits where there is no financial impact or material change to the policy.
3) The Local Taxation Discretionary Policies presented as appendices 1-3 are adopted for 2026/27

Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies

1 Background

1.1 This report reviews three discretionary Local Taxation policies and proposes amendments to the policies where appropriate. Each policy will be set out in turn throughout the report.

Policy 1 - Discretionary Council Tax Discounts Policy

1.2 Local Authorities can reduce the amount of Council Tax payable by granting locally defined discounts under provisions contained in Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

1.3 The Local Government Act 2012 inserted a new section 13A in the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and this created two discounts.

- Section 13A (1)(a) and (b) requires the Council to operate a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The implications under 13A (1)(a) and (b) are considered and agreed on an annual basis when deciding the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme.

- Section 13A (1)(c) allows for a discretionary reduction which can be used in relation to any individual on a case-by-case basis or by determining a class of case for which the charge should be reduced. The intention behind this legislation is to allow billing authorities the discretion to create local discounts or exemptions to cater for local circumstances, for example flooding. The discount must be funded from the Council's own Revenue Budget (General Fund) and can amount to anything up to 100% of the Council Tax charged.

1.4 The Council currently makes use of Section 13A (1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to provide for a discount of up to 100% for care leavers under the Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers policy. This was approved by Cabinet on 24 April 2017 (discount up to the age of 21) and the discount was extended up to the age of 25 in a report approved by Cabinet on 25 March 2019.

1.5 Section 13A (1)(c) can also be used to support residents on a case-by-case basis, typically when they are experiencing exceptional financial hardship and Cabinet approved the introduction of an Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHP) scheme from 2019/20 to support residents to pay their Council Tax when experiencing financial crisis.

Policy 2 - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

1.7 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 (LGFA 1988) and the Localism Act 2011 require the Council to maintain a Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme to award Business Rates Relief (also known as Non-Domestic Rates Relief) of up to 100% to certain organisations who operate within specified criteria. These criteria cover:

- Charitable bodies already in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% – the Council has further discretion to 'top up' this relief to 100% of the rates due.

- Registered community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) already in receipt of Mandatory Relief of 80% – the Council has further discretion to 'top up' this relief to 100% of the rates due.

- Non-profit making organisations – the Council has discretion to grant Discretionary Rate Relief of between 0% -100% of the Business Rates due.

1.8 The Government has, in recent years, introduced several temporary Business Rate Relief schemes. Any awards made under these schemes are awarded under Section 47 of the LGFA 1988 i.e., under the provision enabling Councils to make discretionary payments. However, the Council is fully reimbursed by Central Government by way of grants awarded under Section 31 of the Local government Finance Act 2003. These include:

- The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief scheme will end on 31 March 2026.
- A new Pubs and Live Music Venue Relief for 2026/27.
- Newspaper relief which applies a £1,500 Business Rates discount for office space occupied by local newspapers, up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per property, and up to state aid limits. This relief is applied for the financial years 2017/18 to 2026/27.
- Heat Network Relief which applies to separately rated hereditaments that are wholly or mainly used for the purposes of a heat network and who expect over the next 12 months the heat to be generated from a low carbon source.

1.9 The Council also has the power to reduce or remit the Business Rates charged in certain circumstances where the business is enduring temporary financial difficulties. This is known as Hardship Relief (HR) and may be awarded where the Council is satisfied that:

- The ratepayer would sustain financial hardship if the Council did not do so; and,
- It is reasonable for the Council to grant relief with regard to the interests of its Council Taxpayers.

1.10 The Council also receives requests from ratepayers asking that the rateable value of premises subject to Business Rates is split between the occupied and unoccupied portions. This means that the Council would only apply and charge Business Rates on the occupied portion of the property. The Council has discretion to accept or refuse a request that the rateable value is split between the occupied and unoccupied portions under Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. If the request is accepted, then the Valuation Office Agency is asked to supply a certificate indicating the relevant values for the occupied and unoccupied portions and this certificate is binding upon the Council.

Policy 3 - The Empty Property and Second Homes Premium Policy

1.11 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 allowed Local Authorities the discretion to apply Council Tax Empty premiums for properties unoccupied and unfurnished (long-

term empty) for over 2 years, and to determine its own discounts for unoccupied and unfurnished properties.

1.12 The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allowed the Council to increase the Empty Property premium up to 100% for properties considered long term empty for over 2 years, a 200% premium for properties considered long term empty properties for over 5 years from April 2020 and a further 300% premium for long term empty properties for over 10 years from April 2021.

1.13 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, provides further discretion allowing the Council to introduce the 100% Empty Property premium for properties considered long term empty for 12 months, and a 100% premium for Second Homes.

1.14 The policy outlines the circumstances in which the Council would consider removal of the premium.

2 Current Position

Policy 1 - Discretionary Council Tax Discounts Policy

2.1 The Council currently provides a 100% Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers aged up to the age of 25.

2.2 The Council operates an Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHP) scheme to support residents who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship in paying their Council Tax.

2.3 The proposed policy for 2026/27 can be found at Appendix 1.

Policy 2 - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

2.4 The Council's existing Discretionary Rate Relief Policy outlines the areas of local discretion and the Council's approach to the various discretionary awards. This approach considers the impact:

- of granting Discretionary Rate Relief on the Council's wider financial position and Council Taxpayers.
- on the organisations and businesses that currently receive or may apply for relief in the future.
- for Oldham residents if relief is awarded and the regeneration benefits for the borough.

2.5 When deciding whether to award any Discretionary Rate Relief, the principal consideration is that in making the award there should be a resultant positive impact for residents and Council Taxpayers of Oldham. This consideration also includes long term benefits to both the community and the Council Taxpayer, such as increasing employment or improving amenities available to the local community.

2.6 The Government have introduced new legislation that allows local authorities to determine how far to consider backdated requests of Discretionary Rate Relief. The Council limits backdating of awards to the start of the preceding financial year (from

the application date) unless the applicant can provide reasonable evidence as to why they were unable to apply in a timely manner.

2.7 The Government confirmed a number of additional Business Rates discounts and reliefs for the 2026/27 financial year that would be funded by a grant awarded under powers of Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. These are:

- A new Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief for 2026/27.
- Supporting Small Business Relief Scheme for ratepayers who are losing some or all of their small business rate relief as a result of a large rateable value increases following the 2026 revaluation. The scheme is available for the 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 financial years.
- Newspaper relief. A £1,500 Business Rates discount for office space occupied by local newspapers, up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per property, and up to state aid limits. This relief is applied for the financial years 2017/18 to 2026/27.

2.8 The proposed policy for 2026/27 can be found at Appendix 2.

Policy 3 – Empty Property and Second Homes Premium Policy

2.9 The Council applies an empty property premium for property unoccupied and unfurnished for over 12 months. This means empty property premiums are applied as set out below.

- 100% premium on properties unoccupied and unfurnished for at least 1 year.
- 200% premium on properties unoccupied and unfurnished for at least 5 years.
- 300% premium on properties unoccupied and unfurnished for at least 10 years.
- To help provide guidance to affected property owners and to Council Officers administering the premium.

2.10 The Council applies a second homes premium of 100%.

2.11 This policy is presented at Appendix 3.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 The following options are available:

3.2 Option 1 – Approve the amended Local Taxation Discretionary Policies.

Policy 1 – Discretionary Council tax Discount Policy

The Council would continue to award a 100% Council Tax Discount for care leavers up to the age of 25 and consider requests from residents for Exceptional Hardship Payments. The annual review of the policy will be delegated to Head of Revenues and authorisation will be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits where there are no significant changes proposed.

Policy 2- Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

The Council would continue to administer the temporary Business Rates discount and relief schemes introduced by Central Government. The annual review of the policy will be delegated to Head of Revenues and authorisation will be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits where there are no significant changes proposed.

Policy 3 - Empty Property and Second Homes Policy

The Council would continue to charge additional Council Tax for empty properties and second homes and officers would continue to use their discretion to authorise exceptions to this policy. The annual review of the policy will be delegated to Head of Revenues and authorisation will be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits where there are no significant changes proposed.

3.3 **Option 2 – Approve Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies without the amendments regarding annual reviews.**

Policy 1- Discretionary Council Tax Discount policy

The Council would continue to award a 100% Council Tax Discount for care leavers up to the age of 25 and consider requests from residents for Exceptional Hardship Payments.

Policy 2 - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

The Council would continue to administer the temporary Business Rates discount and relief schemes introduced by Central Government.

Policy 3 - Empty Property and Second Home Premium Policy

The Council would continue to charge additional Council Tax for empty properties and second homes and officers would continue to use their discretion to authorise exceptions to this policy.

4 Recommended Option

4.1 Option 1 – The recommended option is to approve the updated Local Taxation Discretionary Policies for the 2026/27 financial year.

5 Consultation

5.1 During the review of each policy, feedback has been obtained from relevant services involved in the application process.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The 100% Council Tax discount for care leavers continues to create a cost to the Collection Fund. No changes are proposed for 2026/27, and no material increase in caseload is expected.

6.2 New Government-funded Business Rates reliefs for 2026/27, including Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief and Supporting Small Business Relief, are fully reimbursed through Section 31 grants and therefore have no net impact on the Council

6.3 Delegating annual reviews of discretionary policies carries no direct revenue implications but supports timely updates and reduces the risk of outdated guidance affecting financial outcomes.

6.4 Overall, the policy changes result in a manageable financial position.

(Matthew Kearns – Finance Manager)

7 Legal Services Comments

7.1 Option 1, approval of the updated Local Taxation Discretionary Policies is supported. It is important that the relevant policies offered are accurate and up to date and transparent.
Having accurate policies reduces the risk of any challenges around decisions made under the policy and helps to avoid reputational risks. (Alex Bougatef – Director of Legal Services)

8. Co-operative Agenda

8.1 The operation of Local Taxation and Benefits discretionary policies is consistent with the Council's Co-operative ethos.

9 Human Resources Comments

9.1 Not applicable

10 Risk Assessments

10.1 The proposed policy updates are not expected to materially increase financial risk. The Local Taxation Discretionary Policies are key documents setting out the updated guidance, changes and discretion areas which have been introduced since the last review. The financial impact of discretionary awards continues to require careful monitoring, and all decisions must remain within the Councils approved budget framework. The commitment to annual review provides and appropriate mechanism for ongoing financial oversight. Whilst there will be minimal impact on the collection fund, it is important that the Council continues to maximise collection rates. The inclusion of relief for public houses and live music venues will not affect the budget position of the Council as the Government will reimburse awards under this policy.(Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance).

