Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council



Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 November 2026

OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: ALL MEMBERS OF OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL,
JR CLYNES BUILDING, GREAVES STREET, OLDHAM, OL1 1AL

Tuesday, 10 November 2026

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council which will be held on Wednesday 18 November 2026 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AL, for the following purposes:

1 To receive apologies for absence

2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To order that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16th September 2026 be approved and signed as correct records.

3 To receive declarations of interest in any matter to be determined at the meeting

4 To deal with matters which the Mayor considers to be urgent business

5 To receive communications relating to the business of the Council

6 To receive and note petitions received relating to the business of the Council (Pages 13 - 14)

(time limit 20 minutes)

To note, in line with the petitions protocol, the petitions received since the previous meeting of the Council, which received over the required 50 signatures.

7 Youth Council (Pages 15 - 16)

(time limit 20 minutes)

Children in Care Should Not Be a Source of Profit

As young people in and around the care system, we know how important it is that every child has access to safe, stable and high-quality care when they cannot live at home.

Across the country, councils are struggling with the rising cost of children's residential care. While the number of children needing residential placements has increased, the

cost of those placements has risen even faster.

Many children's homes are now run by private companies, and some of these companies are making significant profits from caring for vulnerable children and young people. This means that money which could be reinvested into improving services and opportunities for children is instead leaving the care system as profit.

The shortage of placements also means that councils often have little choice about where children are placed. Too many young people are moved far away from their families, friends, schools and communities because suitable local placements are not available.

As young people, we believe that children in care should be seen as children first, not as opportunities for financial gain.

We believe:
Every child deserves safe, stable and loving care.
Public money should be used to improve the lives and outcomes of children and young people.
Greater openness is needed around how residential care providers set their prices and make their profits.
Local authorities need more affordable, high-quality placements available close to young people's communities.
National government has a responsibility to ensure that the care system works in the best interests of children and young people.
Therefore, we ask this Council Resolves To:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Education expressing concern about the growing cost of children's residential care and the impact this is having on councils and young people.
- Call on Government to increase transparency from private residential care providers, including clearer reporting on costs, profits and ownership arrangements.
- Support stronger national oversight of the children's residential care market to ensure fair pricing, accountability and value for public money.
- Encourage greater investment in not-for-profit, charitable and local authority-run children's homes so that more young people can be cared for close to home.
- Share this motion with the Local Government Association, Greater Manchester partners and neighbouring councils to encourage wider support for reform.

As children in care and care experienced young people, we want a care system that puts children before profit. We want public money to be spent on improving lives, creating opportunities and providing the best possible care. We ask Oldham Council to stand with us in calling for a fairer, more transparent and more sustainable care system for all children and young people.

"Children in care are not a business. They are young people who deserve the very best care and support that society can provide."

8 Public Questions

(time limit 15 Minutes)

9 Leader of the Council (Pages 17 - 20)

To appoint a Leader of the Council, in accordance with provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended.

10 Notices of Motion (Pages 21 - 36)

(time limit 60 minutes)

Motion 1: Oldham objects to the National Scheme of Delegation
To be Moved by Councillor Woodvine
To be Seconded by Councillor Sharp

The National Scheme of Delegation is a standardised set of rules for English local planning authorities that replaces local delegation schemes and came into force on 31st October 2026.

It is authorised under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025. The system was intended to speed up decision-making and ensure elected councillors focus only on major, strategic developments.

However, the Government's own working paper noted that 96% of decisions in the second quarter of 2024 were made by officers. It is only in an extremely rare set of cases that councillors call in applications.

According to the Campaign for Rural England, in 2023-2024 86% of all planning decisions were approved and decisions were only overturned in 2.7% of cases for major applications and 1% of minor applications.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has warned that the new National Scheme of Delegation could lead to an increase in harassment of planners.

While the Local Councils Network's research showed that 84% of its member councils are struggling to recruit and retain planning staff.

Oldham Conservatives have joined over 1,000 Conservative Councillors across the country in writing to the Prime Minister to oppose the changes to legislation.