11 IT Implications

11.1 Not applicable.

12 **Property Implications**

12.1 Not applicable

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 None.
Angela Porter – Senior Category Manager - Commercial & Environment

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 Not applicable

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 Not applicable

16 **Implications for Children and Young People**

16.1 The application of the Council Tax discount for care leavers is the only specific impact on children and young people.

17 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

17.1 In taking financial decisions the Council must demonstrate that it has given "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between different groups.

17.2 Demonstrating that "due regard" has been given involves:

- assessing the potential equality impacts of proposed decisions at an appropriate stage in the decision-making process - so that it informs the development of policy and is considered before a decision is taken;
- ensuring that decision makers are aware of the equality duties and any potential equality issues when making decisions.

NB – having due regard does not mean the Council cannot make decisions which have the potential to impact disproportionately, it means that we must be clear where this is the case and must be able to demonstrate that we have consulted, understood and mitigated the impact.

17.3 To ensure that the process of impact assessment is robust, it needs to:

- Be specific to each individual proposal;
- Be clear about the purpose of the proposal;
- Consider available evidence;
- Include consultation and involvement with those affected by the decision, where appropriate;
- Consider proposals for mitigating any negative impact on particular groups;
- Set out arrangements for monitoring the actual impact of the proposal.

17.4 The Equality Act 2010 extends the public sector equality duties to cover eight protected characteristics, namely: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

17.5 There is no duty to undertake an equality impact assessment (EIA) but an EIA is recognised as a useful tool in performing and recording the duty to have due regard. Equality Impact Assessment documents have been prepared for each policy and are included at Appendices 6 to 8.

18 Key Decision

18.1 Yes

19 Key Decision Reference

19.1 FCR-05-26

20 Background Papers

20.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: The background papers to this report are the Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers policy approved by Cabinet on 24th April 2017 (discount up to the age of 21) and The Local Taxation and Benefits Discretionary Policies approved by Cabinet on 28 March 2023. Both papers are publicly available at www.Oldham.gov.uk
Officer Name: Adam Parsey
Contact No: 1656

21 Appendices

21.1 Appendix 1 – Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy
21.2 Appendix 2 – Discretionary Rate Relief Policy
21.5 Appendix 3 – Empty Property Premium Policy
21.6 Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment – Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy
21.7 Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment – Discretionary Rate Relief
21.10 Appendix 6 – Equality Impact Assessment – Empty Property Premium Policy

APPENDIX 1

Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy

Guidelines for the award of Discretionary Discounts for Council Tax

23rd March 2026

Review 23rd March 2027

1 Introduction and Scope

1.1 This policy sets out the Council's approach to the awarding of Council Tax discretionary discounts and demonstrates that the Council is fair, consistent in its approach and sufficiently flexible to consider individual circumstances.

1.2 The policy has been developed to provide guidance in two areas. Section 2 sets out the guidance to support awards of Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHPs) which are available to support residents experiencing exceptional financial hardship in paying their Council Tax. Section 3 sets out guidance to support the award of discounts to care leavers.

1.3 Under The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Section 13A (1) (c)) (as amended) and the Local Government Act 2003 (Section 76), Local Authorities can use discretion to reduce a part or all of the Council Tax liability where they are satisfied that the Council Taxpayer would suffer hardship if it did not do so.

1.4 Section 13A(1)(c) allows for a discretionary reduction which can be used in relation to any individual on a case-by-case basis, or by determining a specific class of case for which the charge should be reduced.

1.5 Although the decision to reduce an individual's Council Tax liability is discretionary, the actual award (or refusal of) can be challenged by way of an appeal to a Valuation Tribunal.

1.6 Periodically the Government may introduce a specific scheme in response to an event such as a natural disaster (e.g. flooding). Where such schemes are introduced, funding is normally fully met by Government. Any such schemes that are introduced with the intention to be awarded under Section 13A (1) (c) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), will be administered in accordance with any instructions and guidance set out by Government.

1.7 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or as required, in response to changes in legislation or the priorities of the Council. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources, in conjunction with the Director of Finance is authorised to vary the criteria, funding and application processes set out in this policy to ensure it continues to remain fit for purpose and within budget.

2 Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHPs)

2.1 Introduction and Scope

2.1.1 The Council is aware of its statutory duties under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended). This regulation allows billing authorities the discretion to reduce Council Tax in individual cases.

2.1.2 The Council has therefore made provision to assist residents who are facing exceptional financial hardship. Payment made under this provision will be known as Exceptional Hardship Payments (EHPs).

2.1.3 EHPs are not the same as payments made under the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR). Residents on low incomes should first explore whether there is an entitlement to CTR before making an application for EHP.

2.1.4 The Council will ensure each application received for EHP, will be treated on its own merits and all applicants will receive equal and fair treatment regarding accessibility to the fund and the decisions made.

2.1.5 EHPs are only intended as short-term assistance and should not be considered as a way of reducing Council Tax liability indefinitely.

2.1.6 The Council will give particular (but not exclusive) consideration to applications where the applicant is experiencing specific, exceptional or unforeseen situations which then impact on their ability to meet their Council Tax liability.

2.1.7 In considering an award the Council must be satisfied that:

- It is reasonable to expect other Council Taxpayers to meet the cost of reducing the tax.
- It would be unfair to ask the applicant to meet their Council Tax liability based solely on their own individual circumstances and not on circumstances that affect all or a significant proportion of the residents of Oldham.

2.2 **Criteria for an application**

2.2.1 The Council recognises the importance of protecting its most vulnerable residents. This policy has been created to ensure that an appropriate level of protection and support is available to those claimants most in need.

2.2.2 Hardship can be a result of many different and exceptional circumstances which could include, but are not limited to: -

- Multiple and complex issues facing the claimant and his/her household.
- The death of a partner or dependant
- Sudden increases in other expenses due to a family member's illness or incapacity
- Sudden reduction in income due to loss of employment.

The Council will consider all relevant circumstances and resources. For example, it may not be appropriate to attempt to alleviate hardship through the award of financial assistance where advice and assistance in accessing other available support may be of greater benefit.

The Council will consider the full circumstances of the applicant before deciding whether to award an EHP. The Council will be looking for something out of the ordinary that makes it very difficult for the claimant to pay their Council Tax.

2.2.3 When assessing a claim for EHP, The Council must be satisfied that:

- The applicant is unable to meet either all or part of their Council Tax liability. .

- All reasonable steps have been taken to meet the full Council Tax liability prior to submitting the EHP application.
- The applicant's current circumstances are unlikely to improve during the period for which the EHP may be awarded, which would make payment of their Council Tax unlikely.
- There is evidence of exceptional hardship or exceptional personal circumstances that justify a reduction in Council Tax liability.
- The applicant has no assets that could be realised and used to pay Council Tax.
- Entitlement to all other reliefs, discounts, exemptions, discretionary payments and other available support have been considered.
- Non-payment of Council Tax is not due to the taxpayer's own wilful refusal or culpable neglect.

2.3 **What an EHP does not cover.**

2.3.1 EHPs cannot be awarded:

- To help towards payment of rent
- Where the applicants Council Tax liability is nil as a result of any other discount or exemption
- For any reason other than to reduce Council Tax liability.

2.4 **Making an Application**

2.4.1 The applicant, or a party authorised by the applicant such as an appointee or advocate, will be encouraged to complete and submit an EHP application form along with any evidence requested within the application form.
(Applications will not be considered if they are made by landlords or managing agents of properties where the claimant is liable for Council Tax).

- The application must detail the hardship or personal circumstances upon which the request is based.
- Applicants are required to include evidence of their financial circumstances to enable the Council to make an informed assessment of their ability to pay. Financial evidence can include, but is not limited to, household income and expenditure details, utility bills, household bills and all debt.
- Further evidence may be requested that is relevant to the application (e.g., specific details about income and expenditure details and medical evidence) where appropriate.
- Applicants will be expected to provide further information in support of their claim within one month of submitting their application or the application will be rejected.
- The Council will not reimburse any costs an applicant may incur in making an application or in providing requested evidence.

2.5 **Making an Award**

2.5.1 Applications will be reviewed initially by the Council's Head of Revenues and a recommendation made to the Council's Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits for a decision.

2.5.2 EHPs are intended as short-term assistance and the claimant will be expected to have made clear attempts to improve their financial circumstances during any award.

2.5.3 Claimants may make subsequent applications once their initial award has expired or if their circumstances have changed or worsened since an original application was refused.

2.5.4 Awards will normally be paid only once. The reduction in liability will be applied to the relevant Council Tax account and a revised bill will be issued. No cash alternative to this approach is available.

2.5.5 An award will usually be a percentage of the net Council Tax liability (the amount payable following the award of any benefit, discount, exemption or relief) and be for a specified period. The award will not exceed 100% of Council Tax liability.

2.5.6 The claimant must inform the Council about any changes in their circumstances that might affect their claim for EHP within 21 days of that change.

2.5.7 Decisions will normally be made within one month of the application provided all supporting information has been received and will be notified to the applicant as soon as practicable thereafter. The award notification will set out:

- The amount of EHP awarded
- The period of the award
- When the award will be paid
- The requirement to report changes in circumstances
- What the claimant can do if they do not agree with the award decision, and
- Details of where the claimant can obtain independent debt advice

2.5.8 If the application is not successful, the notification will include:

- The reasons for refusal and the appeal rights.
- Details of where the claimant can obtain independent debt advice

2.5.10 If it is subsequently identified that an award was made as a result of false or fraudulent information, the Council will withdraw the award and recover the resulting sum due. The Council has a zero tolerance regarding fraud and reserves the right to report any suspected fraudulent claims to the Councils Counter Fraud team.

2.5.11 Under Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is a right of appeal if a Council Taxpayer applying for a discretionary reduction under Section 13A(1)(c) is not satisfied with the Council's decision. The guidance detailing how to appeal is set out in Section 4.

3 Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers

3.1.1 Oldham Council wants to support care leavers in their transition to independent living by offering a 100% Council Tax discount up to the age of 25.

3.1.2 A care leaver is defined as a person who has been in the care of a local authority (looked after) for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who was in care on their 16th birthday.

3.2 Qualifying Criteria

3.2.1 Confirmation will be sought from Oldham Council's Children's Social Care or other public body or professional organisation that care leaver status applies. Most discount cases will be referred directly by the Council's Children's Services team. However, care leavers can also make a direct application for a discount, and this will be made available on the Council's website www.oldham.gov.uk

3.2.2 The care leaver must live in the Borough at the address the award relates to and be the person responsible for payment of Council Tax to qualify for the discount.

3.2.3 The discount will not be means tested.

3.3 Discount Scheme

3.3.1 The care leavers discount was introduced in April 2017, as such care leavers who become responsible for Council Tax after this date will be granted the discount from the date of occupation.

3.3.2 The level of discount applied will be 100% of Council Tax liability after any entitlement to any national reliefs, exemptions or other discounts including entitlement to Council Tax Reduction have been calculated and awarded.

3.3.3 If, subsequent to an award, the care leaver's liability for Council Tax reduces during the period of the award, for example if the care leaver becomes entitled to a single person discount, the care leaver's discount will be amended to ensure the award does not exceed the care leaver's Council Tax liability.

3.3.4 Where awarded, the discount will remain in force until the care leaver reaches the age of 25 years or ceases to become responsible for Council Tax whichever date occurs first.

3.3.5 When a discount has been given, a Council Tax bill will be issued showing the detail. If a discount request is refused, a letter will be issued outlining the reasons for the refusal.

3.3.6 Under Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is a right of appeal if a customer applying for a discretionary reduction under Section 13A(1)(c) is not satisfied with the Council's decision. The guidance detailing how to appeal is set out in Section 4.

4 Appealing a Decision

4.1 If an applicant disagrees with a decision, there is a right to request that the application is reviewed by the Head of Revenues or the Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits.

4.2 Any requests for a review of the decision must be made within one calendar month of the original decision letter being issued.

4.3 All applications for a review of the decision must be made in writing or via email and must outline the reasons why the applicant is disputing the decision.

4.4 The applicant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decision.

4.5 If the applicant disagrees with the outcome of the internal review undertaken by the Head of Revenues or the Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits they can appeal to the Valuation Tribunal. Appeals must be made directly to the Valuation Tribunal.

4.6 The Valuation Tribunal can only consider whether the decision made by the Council was made reasonably by applying judicial review principles. The Valuation Tribunal cannot award discretionary reductions but may ask the Council to review its policy or decision again.

5 Policy Review

5.1 The Council will review the Discretionary Council Tax Discount Policy on an annual basis, but the Council reserves the right to review and revise the policy at any time as a result of information gained through operating the policy or Government initiatives.

5.2 Where there are no changes proposed, or only minor changes that do not have any financial implications or doesn't materially change the policy, authorisation of the annual review is delegated to the Executive Director of Finance or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits.

APPENDIX 2

Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy

Guidelines for the Award of Discretionary Business Rates Relief

23rd March 2026

Review 23rd March 2027

1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) is granted in accordance with Section 43 and Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (LGFA 1988) and Section 47 and 49 of the LGFA 1988 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 Clause 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amended Section 47 of the LGFA 1988 to allow billing authorities the discretion to fund their own local discounts. Since April 2012, the Council has been able to grant Business Rates discounts entirely as it sees fit within the limits of the primary legislation and European rules on state aid. These powers can be used to encourage new business and investment, as well as to support local shops or community services.

1.3 The introduction of the Business Rates Retention scheme in 2013 meant that Local Authorities now have a financial stake in the income generated from Business Rates in their area. Since April 2017, the Council has participated in the 100% Business Rates Retention pilot scheme.

1.4 This means that Mandatory and Discretionary Relief is financed 99% by the Council and 1% by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The Government has pledged that Greater Manchester authorities will suffer no financial detriment as a result of participating in the 100% pilot scheme. This extends to the awarding of mandatory and discretionary rate reliefs.

1.5 In view of the direct cost of awarding Business Rates relief, the Council has determined that its DRR policy is reviewed annually to ensure that awards of DRR are appropriate and maximise benefits to Oldham residents.

1.6 This policy document outlines the areas of local discretion and the Council's approach to the various awards. This approach has regard to the impact:

- Of granting DRR (including Section 44a Relief and Hardship Relief) on the Council's wider financial position and Council Taxpayers;
- On the organisations and businesses that currently receive or may apply for relief in the future;
- For Oldham residents and any regeneration benefits to the borough.

1.7 The principal consideration when making an award is that any relief granted is in the best interests of the residents and taxpayers of Oldham and produces a local benefit. It will also be reflective of and complementary to the co-operative ethos of the Council.

1.9 The Government has introduced several rate relief schemes in recent years, some of which are available for specified years only. The criteria and funding for these schemes are detailed within Government guidance issued to Local Authorities. The Government funded schemes in relation to 2026/27 can be found in section 11.

2 CHARITABLE RELIEF (CHARITIES)

2.1 Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% is granted to charities in the following circumstances where the:

- Ratepayer of a property is a charity or the trustees of a charity; and
- The property is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes (including charity shops, where the goods sold are mainly donated and the proceeds are used for the purpose of the charity).

2.2 The Council does not have any discretion regarding the award of Mandatory Rate Relief; however, the Council must be satisfied that the statutory criteria has been met. For this purpose, the Council will use guidance provided in both the LGFA 1988, and by reference to other enactments and case law.

2.3 The Council will refer to the Charity Register for evidence of charitable status however absence from the register does not mean an organisation has not been established for charitable purposes as certain organisations are exempt from registration under the Charities Act 1993.

2.4 In cases where a charity is in receipt of mandatory rate relief of 80%, the Council has discretion to grant up to 20% additional rate relief known as a DRR top up.

2.5 The Council will consider applications for a DRR top up from charities based on their own merits, on a case-by-case basis. However, the principal consideration is that the relief is in the best interests of the residents and taxpayers of Oldham and produces a local benefit as the Council must contribute to the cost of each award. As such, top up will be awarded generally to the following type of registered charities:

- Scouts, guides, cadets and other clubs/associations for young people;
- Community schemes encompassing organisations providing support for those over the age of retirement, community transport, those based on volunteering and residents' associations;
- Organisations providing support in the form of advice, training for employment, counselling;
- Organisations that provide services that address the consequences of ill health and disability;
- Charitable sporting clubs (also see CASCs);
- Locally based leisure and cultural organisations;
- Armed forces veteran's associations;
- Locally based charities;
- Charity shops (operated by either locally based or national charities);
- Local childcare providers registered as charities

3 REGISTERED COMMUNITY AMATEUR SPORTS CLUBS (CASC) RELIEF

3.1 Mandatory rate relief of 80% is granted to registered community amateur sports clubs (CASCs). To qualify as a CASC, a sports club must fulfil all the following criteria. It must be:

- Open to the whole community;
- Run as an amateur club;
- Non-profit making and
- Aiming to provide facilities for, and encourage people to take part in, eligible sport.

3.2 In cases where a CASC is in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief of 80%, the Council has discretion to grant up to 20% additional rate relief as a DRR top up.

3.3 The principal consideration is that any relief is in the best interests of the residents and taxpayers of Oldham. However, in determining the application the following matters will be taken into consideration:

- How the CASC supports and links into the Council's corporate vision and priorities;
- A club should have an open access policy. If a club effectively discriminates by only accepting members who have reached a particular standard, rather than seeking to promote the attainment of excellence by enhancing access and the development of sporting aptitude, then it does not fulfil the requirements;
- Although clubs should be open to all without discrimination, single sex clubs may be permitted where such restrictions are not discriminatory in intent but a genuine result of physical restraints (such as changing room facilities) or the requirements of the sport. In such cases, the organisation will be required to provide proof of such limiting factors.

3.4 If the organisation applying for a DRR requires membership or an entry fee, the Council will consider whether:

- Membership is open to everyone, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, creed, disability, age, religious affiliation or political belief,
- The subscription or fee is set at a level which is not prohibitively high and considered to be affordable by most sections of the community
- Fee reductions are offered for certain groups such as, for example, under 18s or over 60s
- Membership is encouraged from groups who face social barriers, such as, for example, young people not in employment, education or training; people above working age; or people with disabilities
- Facilities are made available to people other than members.

3.4 It should be noted that sports clubs which run a bar are unlikely to be awarded relief if their main purpose is the sale of food or drink. However, if the sale of food or drink by the organisation aids the overall operation and development of the organisation in achieving its objectives, this would be permissible if the principal objectives of the organisation meet the eligibility criteria detailed at 3.1. If the bar makes a profit, this profit must be reinvested to support the organisation in achieving its principal objectives. Financial information will be required to evidence any profit and its use.

4 NON-PROFIT MAKING ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANIES (CIC)

4.1 The Council has the power to grant discretionary rate relief of up to 100% to non-profit making organisations. The main objectives of the organisation must be related to:

- Relief of poverty
- Advancement of religion
- Advancement of education
- Social Welfare
- Science
- Literature
- Fine arts
- Recreation
- Or be otherwise beneficial to the community

An organisation must be able to demonstrate how it:

- Meets local needs and benefits local people; and
- Provides a valuable service to the community; and
- Is open to all sections of the community and operates in such a way that it does not discriminate against any section of the community; and
- It is not conducted or established for the primary purpose of accruing profit.

4.2 The Council will consider applications for a DRR top up from non-profit making organisations based on their own merits, on a case-by-case basis. However, the principal consideration is that the relief is in the best interests of the residents and Council Taxpayers of Oldham and produces a local benefit as the Council must contribute to the cost of each award. As such, top up will generally be awarded to the following type of non-profit making organisations:

- Scouts, guides, cadets and other clubs/associations for young people;
- Community schemes encompassing organisations providing support for those over the age of retirement, community transport, those based on volunteering and residents' associations;
- Organisations providing support in the form of advice, training for employment or counselling;
- Organisations that provide services that address the consequences of ill health and disability;
- Locally based leisure and cultural organisations;
- Armed forces veteran's associations.

4.3 If the organisation applying for DRR requires membership or an entry fee, the Council will consider whether:

- Membership is open to everyone, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, disability, age, religious affiliation or political belief,
- The subscription or fee is set at a level which is not prohibitively high and considered to be affordable by most sections of the community;
- Fee reductions are offered for certain groups such as under 18s or over 60s;

- Membership is encouraged from groups who face social barriers, , for example, young people not in employment, education or training; people above working age; or people with disabilities;
- Facilities are made available to people other than members.