Oldham Council updated its Constitution on 16th September 2026. However, the Planning Committee has already found its hands tied by the new law and it has made Councillors' role in the planning process much more challenging.

Therefore, this Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Communities, Housing & Local Government to state its opposition to the changes and ask for the unnecessary new law to be reviewed.

Motion 2: Free Bulky Waste Collections for Households on Council Tax Reduction

To be Moved by Councillor Ghafoor
To be Seconded by Councillor Chowhan

This Council notes that:

Fly-tipping is a serious and growing problem in Oldham. Official DEFRA figures for 2024/25 record 5,959 incidents, up 19% on 2023/24 (5,022). That is 23.7 per 1,000 residents, against 21.5 for England. 44% of incidents (2,648) were in back alleyways and 30% (1,760) on highways.

1. Officer figures provided on 2 November 2026 show that in 2025/26 the Council spent £623,321 clearing fly-tipping, before overheads. This included disposing of 1,088.76 tonnes of fly-tipped waste.
2. Residents are charged £10 per item for a bulky waste collection, under the 2026/27 fees and charges approved by this Council on 4 March 2026. The in-house service has an income target of £140,000 a year.
3. On 1 January 2026, 19,495 Oldham households were receiving Council Tax Reduction: 13,108 of working age and 6,387 of pension age (Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 report).
4. Since September 2025, Bolton Council has offered households receiving Council Tax Support one free bulky waste collection each financial year, from a limited fund, while that funding lasts.
5. Officers have advised that the cost of making bulky collections free for every household could be well over £1m a year, because demand would rise, including from households that would never fly-tip. They have also advised that any new discretionary spending must have an identified funding source.
6. The 2027/28 budget, including fees and charges, will be set by Full Council at its Budget meeting on 3 March 2027.

This Council believes that:

1. Collecting household waste is a core public service that residents already pay for through their council tax. A free bulky collection does not reward fly-tippers. It helps residents who want to do the right thing.
2. For households living on the lowest incomes, often without a car, a £10-per-item charge is a real barrier. A family clearing a sofa, a mattress and a broken fridge pays £30.
3. Targeting help at households on Council Tax Reduction, as a year-round service and not a one-off allowance, puts support where the charge bites hardest and where fly-tipping hits communities hardest. Oldham should go further than Bolton's single free collection a year. Targeting also keeps the cost far below a borough-wide free service. The charge income given up cannot exceed the current income target of about £140,000 a year.
4. Any change must be lawful, properly costed and fully funded, and decided openly through the budget.

This Council resolves to:

1. Instruct Officers to liaise with colleagues at Bolton Council to explore best practice options on how this proposal can be implemented.
2. Note that the Oldham Group will bring forward this proposal, fully funded, in its alternative budget for 2027/28.
3. Note that this motion does not commit any spending in 2026/27 and does not change the approved 2026/27 budget or fees and charges.

The Oldham Group believes that, by acting first for those who need it most, this Council can help residents do the right thing, keep our alleyways and highways clean, and stop paying twice for fly-tipping. Making collections free for every household remains our longer-term ambition, as and when it can be fully funded.

Motion 3: Eton Star Oldham
To be Moved by Councillor P. Taylor
To be Seconded by Councillor Brooks

This Council notes:

That the Department for Education has approved proposals to establish a new sixth-form college (Eton Star Oldham) in partnership between Star Academies, Eton College and the DfE, with a preferred location being upon the former Tommyfield Outdoor Market site in Oldham town centre.

That all local authorities in England are required to transfer land to the Department for Education (DfE) under the Academies Act 2010 (Schedule 1), as amended by the Education Act 2011 (Schedule 14).

That in accordance with the Land and Property Protocols detailed in the Constitution, this sort of land disposal is an executive decision. The Corporate Property Board (chaired by Executive Member at the time) reviewed the proposed disposal, noting the statutory direction made by the DfE.

That the Cabinet endorsed the Oldham Town Centre Development Framework on 18 November 2024 and this included an Appendix which referred to the Tommyfield Market site for the new sixth-form college.