4.4 Where the applicant organisation requires membership, at least 50% of the members should reside within the boundaries of the Borough of Oldham (evidence of this will be required).

5 LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

5.1 The Council will consider applications for DRR from local childcare providers based on their own merits on a case-by-case basis. The principal consideration is that any relief is in the best interests of the residents and taxpayers of Oldham and produces a local benefit as the Council must bear a percentage of the cost of any relief granted. Criteria in relation to an award are:

- A local childcare provider is in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief of 80% as a registered charity, in these cases the Council has the discretion to grant up to 20% additional rate relief.
- In cases where a local childcare provider is not in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief the Council has the discretion to consider granting an award up to 100% of rate relief.
- If a local childcare provider applies for relief, they must not charge fees that would be considered unaffordable by most Oldham residents. The provider must also not restrict attenders with admittance policies that are deemed unfair.
- If a nursery charges unreasonable fees or if they make significant profits that are not reinvested into the business that they are unlikely to be awarded DRR.
- In reviewing an application from a childcare provider, there will be consultation with the Early Intervention and Families team to determine if providing relief would meet the aim of supporting local childcare provision.

6 RURAL RATE RELIEF

6.1 Organisations or businesses which operate within a designated rural settlement (with a population of 3,000 or less) may be eligible for Rural Rate Relief. Eligible organisations/businesses must be located in one of the settlements identified in the Council's rural settlement list, which is reviewed periodically:

- Current areas designated as rural settlements are:

Delph	Denshaw	Diggle	Dobcross
Grasscroft	Grotton	Scouthead	Woodhouses

6.2 Rural Rate Relief is open to any type of business within a classified rural settlement that satisfies the following criteria:

- The only qualifying village shop or post office with a rateable value of up to £8,500
- The only qualifying public house or petrol station with a rateable value of up to £12,500
- Within the boundaries of a qualifying rural settlement.

7 LOCALISM RELIEF

7.1 The Council is now able to grant Business Rates discounts entirely as it sees fit within the limits of the primary legislation and the UK Subsidy Control regime. The Council will place particular focus on using these powers to support the regeneration objectives of the Council, encouraging new business and investment in the Borough.

7.2 In reviewing an application from a business requesting DRR under these powers, there will be consultation with the Council's Business and Investment Team to determine if providing relief would support the economic objectives of the borough.

7.3 Applicants will also be signposted to the Council's Business and Investment team for support and for advice on other options available to the business prior to an award being considered.

8 HARDSHIP RELIEF

8.1 The Council has the power to reduce or remit the Business Rates charged in certain circumstances where the business is enduring temporary financial difficulties beyond their control. This is known as Hardship Relief.

8.2 The Council may grant Hardship Relief if it is satisfied that:

- The ratepayer would sustain financial hardship if the Council did not do so; and
- It is reasonable for the Council to grant relief, with regard to the interests of its residents and Council Taxpayers.

8.3 Loss of profitability due to increased competition would not generally be considered as Financial Hardship.

8.4 Hardship Relief is a temporary measure which should not be used to artificially sustain a failing business. Hardship Relief will be awarded where the applicant organisation is facing temporary financial difficulties and where the community would be significantly disadvantaged if the business were to close due to these temporary financial constraints.

9 SECTION 44A RELIEF (PARTLY OCCUPIED PROPERTIES)

9.1 The Council has discretion to consider requests from ratepayers asking that the rateable value of premises that is charged Business Rates is split between the occupied and temporarily unoccupied portions and that the Council then only charges rates of the occupied portion. This is permitted under Section 44a of the LGFA 1988.

9.2 The Council has the discretion to accept or refuse such a request. If the request is accepted, then the Valuation Office Agency (part of Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) is asked to supply a Certificate indicating the relevant values for the occupied and unoccupied portions and this Certificate is binding on the Council.

9.3 The definition of 'temporary period' is not prescribed with the law and therefore Oldham Council has the discretion to decide the period of relief that should be awarded.

9.4 The law provides discretionary power, but the decision whether to exercise that power must be taken before the Valuation Officer's Certificate is requested, as the apportioned values are those upon which the charge must be levied once supplied. Discretionary power does not alter the general rule that occupation of part of a premise constitutes occupation of the whole of the premises.

9.5 The effect of the apportioned values applies to the **operative period**, which is defined as the period beginning with the day on which the premises became partly unoccupied and ending with the first day on which one or more of the following events occur.

- The occupation of any of the unoccupied part of the premises;
- The ending of the financial year in which the apportionment was required;
- The requiring of a further apportionment;
- The complete occupation of the premises; or
- The complete vacation of the premises.

9.6 The Authority is required to terminate this relief in the event of a change in the proportions of the premises occupied and unoccupied or at the end of a financial year, and then may, if appropriate consider requesting the Valuation Office to issue a further Certificate.

9.7 The amount of Rate Relief that is awarded is determined by statute and is calculated by reference to the Rateable Value attributed to the unoccupied area by the Valuation Office Agency.

9.8 Applications will only be considered in respect of unoccupied parts of a property that can be clearly defined and are reasonably segregated from the occupied part of the property.

9.10 The use of Section 44a is intended to apply to those premises where there are practical difficulties in either occupying the premises or vacating the premises. Therefore, it is not intended that all premises which temporarily become partly unoccupied should have their liability reduced.

9.11 No award shall be made where it appears to the Council that the reason that part of the property is unoccupied is wholly or mainly for the purpose of applying for Rate Relief.

9.12 Rate Relief under this section will not be awarded in respect of partly occupied property where the partial occupation of the property may arise due to the ordinary day to day nature of the business (for example the operation of a warehouse) or where a ratepayer is incrementally moving out of the premises and leaving the borough.

9.13 The period of Relief will not exceed either 3 or 6 months depending on the type of property the claim has been made for, in line with the current legislation for part-occupied properties.

9.14 In determining the application, favourable consideration will be given (but not limited to) where:

- There is a partial occupation of a warehouse, factory or commercial premises to

facilitate relocation of the company into the borough or to extend the current portfolio and associated occupation levels in the borough; or
- Where fire, flood or other disaster prevents full use of the premises.

9.15 Favourable consideration would not normally be given:

- For a period that has now passed;
- For consecutive periods;
- To support a business moving its operation outside of the borough;
- Where the owner sublets part of the premises on a commercial basis;
- Where the part occupation is likely to continue for more than 3 months (6 months if industrial premises);
- Where there appears to be no effort to let, sell or occupy the empty part; or
- Where part occupation is seasonal or cyclical in nature.
- Where part occupation is due to refurbishment of the premises.

(N.B. This is not an exhaustive list.)

9.16 At all times consideration will be made for the regulations contained within Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and any relevant case law.

10 MAKING AN APPLICATION

10.1 Applicants will be encouraged to submit applications for DRR online at www.oldham.gov.uk

10.2 All Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief top up must be supported by, and include:

- The organisation's main purposes and objectives, as set out in, for example, a written constitution, a memorandum of association, or set of membership rules.
- A full set of audited accounts relating to the two years preceding the date of application. Where audited accounts are not available, projected figures should be provided instead. (It is recommended that applicant organisations submit audited accounts dating back further than two years if such information is available.)
- Details of how the organisation meets the criteria outlined in these guidelines.

Localism Relief

10.3 Where applications seek rate relief in respect of new business set up etc., information provided should also include business plans and other information that demonstrate the regeneration or economic benefit to Oldham.

Section 44A Relief

10.4 The following information will be required to support written requests for Section 44a relief:

- A plan of the property showing the dimensions of the occupied and unoccupied area of suitable quality to enable the Valuation Office Agency to apportion the rateable value of the property between the occupied and unoccupied areas.

Applications will not be considered until such time as the plan is provided;
- The period to which the application relates;
- Contact details in order to inspect the site where necessary.

10.5 If an application is received without the necessary supporting information, the application will be considered ineligible.

10.6 The Council will inform applicants in writing of any decision. This notification will also confirm the period for which relief has been awarded and a revised bill will be issued.

10.7 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and provided instructions on how they can appeal the decision.

10.8 The granting of relief will be reviewed annually and those in receipt of Discretionary Rate Relief will be asked to supply or confirm relevant information for the purpose of the review. If this information is not provided, no reminders will be issued, and the relief will be removed.

10.9 The Council can depart from its general policy if it sees fit to do so, taking into account the facts of each case and the interests of residents and Council Taxpayers.

11 Temporary Government funded Relief schemes

11.1 The Government has introduced several rate relief schemes in recent years, some of which are available for specified years only. The application process and eligibility criteria are individual to each relief scheme. The Council follows Government guidance in administering and awarding these reliefs.

11.2 The schemes available for 2026/27, and the applicable government guidance can be found using the links below.

Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief 2026 https://www.gov.uk/business-rates-relief/pubs-and-live-music-venues-relief

Supporting Small Businesses Relief 2026 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-relief-2026-supporting-small-business-relief-local-authority-guidance

Business Rates Heat Network Relief https://www.gov.uk/business-rates-relief/heat-networks-relief

12 ASSESSMENT OF THE AWARD

2.1 12.1 The Council delegates the decision-making power for DRR awards to the Head of Revenues and the Assistant Director for Revenues and Benefits (or equivalent post holders).

2.2 Any officer or Member involved in the decision-making process for DRR must declare if they have an interest in or association with any organisation which is applying for relief.

2.3 In making decisions about applications the Council may:

- Grant relief up to a maximum of 100% of the rates due
- Grant relief for a sum less than 100% of the rates due or
- Refuse any application for additional relief.

2.4 When considering an application for Section 44A relief, a visit may be made to the premises to confirm the accuracy of the submitted plan. Independent evidence may also be requested, and this may be in the form of surveyors' reports, dated photographs, solicitors' letters and estate or letting agents' records (list not exhaustive).

2.5 The granting of relief will be reviewed annually and those in receipt of Discretionary Rate Relief will be asked to supply or confirm relevant information for the purpose of the review.

12.7 All awards of Discretionary Rate Relief will typically be awarded as a temporary measure for a limited period e.g., one financial year.

12.8 The maximum period for which the Council will consider backdating Discretionary Rate relief is the start of the preceding financial year. The Council will only consider backdating relief prior to the start of the preceding financial year if the applicant can reasonably demonstrate why they were unable to apply in a timely manner.

12.9 As a guide, for a charity, CASC or Non-Profit organisation to be eligible for DRR top up, the organisation must not have enough financial resources available in unrestricted funds to continue to operate for more than 12 months, nor should it have sufficient financial resources in unrestricted reserves to continue to operate for more than 12 months, unless a business plan exists detailing how these additional reserves are to be used to benefit the local community.

12.10 In exceptional cases, DRR will be granted to organisations which have enough financial resources in unrestricted funds to continue to operate for more than 12 months. This may include charities or community organisations which require large amounts of available resources to sustain the service they deliver to the community. In such cases, the organisation must be able to prove that it offers a service which the Borough's residents depend on, and which they would be unlikely to find elsewhere in the Borough.

13 APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS

13.1 Any organisation requiring a review of a decision may submit a request by email to DiscretionaryRateRelief@oldham.gov.uk

13.2 Oldham Council can review a Discretionary Rate Relief, Hardship Relief or Section 44a decision in the event of a dispute or in light of any new information. Final decisions on appeals will be made by the Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources.

13.3 If the Ratepayer is further dissatisfied the only remaining route to challenge the decision would be judicial review in line with Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1988. Such a review would only consider whether the decision-making process

had been followed correctly; it may not necessarily change a decision.

14 STATE SUBSIDY

14.1 From 1st January 2021, the United Kingdom left the EU Single Market and Customs Union and is no longer subject to the De Minimis Regulations. The Government has introduced its own rules regarding state subsidies. Discretionary rate relief is considered a subsidy under the rules, but the matters that must be considered all relate to the effect of the subsidy on international trade. In making an award the Council must consider the award of relief:

- affects international trade;
- is prohibited under World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules;
- are in line with those agreed by the UK-EU Cooperation and Trade Agreement
- are unlikely to trigger a dispute under WTO trade rules

14.2 It is expected that in most cases an award of discretionary relief would not breach State Subsidy rules. However, for cases where the Council believes a breach may be possible the recipient of the relief will be asked to complete and return a state subsidy declaration. If this is not completed and returned the application will be refused.

15 POLICY REVIEW

15.1 The Council will review the Discretionary Rate Relief policy on an annual basis, but the Council reserves the right to review and revise the policy at any time as a result of information gained through operating the policy or in response to Government initiatives.

15.2 Where there are no changes proposed, or the changes proposed have no financial implication or doesn't materially change the policy, authorisation of the annual review is delegated to the Executive Director of Resources or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits.

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APPENDIX 3

Empty Property and Second Homes Premium Policy

Guidelines for the consideration of exceptions to the Empty Property and Second Homes Premium

23rd March 2026

Review 23rd March 2027

1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 This policy sets out the Council's approach to requests from property owners to be excepted for payment of premiums regarding their long-term empty property. This guidance demonstrates that the Council is fair, consistent in its approach.

1.2 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 allowed Local Authorities the discretion to apply Council Tax Empty premiums for properties unoccupied and unfurnished (long-term empty) for over 2 years, and to determine its own discounts for unoccupied and unfurnished properties.

1.3 The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allowed the Council to increase the Empty Property premium up to 100% for properties considered long term empty for over 2 years, a 200% premium for properties considered long term empty properties for over 5 years from April 2020 and a further 300% premium for long term empty properties for over 10 years from April 2021.

1.4 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, provides further discretion allowing the Council to introduce the 100% Empty Property premium for properties considered long term empty for 12 months, and to introduce a 100% premium for second homes.

1.5 The Council has determined to levy Council Tax Premiums as set out below:

- From April 2019 - A maximum 100% Empty Property premium for Properties considered long term empty over 2 years.
- From April 2023 - A maximum 200% Empty Property premium for Properties considered long term empty over 5 years.
- From April 2023: - A maximum 300% Empty Property premium for Properties considered long term empty over 10 years.
- From April 2024 – A maximum 100% Empty Property premium for Properties considered long term empty over 1 year.
- From April 2025 – A 100% Second Home premium.

2 PRINCIPLES OF THE EMPTY PROPERTY AND SECOND HOMES PREMIUM POLICY

2.1 The premium will not apply in the cases specified by Government in The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings and Consequential Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.

2.2 The Council may decide to exempt other properties from the premiums in exceptional circumstances. The Council will treat all applications on their

individual merits, and which the imposition would result in hardship, and a reasonable person would regard it as unfair.

3 MAKING AN APPLICATION

3.1 Any application for the removal of an Empty Property and Second Home Premium must be made on an application form provided by the Council and signed by the owner of the long-term empty property or second home.

3.2 A Council Officer may make an appointment to visit any applicant who for whatever reason is unable to complete the application form or to confirm the details provided which may necessitate being given access to the premises.

3.3 The Council may request any (reasonable) evidence in support of an application, but the applicant will be asked to provide the evidence within one month of such a request although this may be extended in appropriate circumstances.

3.4 The Council reserves the right to verify any information or evidence provided by the Applicant, with third parties where appropriate.

3.5 Payment of Council Tax including the premium may not be withheld whilst awaiting the outcome of an application or the review of a previous decision.

4. PERIOD OF EXCEPTION

3.1 In all cases, the Council will decide the length of time for which an exception will be awarded based on the evidence supplied and the facts known.

3.2 The start date of an exception is normally the date the application is received by the Council, providing it is satisfied the reasons for the exception existed at that time and the exception will continue to the end of the financial year in which the application is made. If circumstances remain the same the applicant will need to submit a new claim for the new financial year.

3.3 The Council reserves the right to make routine inspections of the property at any point during the period of the exception.

3.4 The Council will comply with any Regulations issued by the Secretary of State in relation to any application and have regard to any related national policy guidance.

5 AWARDING AN EXCEPTION TO LIABILITY FOR THE COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM

5.1 In deciding whether to award an exception to payment of the Council Tax Premium, the Council will consider the following criteria:

5.1.1 The guidance provided by Government.

5.1.2 Any exceptional and /or unforeseen circumstances and / or occasionally any other circumstances, proven to be beyond the control of the owner/liable person**.**

5.1.3 Cases where imposition of the Council Tax Premium would result in hardship and a reasonable person would regard the imposition as unfair.

5 CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES

6.1 The Council may need to revise the decision to grant an exception to the Premium if it becomes aware that the applicant's circumstances have materially changed. Individuals must advise the Council of any change in circumstances affecting the decision, within 21 days of the change. Failure to do so may result in the exception being revoked in full.

7 NOTIFICATION

7.1 The Council will inform the applicant in writing of the outcome of their application within 28 days of receipt, or as soon as possible after. Where the application is unsuccessful, the Council will set out the reasons why this decision was made and explain the right of review.

8 THE RIGHT TO SEEK A REVIEW

8.1 As the exceptions to the Premium in this policy are determined locally any decisions are not subject to a statutory appeals mechanism. The Council will therefore operate its own procedures for dealing with appeals against a refusal to award an exception to the Premium.

8.2 Decisions will be determined by the Revenues Manager or Revenues Team Leader(s).

8.3 An applicant (or their appointee or agent) who disagrees with a decision not to award an exception may dispute the decision. A request for a review must be made in writing within one calendar month of the written decision being issued.

8.4 Appeals will be considered by the Head of Revenues or The Assistant Director, Revenues and Benefits. A review of all the evidence held be and may ask for further clarification to be provided. A decision will be made within 28 days of the request for a review. The decision will be notified to the claimant in writing, setting out the reasons for the decision.

8.5 There is no further right of appeal following this review, and a refusal will not be considered as a complaint under the Councils Complaints policy.

9 POLICY REVIEW

9.1 The Council will review the Empty Property Premium Policy on an annual basis, but the Council reserves the right to review and revise the policy at any time as

a result of information gained through operating the policy or in response to Government initiatives.

9.2 Where there are no changes proposed, or the changes proposed have no financial implication and doesn't materially change the policy, authorisation of the annual review is delegated to the Executive Director of Finance or the Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits.

Report to CABINET

Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) – Acceptance of Funding

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr E Taylor – Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing

Officer Contact: Neil Consterdine - Director of Communities

Report Author: Simon Shuttleworth – Service Manager of Strategic Housing Recovery
Ben Hill – Housing Delivery Team Leader

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched a fourth round of the Local Authority Housing fund (LAHF) to run over the financial years of 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Oldham Council has been given an allocation of £3,719,182 comprising of a capital grant element of £3,676,200 and revenue grant of £42,982.

To secure the Grant a legally non-binding Memorandum of Understanding needs to be completed between the Council and MHCLG by 10th April 2026.

The LAHF grant should be used to deliver:

- 22 properties (2-4+ bed) to be allocated to temporary accommodation.
- 7 properties (2-3 bed) for resettlement households
- 6 properties (4+ bed) for resettlement households.

This report is presented under Rule 13 of the Council's Constitution, with the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board having approved it being submitted without having been on the forward plan, due to the date of receipt of funding confirmation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Approves acceptance of the £3,7191,82 grant from MHCLG, comprising:
  - £2,611,200 capital allocation for 2026/27
  - £1,065,000 capital allocation for 2028/29
  - One-off revenue allocation of £42,982
- Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Exec (Place) and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods for:
  - Approval of preferred model(s) to achieve delivery of expected outcomes
  - Approval of any necessary procurement exercises, to enable delivery of this scheme
- Delegates authority to the Borough Solicitor or their nominee to formalise any necessary legal requirements including signing and/or sealing any documentation required to give effect to the recommendations and/or delegations in this report.
- Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Exec (Place) or their nominee to approve the appointment of external legal advisors, as required, to protect the Council's interests and give effect to the recommendations in this report.
- Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Exec (Place) or their nominee to sign and return the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG by the deadline of 10th April.

Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) – Acceptance of funding.

1 **Background**

1.1 Oldham Council have been allocated £3,719,182 from The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) fourth round of the Local Authority Housing fund to run over the financial years of 2026/7 and 2029-30.

The funding should be used to deliver:

- 22 temporary accommodation (TA) properties of two to four bedrooms. These will provide accommodation to families who are owed a statutory homeless duty by the local authority.
- 7 family homes for households welcomed to Oldham under the Resettlement Scheme (2 to 3-bedroom properties).
- 6 larger (4+ bed) homes for a households under the Resettlement Scheme.

The homes would be let at Social Rent where viable but could include the Affordable Rent.