That in accordance with the Land and Property Protocols detailed in the Constitution, Heads of Terms (HoT) have been discussed with Legal Services and the agreed HoT have been released to the DfE.

That no formal contract for the transfer or disposal of the land has yet been completed. Once the documents have been formally signed by both parties the delegated report will be published and therefore the site remains in the ownership of the Council at this time

This Council notes that concerns have been raised by some elected members, education stakeholders and residents regarding the impact on existing post-16 provision, the suitability of the location and whether the proposal represents the best use of a prime commercial regeneration site.

This Council therefore resolves:

That consideration be given to members with concerns regarding the new sixth-form college provision and provide a report to members by the end of January 2027 outlining the following:

1. the impact on existing sixth-form and further education provision in the borough, from both the council perspective and the views of other sixth-form providers within the borough;
2. the school admissions arrangements for the proposed Eton Star Academy and how they will serve the widest possible cohort of Oldham's young people, rather than students from across Greater Manchester, as is presently the case.

Motion 4: Stop Eton Star
To be Moved by Councillor Bishop
To be Seconded by Councillor Kenyon

This Council notes that:

- The Department for Education's process for approving free schools doesn't allow for sufficient Council oversight nor scrutiny and doesn't provide the Council with sufficient engagement. There has been no specific consultation with council members, and no consultation with the public.
- Eton Star Sixth Form will not provide the educational uplift that Oldham requires, which is primarily at GCSE level.
- The intended admissions criteria will not give Oldham young people priority.
- The borough will be sacrificing a high-value, town centre commercial, retail or leisure space to benefit young people from other boroughs with better outcomes at GCSE, with no discernible benefit for Oldham.
- Eton Star Academy presents a significant threat to the educational outcomes of Oldham's existing sixth form provisions, especially our outstanding Sixth Form College.
- A significant number of education professionals elected members, and the public are strongly opposed to Eton Star Academy, and it lacks both cross-party and public support.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Department for Education seeking clarity on the decision making and consultation around Eton Star that has taken place so far. Request that the Department for Education engage in discussions on the options for and implications of, withdrawal from the Eton Star Sixth Form programme.
- Request a cross-party meeting with the Department for Education to discuss Eton Star and look at alternative approaches to providing improvements in the town's secondary educational offering

Motion 5: Strengthening Standards and Conduct in Oldham
To be Moved by Councillor E. Taylor
To be Seconded by Councillor Shuttleworth

This Council notes that it owes a duty of care to its employees, residents, service users, volunteers and all those who interact with the authority, and that this duty must be upheld consistently, fairly and without exception, with the safety and wellbeing of individuals being the paramount consideration in decision-making.

This Council further notes that elected members hold positions of public trust and carry significant responsibilities and democratic legitimacy, but the status of elected office must never override the Council's wider obligation to safeguard staff, residents and the public. Holding office should not provide immunity from reasonable safeguarding measures where legitimate concerns arise.

This Council notes that at its meeting in December 2025 it welcomed the Government's proposals to strengthen the standards and conduct framework. In its response of 11 November 2025, the Government committed to legislate for a mandatory minimum code of conduct, a formal standards committee in every authority, a power of suspension, a new disqualification category for gross misconduct and repeated breaches, and a national appeals mechanism. Suspensions would be capable of lasting up to six months, with disqualification following a second maximum suspension within five years, and interim suspension of up to three months would be available in serious cases involving external investigation; including extension and review periods subject to statutory review. The Government also stated that the outcomes of investigations should be published, including where a councillor stands down during an investigation.

This Council regrets that no legislation to deliver these reforms was included in the King's Speech of May 2026, despite calls from the Local Government Association and the Ethics and Integrity Commission to find parliamentary time. The Government has since said that reform will come as soon as parliamentary time allows. Until it does, the sanctions available to councils remain those the Committee on Standards in Public Life found to be insufficient in 2019, and there is no provision in current legislation for suspension as a sanction for a councillor found to have breached the code.