1.2 A Memorandum of Understanding (contained at Appendix 1) was issued by the MHCLG on 6th March 2026. To secure the grant, the MOU needs to be signed by 10th April 2026.

1.3 The MOU is not intended to create legal or binding obligations but sets out an understanding between both parties for the use and timing of funding.

Under the MOU, the following delivery profile has been put forward:

Property type	Year 1 delivery target (2026-27)	Year 2 delivery target (2027-28)	Year 3 delivery target (2028-29)	Year 4 delivery target (2029-30)	Total delivery target
TA element (2-4+bed)	22	0	0	0	22
R4 resettlement element (2-3 bed)	2	0	5	0	7
R4 large resettlement element (4+bed)	1	0	5	0	6

All property types	25	0	10	0	35

2 **Current Position**

2.1 While local authorities (LAs) can deliver LAHF independently, MHCLG encourages LAs to work closely with partners, particularly housing associations, who may be the most appropriate delivery vehicle.

2.2 The delivery model and Business Case for how LAHF 4 will be delivered is being developed and further reports and approvals will be required before the delivery vehicle is agreed. It could that each element of LAHF is delivered in different ways.

3. Options/Alternatives

Option 1 – Complete the MoU and accept grant monies

Under this option, the Council would receive £3.7 M to help deliver 35 homes including 22 to provide accommodation to families who are owed a statutory homeless duty by the local authority. Whilst the exact figures are not yet known, this will lead to revenue savings for the Local Authority.

Option 2 - Decline grant

The Council could decline to accept the MHCLG grant and not take part in the scheme. By not completing the MoU no grant would be paid to the Council.

4 **Preferred Option**

4.1 Option 1 is the preferred option for the reasons outlined above.

5 **Consultation**

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Decent Homes has been consulted and is supportive.

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 The acceptance of the grant will enable the Council to receive £3.676m of capital grant funding profiled as £2.611m for 2027/28 and £1.065m for 2028/29, which will increase the Council's capital programme. The grant will need to be spent in line with the terms outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG.

(James Postle)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 S1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives Local Authorities a general power of competence to do anything which an individual may do for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in their area.

7.2 The Council must be satisfied it can meet the objectives and terms and conditions and milestones of funding imposed by any funding authority including any obligation to provide match funding and to monitor and keep any necessary records and file any necessary returns. Client Officers must also check the terms do not conflict with other funding conditions already in place.

7.3 External legal advice may be needed to supplement the in-house team to complete any Subsidy Control analysis and satisfy the relevant regulations and may also be required for delivery of the schemes which costs will need to be factored into and funded by the projects at the appropriate time. Any advice required will be procured by means of a compliant route in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.

7.4 Any property transactions/acquisitions must comply with the Council's Land and Property Protocol. Any works or services procured must, where relevant, comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules must be observed at all times. To date, the report author has confirmed compliance with all relevant protocols and regulations.

Rebecca Boyle (Corporate Group Solicitor)

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People



IAReport_LAHF_3.pdf

8.1 Yes

9 Key Decision

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision Reference

11.1

12 Background Papers

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act :

13 Appendices

13.1 Memorandum of Understanding

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

-and-

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

1. Purpose

1.1. This Memorandum of Understanding ('MOU') sets out the agreed working relationship between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government ('MHCLG') and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council ('the Council') regarding the administration and delivery of the Local Authority Housing Fund – fourth funding round ('LAHF R4').

1.2. This MOU will be for the period 2026/27-2029/30. It will be reviewed and updated only where either of the signatories deem it necessary, in which case it will require joint agreement. Further detail on changing the MOU is set out in paragraph 5.5.

1.3. This MOU is not intended to create legal or binding obligations. It describes the understanding between both parties for the use of funding specified in Section 3 of this agreement.

2. Background

2.1. LAHF R4 was launched in November 2025. The details of the fund were shared with the Council in the document 'Local Authority Housing Fund - fourth funding round: Prospectus and Guidance' ('the Prospectus').

2.2. LAHF R4 is a £950m grant fund, with objectives to:

- Reduce local housing pressures and use of expensive and unsuitable accommodation, by providing better quality temporary accommodation to those owed homelessness duties by local authorities.
- Reduce temporary accommodation costs.
- Provide sustainable settled housing for some families on the Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP) so that they can build new lives in the UK, find employment and integrate into communities.

- Support local housing markets by assisting the delivery of new housing stock or new developments to grow overall housing supply.

3. Total delivery target and Total allocation

3.1. MHCLG has accepted the Council's plan to provide 35 homes ('the total delivery target') under LAHF R4, of which 22 homes shall be new supply ('the new supply delivery target'), and MHCLG will provide a grant of £3,719,182 ('the total allocation').

3.2. The total allocation includes any New Supply Uplift, the refurbishment allowance as calculated with reference to 6.3 of the Prospectus (any agreed reductions to the grant rate will reflect proportionate adjustments to the refurbishment allowance). The capital grant is set out at 3.6.

3.3. For the purposes of the New Supply Uplift, a new supply home is a property that:

- will be delivered in as direct council led (or commissioned) new development.
- arises from a conversion or redevelopment of property which delivers additional residential unit(s) (densification).
- arises from a change of use (which delivers an extra residential unit).

3.4. The total allocation will be provided in the yearly amounts specified in table 1:

Table 1 – Yearly capital allocations

Year 1 allocation (2026-2027)	£2,611,200
Year 2 allocation (2027-2028)	£0
Year 3 allocation (2028-2029)	£1,065,000
Year 4 allocation (2029-2030)	£0

3.5. The Council agrees the following targets to deliver at least:

- 22 properties (2-4+ bed) to be allocated to households that meet the **TA element** eligibility criteria outlined in section 5.1 of the Prospectus.
- 7 properties (2-3 bed) for households that meet the **R4 resettlement element** eligibility criteria outlined in section 5.2 of the Prospectus.

- 6 properties (4+ bed) for households that meet the **R4 large resettlement element** eligibility criteria outlined in section 5.2 of the Prospectus.

3.6. The total allocation comprises a capital grant of £3,676,200 and a revenue grant of £42,982.

3.7. This MOU covers the funding commitments from MHCLG, as well as the delivery, financial expenditure, agreed milestones, reporting and evaluation, and communications between the Parties. It also sets out the steps MHCLG could take in the event of underperformance.

4. Purpose of the Funding

4.1. LAHF R4 funding has been provided specifically for spending on LAHF R4 priorities as specified at paragraph 2.2 to deliver properties for use by households that meet the LAHF R4 eligibility criteria. The Council agrees to spend LAHF R4 funding on activity set out in this MOU as agreed with MHCLG or subsequently agreed with MHCLG as per paragraph 5.5.

4.2. LAHF R4 funding is not intended to meet all the Council's acquisition/ delivery costs. The Council or its delivery partner(s) will fund any outstanding sum required.

4.3. LAHF R4 initial funding allocations and delivery targets are made assuming that the Council's housing delivery will be primarily achieved by open market acquisition or development. If the Council intends to deliver some LAHF R4 homes using alternative methods which may have lower intervention costs (including particularly: refurbishments of existing stock; acquisitions discounted via S106 agreements; or prefabricated or modular construction), the Council should notify MHCLG prior to commencement of that delivery. MHCLG will consider, and advise the Council, whether the proposals are compliant with the programme's conditions or whether they can be made compliant by increasing the Council's delivery targets or by reducing the grant payable. Where the Council has already advised the Department of plans to deliver via alternative methods, and adjustments to the delivery profile and/or grant rates have been agreed, these will be captured in this MoU.

4.4. The Council will use its best endeavours to meet the delivery target and to achieve value for money. The Council should ensure it complies with the Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting.

4.5. The Council may determine how it uses the total allocation as long as the delivery target and the new supply delivery target are met.

5. Delivery Profile

5.1. Delivery of property will be measured on the basis of exchange of contracts, or equivalent milestone where exchange of contract will not occur. Any variations to this, and necessary changes to the MOU, will need to be agreed by the parties and an amendment to this MOU made.

5.2. Funding outlined in Table 2 is provided to deliver the total delivery target. The Council agrees to make best endeavours to meet the annual delivery profiles set out in table 2 and the total delivery target by 31 March 2030.

5.3. The Council agrees to deliver:

- 25 properties in financial year 2026-27 ('the Year 1 delivery target')
- 0 properties in financial year 2027-28 ('the Year 2 delivery target')
- 10 properties in financial year 2028-29 ('the Year 3 delivery target')
- 0 properties in financial year 2029-30 ('the Year 4 delivery target')

The property types that the Council agrees to deliver in each year are outlined in Table 2 and Annex A. (Detail of yearly new supply targets is specified in Annex A).

Table 2 – delivery profile

Property type	Year 1 delivery target (2026-27)	Year 2 delivery target (2027-28)	Year 3 delivery target (2028-29)	Year 4 delivery target (2029-30)	Total delivery target
TA element (2-4+bed)	22	0	0	0	22
R4 resettlement element (2-3 bed)	2	0	5	0	7
R4 large resettlement element (4+bed)	1	0	5	0	6
All property types	25	0	10	0	35

5.4. This MOU is for the full term of the total allocation unless signatories agree to change as per paragraph 5.5.

5.5. MHCLG and the Council both have the right to request a change to the MOU. With regards to changing the target number of units, the Council

may ask for either a higher or lower target. Any proposed change will impact the amount of funding received (as set out in the Prospectus) unless the Council is seeking to deliver more units for the same amount of money. Requests will be assessed in line with the grant allocations principles set out in sections 6 and 11 of the Prospectus.

6. Financial Arrangements

6.1. The agreed funds will be issued to the Council as grant payments under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council may pass on the funding to a third party (e.g. Registered Providers) as appropriate to deliver the delivery target, complying with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

6.2. The capital funding will be provided by MHCLG in up to eight tranches, with two tranches per year. Both yearly tranches may be paid in a combined payment if the relevant delivery milestones have been met for both tranches. Tranches are set out in Table 3.

Table 3 – Capital funding allocation

Allocation tranches	Tranche comprises of:	Total funding
Tranche 1 allocation	30% of the Year 1 capital allocation and 100% of the Year 1 & 2 revenue allocation	£804,851
Tranche 2 allocation	70% of the Year 1 capital allocation	£1,827,840
Tranche 3 allocation	50% of the Year 2 capital allocation	£0
Tranche 4 allocation	50% of the Year 2 capital allocation	£0
Tranche 5 allocation	50% of the Year 3 capital allocation and 100% of the Year 3 & 4 revenue allocation	£553,991
Tranche 6 allocation	50% of the Year 3 capital allocation	£532,500
Tranche 7 allocation	50% of the Year 4 capital allocation	£0
Tranche 8 allocation	50% of the Year 4 capital allocation	£0
Total allocation		£3,719,182

6.3. Table 4 sets out the delivery milestones requirements and timetable for payments to be made to the Council. MHCLG may reallocate the Council's future year grant funding if the council does not meet the specified delivery milestone deadlines for payment of the two tranches each year.

6.4. A Grant Determination Letter (GDL) will be provided after each tranche payment giving confirmation of the grant payment.

6.5. The Council may wish to return unspent monies to the Department.

6.6. MHCLG reserves the right to request the return of some or all of the capital funding if the Council demonstrates insufficient delivery progress

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towards achievement of the delivery target, delivers less homes than its agreed delivery target, or withdraws from LAHF R4 completely. Where a local authority does not achieve their new supply delivery target, MHCLG may request the return of the new supply uplift.

Table 4 – Payments timetable

Payments	Requirements for payment milestone*	Payment schedule
Tranche 1 allocation	MOU signed with MHCLG	By 17 April 2026 (if an MOU is signed by 13 March 2026. Or By 15 May 2026 (if an MOU is signed by 10 April 2026).
Tranche 2 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 60% of Tranche 1 has been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 17 July 2026 (if SOGU is provided by 12 June 2026 and all MI submitted to schedule). Or By 21 August 2026 (if an MOU is signed by 17 July 2026 and all MI submitted to schedule). (With further payment windows TBC).
Tranche 3 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of Tranches 1 and 2 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 16 April 2027 (if SOGU is provided by 12 March 2027) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC.
Tranche 4 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of the Tranches 1, 2 and 3 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 16 April 2027 (if SOGU is provided by 12 March 2027) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC

Tranche 5 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of the Tranches 1,2,3 and 4 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 13 April 2028 (if SOGU is provided by 10 March 2028) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC.
Tranche 6 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of the Tranches 1,2,3,4 and 5 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 13 April 2028 (if SOGU is provided by 10 March 2028) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC.
Tranche 7 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of the Tranches 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 13 April 2029 (if SOGU is provided by 9 March 2029) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC.
Tranche 8 allocation	Statement of Grant Usage (SOGU) demonstrating 80% of the Tranches 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 have been committed*, AND Satisfactory monitoring information (MI) submitted to date.	By 13 April 2029 (if SOGU is provided by 9 March 2029) and all MI submitted to schedule. With further payment windows TBC.

* Note: Committed spend in table 1 refers only to capital grant spend (and does not include revenue grant spend). Committed spend reported in a SOGU should be verified by the local authority S151 officer. We anticipate that local authorities will follow their own internal processes to confirm committed spend.

7. Charging Affordable Rents for LAHF R4 funded homes

7.1. The LAHF Prospectus specifies “It is up to local authorities to determine the precise rent level and tenure of homes in line with the fund objectives.

This should be at Social Rent where viable, but could include affordable rent, or a temporary accommodation rent."

7.2. The Rent Standard (Rent Standard 2020 - GOV.UK) provides that Affordable Rents may be charged only in limited circumstances.

7.3. This MOU records the agreement between the Secretary of State and the Council that relevant accommodation, provided by the Council or a partner Registered Provider pursuant to LAHF grant funding, is permitted to be let at an Affordable Rent, and that accordingly that an Affordable Rent may be charged for such accommodation in accordance with paragraph 3.10b of the Rent Standard - April 2020.

7.4. In paragraph 7.3, "relevant accommodation" means accommodation:

- in the Council area;
- which is being used to further the LAHF objectives set out at paragraph 2.2 of the MOU;
- which has never been let at a Social Rent; and
- where the accommodation is provided by a partner Registered Provider, for which the Council has agreed that the partner Registered Provider may charge Affordable Rent.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

MHCLG Responsibilities

8.1. MHCLG is responsible for setting national housing policy, providing grant(s) to the Council and monitoring the delivery of homes.

Council Responsibilities (fund delivery)

8.2. The Council will make housing investment decisions, review existing housing policies and products, maximise leverage of this public sector investment and ensure that funds provide value for money and are deliverable within the timescale of the fund. The Council may work in partnership with private Registered Providers, local authority housing companies or other bodies to deliver homes. The Council will also report on the fund by providing Management Information (MI) as set out in **Annex B** of this MOU and will work with MHCLG to ensure they have the capability to deliver the fund and provide MI within the set timescales.

8.3. The Council is expected to have the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to, which may include, but not solely:

- **subsidy control**, at all levels e.g. the funding the Council allocates to project delivery partners and subsidies that project delivery partners provide to fourth parties.
- **equalities duties**, the Council must ensure that all LAHF funded activity is delivered in accordance with its obligations under the public sector equality duty (PSED).
- **procurement**, the Council must ensure that the allocation of funding to project delivery partners that constitutes a procurement is managed in compliance with the public contract regulations.
- **fraud**, the Council must ensure that robust arrangements are in place to manage fraud risk, including ensuring that project deliverers have robust fraud risk management process and paying particular attention to projects that involve the payment of grants to beneficiaries e.g. businesses.

8.4. The Council's Section 151 Officer is expected to ensure that these legal duties and all other relevant duties are considered and that delivery of LAHF investment is carried out with propriety, regularity, and value for money.

Council Responsibilities (Affordable Rents – where required by LAs)

8.5. The Council should note (and remind partner Registered Providers) that conversion of Social Rent properties to Affordable Rent is not permitted pursuant to paragraph 3.17 of the Rent Standard other than in the circumstances set out in chapter 2 of the Rent Policy Statement.

8.6. Where the Council has agreed that a partner Registered Provider may charge Affordable Rent, the Council will confirm to the Registered Provider that the Registered Provider may charge Affordable Rent in accordance with paragraph 7.3 of this MOU.

8.7. The Council will require partner Registered Providers to provide details to the Council of any accommodation provided pursuant to LAHF grant funding for which Affordable Rent is charged.

8.8. The Council will maintain a register of any accommodation provided pursuant to LAHF grant funding for which it or a partner Registered Provider is charging Affordable Rent. This register should be available for inspection upon request by either MHCLG or the Regulator for Social Housing. The fields of information required in register are specified in **Annex D**.

9. Monitoring Arrangements and Accountability

9.1. The Council will put in place appropriate governance and oversight arrangements to ensure that delivery of housing is on track and that plans remain ambitious and provide value for money.

Reporting Arrangements

9.2. The Council has agreed to provide monitoring information (MI) to MHCLG on fund allocations and delivery. The Council will be asked to provide a mix of quantitative and qualitative summary updates to MHCLG; a full list of MI can be found in **Annex B**.

9.3. The first report will be due in June 2026 and then every two months thereafter, until the Council's programme has completed. The schedule for monitoring reports is outlined in **Annex C**.

9.4. Spend outturn and forecast should be signed off by the Section 151 officer or deputy Section 151 officer.

9.5. A Statement of Grant Usage Section 151 officer or deputy Section 151 officer should be submitted when relevant tranche payment thresholds (as set out in Table 4 above) have been met.

9.6. The Council also agrees to work with the department to provide any reasonable additional MI as and when requested by the MHCLG Senior Reporting Officer (SRO). MHCLG will provide an appropriate amount of time to return any additional MI requests.

9.7. The Council agrees to work collaboratively with any requests from MHCLG to support any retrospective assessment or evaluation as to the impact or value for money of LAHF. As a minimum, the Council is expected to monitor spend, outputs and outcomes against agreed indicators and keep this information for at least 5 years.

10. Governance & Assurance

10.1. The Council is expected to ensure that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to, which may include, but not solely, state aid / subsidy control, equalities duties, procurement, health and safety, and fraud prevention. The Council has prerogative to establish internal governance and assurance arrangements as they see fit to achieve this.

10.2. The Council will ensure data can be shared for the prevention and detection of fraud by including the following clause in all agreements with companies or external entities in relation to LAHF – including, but not limited to, property contracts, professional services contracts, construction contracts and lease agreements:

"Data may be shared with other enforcement agencies for the prevention and detection of crime."

Signed for and on behalf of MHCLG

Signature:

Name:

Position: Date:

Signed for and on behalf of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Signature:

Name:

Position: Date:

Annex A – New supply detailed delivery targets

1. MHCLG and the Council agree that the new supply homes specified in MOU 3.1 will be delivered in the profile shown in Table 5.

2. As per MOU 3.3, for the purposes of the New Supply Uplift, a new supply home is a property that:
    - will be delivered as direct council led (or commissioned) new development.
    - arises from a conversion or redevelopment of property which delivers additional residential unit(s) (densification).
    - arises from a change of use (which delivers an extra residential unit).

3. As per 6.3 of the Prospectus, the New Supply uplift will not apply to purchases of new homes already in development e.g. off-the-shelf market sales purchases or s106 discounted affordable housing purchases. Whilst these purchases are not eligible for the New Supply uplift, local authorities can still include them in their standard LAHF R4 delivery.

Table 5 New supply delivery targets

Property type	Year 1 new supply delivery target (2026-27)	Year 2 new supply delivery target (2027-28)	Year 3 new supply delivery target (2028-29)	Year 4 new supply delivery target (2029-30)	Total new supply delivery target
TA element new supply (2-4+bed)	22	0	0	0	22
R4 resettlement element new supply (2-3 bed)	0	0	0	0	0
R4 large resettlement element new supply (4+bed)	0	0	0	0	0
All property types new supply	22	0	0	0	22

Annex B - Reporting and Monitoring Arrangements

Scope and Purpose

1. This annex sets out the agreed reporting and monitoring arrangements for LAHF, including the expected frequency and content of the regular reports that the Council will provide to MHCLG.

MHCLG Role

2. MHCLG will support the running of the fund and maintain a national picture of delivery by putting in place a proportionate monitoring and governance framework. This will include a fund governance board(s). Wherever possible MHCLG will avoid duplication of requests towards the Council.

Council Role

3. Day-to-day project monitoring and delivery responsibilities will be delegated to the Council. The Council will submit reports to MHCLG in accordance with the agreed timescales and frequency set out in the MoU. The Council will also work with MHCLG to provide any reasonable additional MI required as and when requested by the MHCLG Senior Reporting Officer. MHCLG will provide an appropriate amount of time to return any additional MI requests.