This Council further notes that a Member of Parliament who is suspended by the House can face a recall petition and believes that residents are entitled to expect the same seriousness of consequence for those who hold office locally. Where a Member of Parliament resigns from the House to try and end a standards investigation, then returns to public office, these investigations are restarted as a matter of course.

This Council believes that public confidence in local democracy is strengthened, not weakened, when robust standards and safeguarding arrangements are applied equally to all, regardless of position or status. It further believes that a member who steps down during an investigation should not thereby escape accountability, leave complainants without an answer, or return to seek public office as if the matter had never arisen, and that where a serious breach may also be a crime, officers must act without hesitation.

This Council resolves to:

1. Reaffirm that safeguarding considerations must take precedence when balancing the rights and responsibilities of elected office holders against the Council's duty to protect residents, staff and the wider public.

2. Support the principle that elected members should be subject to safeguarding measures, risk-management arrangements and restrictions equivalent to those that would reasonably be applied to employees in comparable circumstances and ask the Monitoring Officer to report to the Standards Committee within three months on what can lawfully be done to give effect to this principle under the current framework.

3. Ensure that no individual is exempt from appropriate safeguarding arrangements solely by virtue of the office they hold.

4. Ask the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer to ensure that, to the fullest extent permitted by law, where a member resigns or steps down during an investigation, the investigation is concluded to a finding where practicable and its outcome is published, and that, should that person subsequently seek election or co-option to this Council, the complaint is re-examined by the Standards Committee and the outcome made public.

5. Reaffirm the expectation that officers will pursue every credible allegation of a serious breach of standards vigorously without fear or favour and will refer matters to the police or other relevant authorities at the earliest opportunity where a breach may amount to criminal conduct and ask the Chief Executive to report annually to the Standards Committee on the operation of these referral arrangements.

6. Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, urging the Government to bring forward standards legislation as a matter of urgency, to strengthen it further so that complaints can be reopened where a member stood down to avoid

accountability, and to ensure that the standards regime for councillors is as robust as that which applies in Parliament.

This council further resolves to:

1. Ask the Chief Executive to write to the borough's Members of Parliament seeking their support for the above, and to the Local Government Association asking it to continue pressing for early legislation.

2. Ask the Standards Committee to report back to Full Council on progress against these resolutions within six months.

3. That with the permission of each councillor, the council will publish the status of each elected member's enhanced DBS check according to its records.

11 A New Start for Oldham Borough report (Pages 37 - 50)

To receive the report on the Council Motion of 16th September 2026 on 'A New Start for Oldham'.

12 Independent Member of Audit Committee (Pages 51 - 54)

To consider the report of the Assistant Director of Governance regarding the Independent member (Vice Chair) of the Audit committee.

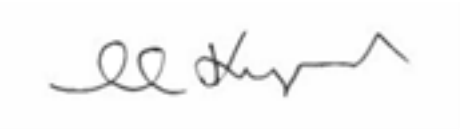
13 Review of Political Balance on Committees

Report to follow following the result of the Failsworth West by-election.

14 Update on Actions from Council (Pages 55 - 76)

To update on actions from previous Council meetings.

NOTE: The meeting of the Council will conclude 3 hours and 30 minutes after the commencement of the meeting.



Shelley Kipling
Chief Executive

PROCEDURE FOR NOTICE OF MOTIONS
NO AMENDMENT

MOTION – Mover of the Motion to MOVE

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MOTION – Seconder of the Motion to SECOND – May reserve right to speak

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DEBATE ON THE MOTION: Include Timings

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MOVER of Motion – Right of Reply

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VOTE – For/Against/Abstain

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Declare outcome of the VOTE

RULE ON TIMINGS

(a) No Member shall speak longer than four minutes on any **Motion or Amendment**, or by way of question, observation or reply, unless by consent of the Members of the Council present, he/she is allowed an extension, in which case only one extension of 30 seconds shall be allowed.

(b) A Member replying to more than one question will have up to six minutes to reply to each question with an extension of 30 seconds

WITH AMENDMENT