Management Information (MI)

4. The list of MI is split between operational data – required for monitoring the ongoing fund delivery (Table 6) and evaluation data (Table 7) required to assess the strategy-level success of the fund and inform future policy development. Tables 6 and 7 present the required routine MI and is subject to change, with agreement by MHCLG and the Council. MHCLG may also request additional delivery progress information from local authorities which have agreed to deliver new supply to provide assurance on the advancement of this delivery.

Table 6 – Monitoring Data

Item	Frequency
Number of properties where contracts exchanged, including: • bedroom size • whether located in another borough area • who will own the dwellings • how properties obtained	Every 2 months
Number of properties occupied/ ready to let, including bedroom size	Every 2 months

Number of resettlement scheme households housed	Every 2 months
Number of pending resettlement scheme properties pre-matched to current/ former bridging hotel households	Every 2 months
Overall assessment (RAG rated) of whether delivery is on track as determined by the responsible Council officer	Every 2 months

Table 7 – Evaluation Data

Item	**Frequency**
How properties have been sourced (e.g., through stock acquisition or another delivery route)	Post April 2026 and thereafter upon request to aid with evaluation of the fund
Total delivery costs. Total amount of Council contributory share, and how the Council has funded its share.	
Breakdown of resettlement scheme households housed by previous housing situation, e.g., in bridging hotel, in LA emergency accommodation/temporary accommodation	
Tenancy duration	
Rent levels	
Number of properties obtained outside the local authority's area, if applicable, and where these are located.	

5. In addition, to enable the assessment of relative value for money and to assist with future spending reviews, we may occasionally ask for additional information including details of how the fund is delivered and housing market conditions. This will provide important data to support future policy developments. This information will be provided to agreed timeframes when requested by MHCLG.
6. Should the Council wish to amend and/or not collect any of these proposed data points, they should submit a proposal to MHCLG for agreement.

Frequency of Reporting

7. The Council will be asked to provide reports every two months. The schedule for monitoring reports is outlined in Annex C.

Data Consistency

8. MHCLG and the Council have a shared commitment to ensure that, for clarity and transparency purposes, consistent methods of recording outputs are

maintained. It is expected that the provided reporting will be robust, accurate and quality assured to a high standard. As such minimal revisions would be expected – although, where these are required, MHCLG should be advised as soon as practical.

Use of Material Provided

9. MHCLG will use the provided material to track local authority progress against agreed delivery milestones and to monitor programme delivery nationally.

Annex C – Monitoring Milestones

1. The Council is requested to submit the monitoring information summarised in **Annex B** every two months by 5pm on the dates outlined below. MHCLG will provide the link to the return directly to the Council well in advance of each touchpoint date.
2. MHCLG will provide full guidance for submitting the return directly well in advance of each touchpoint date.

Table 8 – Monitoring Touchpoint Dates for year 1

Monitoring touchpoint	Window covers all (cumulative) R4 delivery up until	Collection window opens	MI Return to be submitted by 5pm on the following dates
Touchpoint 1	31 May 2026	1 June 2026	15 June 2026
Touchpoint 2	31 July 2026	3 August 2026	17 August 2026
Touchpoint 3	30 September 2026	1 October 2026	15 October 2026
Touchpoint 4	30 November 2026	1 December 2026	15 December 2026
Touchpoint 5	1 February 2027	2 February 2027	16 February 2027
Touchpoint 6	31 March 2027	1 April 2027	15 April 2027

3. MHCLG will update local authorities on planned touchpoint dates for Years 2,3 and 4 in due course.

Annex D – Register of LAHF accommodation for which an Affordable Rent is charged

This annex sets out the agreed information which will be contained in the Council's Register of LAHF accommodation for which an Affordable Rent is charged.

This register should be available for inspection upon request by either MHCLG or the Regulator for Social Housing.

Property address			
Completion date			
Name of Registered Provider			
Registration Code			

Note: The Council is not required to submit this information as part of regular delivery monitoring submissions.

Report to CABINET

Acceptance of 26/27 GMCA Community Safety Partnership, Voluntary and Community Sector, Hate Crime, GM Violence Reduction and Cohesion Grants

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr E Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Neil Consterdine - Director of Communities

Report Author: Lorraine Kenny – Assistant Director – Community Safety and Cohesion

23rd March 2026

Reason for Decision

To accept the GMCA and Violence Reduction grant payments for 26/27 to support the delivery of the Community Safety Partnership's statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the commitment of the Council to make communities safer and stronger.

The grant monies are paid annually and the Community Safety Partnership is reliant upon acceptance of the grants to carry out its core functions.

This report is presented under Rule 13 of the Council's Constitution, with the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board having approved it being submitted without having been on the forward plan, due to the date of receipt of funding confirmation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Approves acceptance of the Grants from GMCA:

Grant name	Year	Amount

Community Safety Grant	2026-27	£277,179
Voluntary, community, faith-based, and social enterprise organisations Grant	2026-27	£105,678
Hate Crime Grant (Deputy Mayor and Police and Crime Panel)	2026-27	£10,284
Cohesion Grant	2026-27	£50,000
Serious Violence Combined Grant	2026-27	£167,171

- Delegates power to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to accept future grant allocations on behalf of the statutory Community Safety Partnership to enable timely delivery of activities and projects due to the limited period between confirmation of grants monies from GMCA and the start of the fiscal year.

Acceptance of 26/27 GMCA Community Safety Partnership, Voluntary and Community Sector, Hate Crime, GM Violence Reduction and Cohesion Grants

1 Background

1.1 GMCA and the GM Violence Reduction Unit provide annual grants to the statutory Community Safety Partnership.

1.2. The grants for 26/27 are:

Grant name	Year	Amount
Community Safety Grant	2026-27	£277,179
Voluntary, community, faith-based, and social enterprise organisations Grant	2026-27	£105,678
Hate Crime Grant (Deputy Mayor and Police and Crime Panel)	2026-27	£10,284
Cohesion Grant	2026-27	£50,000
Serious Violence Combined Grant	2026-27	£167,171
Total		£610.312

1.3 The Community Safety Partnership consists of the 5 statutory Responsible Authorities listed below, in addition to a number of other partnership organisations from the statutory and VCFSE.

- Oldham Council
- Greater Manchester Police
- Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service
- Probation Service

1.4 The Community Safety Partnership is reliant upon the grant payments to support partnership activity to prevent and reduce crime and disorder in accordance with its responsibilities under s17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

1.5 The funds are paid to the Council and are distributed in accordance with the decisions on allocation which are made by the Community Safety Partnership.

1.6 Quarterly returns on spend (actual and forecast) and service delivery are completed by the lead for the Community Safety Partnership and provided to GMCA in accordance with the conditions of the grant agreement.

2. Options/Alternatives

Option 1

Accept the grant funding and continue delivery of activities and projects as allocated by the Community Safety Partnership.

Option 2

Reject the grant funding and cease the delivery of project activity.

3 Preferred Option

3.1 Option 1 is the preferred option. Accept the grant funding and continue delivery of activities and projects as allocated by the Community Safety Partnership.

4. Consultation

4.1 The Lead Member with responsibility for Community Safety is a core member of the Community Safety Partnership and is fully sighted on the grant funding arrangements and on the proposals for spend of the grant monies by the Partnership for 26/27.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The report seeks approval to accept several GMCA and GM Violence Reduction Unit grants for the 2026/27 financial year to support the statutory functions of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The grants are paid annually and form a key element of CSP's revenue funding, enabling delivery of activities aligned to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 responsibilities.

5.2 The funding totals £610,312 for 2026/27 and will be held within the Communities Directorate. Spend will be monitored in line with GMCA grant conditions, with quarterly returns submitted by the CSP lead officer.

5.3 Future allocations may be accepted under delegated authority by the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to enable timely mobilisation of activity at the beginning of each financial year.

5.4 There are no anticipated financial risks, provided expenditure is contained within the grant envelopes and monitoring arrangements remain in place.

5.5 Refer to the table in Section 1.2 for a detailed breakdown of the respective grants

5.6 Please Note the following extracts from the embedded grant agreement

5.7 Funding will apply only to the specified financial year and must be allocated and spent within that period.

5.8 Any funding remaining unspent at the end of the financial year must be identified.

5.9 Carry-forward of unspent funds is subject to approval by GMCA. Please be aware that any underspend exceeding £5,000 may not be approved, and future allocations may be reduced by the equivalent amount.

5.10 The Serious Violence Combined Grant is not eligible for carry-forward under the Home Office terms and conditions.

5.11 The Deputy Mayor may request clarification from Oldham Council regarding information submitted. Oldham Council is required to comply with any reasonable request for further information.

5.12 Any portion of the grant that is not used in accordance with the approved conditions must be repaid.

Matthew Kearns (Finance Manager)

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has the legal power to accept the GMCA Community Safety, VCFSE, Hate Crime, Cohesion and Serious Violence Combined Grants under the general power of competence in the Localism Act 2011. Acceptance of the funding supports the Council's statutory responsibilities as a Responsible Authority under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with partners to prevent and reduce crime and disorder.

6.2 The funding must be used in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the GMCA Grant Funding Agreement. These include requirements relating to the approved purposes of the grant, reporting and monitoring, the treatment of underspends, the prohibition on carrying forward the Serious Violence Combined Grant, and the need to repay any sums not used in compliance with the conditions.

6.3 Any onward allocation or commissioning activity must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation. Where funds aredistributed to voluntary, community or other external organisations, suitable grant or service agreements must be in place to ensure compliance with monitoring, safeguarding, data protection and performance requirements.

6.4 The proposed delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to accept future annual allocations is lawful subject to Cabinet approval and must be exercised in accordance with the Council's Constitution. Decisions made under delegated authority must be recorded appropriately.

6.5 Where funding is awarded to third parties, the Council must also ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. There are no legal barriers to the acceptance of

the grants or the recommendations within this report, provided that grant conditions and governance requirements are followed.

Sukie Kaur (Solicitor)

7. Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

7.1 All members of the community benefit from the activities delivered from the grant funding.

8. Key Decision

8.1 Yes

9. Key Decision Reference

9.1

10. Background Papers

10.1 There are no background papers

11. Appendices

11.1 GMCA Grant Agreement



GMCA Community Safety Partnership Gra

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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