

**Present:** The Mayor – Councillor Iqbal (Chair)

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, A. Alexander, G. Alexander, Ali, Azad, Ball, M Bashforth, S Bashforth, Briggs, Brownridge, Byrne, Chadderton, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Curley, Davis, Dean, Fielding, Garry, C. Gloster, H. Gloster, Goodwin, Haque, Harkness, Harrison, Heffernan, Hewitt, Hudson, F Hussain, Jabbar, Jacques, Jacques, Judd, Leach, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Phythian, Price, Qumer, Rehman, Roberts, Salamat, Shah, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Sykes, Taylor, Toor, Ur-Rehman and Williams

1            **CIVIC APPRECIATION AWARD**

A presentation took place for Mr. Alan Noble and Mr. Trevor Warren in recognition of their significant voluntary contribution and dedication to the borough and community of Oldham.

Councillors Fielding and Sykes gave congratulatory speeches to Mr. Noble and Mr. Warren.

Mr. Noble and Mr. Warren were then presented with their awards and made short acceptance speeches to the Council.

2            **QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS FROM THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ON WARD OR DISTRICT ISSUES**

The Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda in Open Council was Public Question Time. The questions had been received from members of the public and would be taken in the order in which they had been received. Council was advised that if the questioner was not present, then the question would be read out by the Mayor.

The following questions had been submitted:

1.            Question received from Charles Garrity via email:

“I am an avid watcher of Council meetings on youtube. I would refer to full Council meeting 12<sup>th</sup> December regarding the insulting and abusive utterings of a senior member of the council, Opposition Leader Howard Sykes. This person when making reference to persons that used their democratic right to make a vote in the EU Referendum, that did not concur with his own views, were referred to as ‘swivel eyed loonies’. As the Mayor did not bring Councillor Sykes to task for this insulting remark {Councillors Code of Conduct Respect for Others}, I would remind the Council this meeting was streamed live. I would ask the following question: Does this Council condone the use of insulting remarks when describing constituents of the borough in the meetings of the

Council. I would also ask that Councillor Sykes be instructed to make a full apology for his remarks at the next full Council meeting.”



Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that there was a Standards Hearings procedure which existed for this purpose. The Leader recalled that the matter under discussion was Brexit which had inflamed tensions. The Leader also responded that he was not in a position to ask the Leader of the Opposition to respond.

The Mayor invited Councillor Sykes to speak.

Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Opposition, addressed Full Council and provided a personal explanation.

2. Question received from Syed Maruf Ali via Twitter:

“Can you please raise this question at the full council meeting and I would like the Mayor to read the question out. Unemployment has always been high in Town Centre Base area. Most economically developed nations are now multi-ethnic, and, given current demographic trends, there is reason to believe that societies will continue to become more ethnically and culturally diverse. We the residents of Town Centre base would like to know what percentage of Oldham Council, NHS and Greater Manchester Police workforce are employed within 2 miles radius of civic centre/council offices? How many senior managers are employed by Oldham Council within 2 miles radius of civic centre? Oldham Town centre area have one of the highest number of NEETS, Unemployment and benefit claimants in England. Many Town Centre residents CANNOT access good/outstanding attainment School due to individual School oversubscription criteria. There has been increase in population in Town Centre area putting pressure on housing, school places and infrastructure. What's the attraction to migrants especially from EU to one of the poorest wards in Oldham with the highest unemployment & the lowest paid economy in GM? We urgently need the local authorities to invest in infrastructure in town centre base area such as Education, Employment, Training, access to employment, improve the local roads etc.”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills, responded that data was only immediately available for council staff. 39.8% of council staff lived in post codes of which at least part is within 2 miles of the Civic Centre. Eighteen senior managers lived within 2 miles of the Civic Centre (a total of 166 although the latter hadn't been asked for). Senior Manager was defined as earning over £45.6k FTE. Within the UK and internationally, new migrant groups would always (or almost always) move to the lowest rent areas available,

which were typically deprived inner-city areas. As their communities became embedded and typically more prosperous, they would tend to move away from inner-city areas to more affluent but connected areas, often to be replaced by the next migrant group. This pattern had been repeated many times through the history of Oldham. Inner areas of Oldham and other towns had some of the lowest rents in Greater Manchester, and low house prices had increased the size of the private rented sector. It was expected that this would attract migrant groups. While employment opportunities would be more limited than elsewhere, affordable housing would tend to be more of an immediate factor.

3. Question received from Ruji Surjan via email:

“The welfare benefit cuts that has been brought in by the current Tory government, including freezing Child Benefits for the last 4 years, has led to a massive increase in Child Poverty in Oldham and in particular my ward - Coldhurst. What I'd like to ask is, what can Oldham Council, working with other key partners, do to tackle child poverty and create better chances for our young people?”

Councillor Chadderton, Cabinet Member for Children's Services responded that children's poverty was a priority for the Council. Meeting had been held and she referred the response to the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that child poverty was unacceptable in Oldham. The UK economy was the 5<sup>th</sup> largest in the world and the UN who had drawn attention to the poverty in Oldham. Despite the financial cuts, the Council had continued to invest in services and programmes. The range of schemes included Get Oldham Working and the Career Advancement Service which continued to provide employment opportunities, the Warm Homes Oldham continued to pull people out of fuel poverty every year with an estimated 5,600 people helped so far. The Council had taken a decision to make Oldham a living wage employer and pay a genuine living wage, the Oldham Education Commission and the Opportunity Area Oldham continued to develop approaches to improve social mobility and holiday hunger schemes aimed to match food provision with holiday enrichment activity to help families during the holidays. Over 3,500 meals had been delivered in the summer last year and it was planned to roll this out to more sites this year and to ensure all year provision. The Leader referred to poverty proofing and tackling poverty in schools through the 'voice of the child'. Tackling poverty and inequality was a part of everything done by the Council despite the massive funding challenges.



4. Question received from Stephen Kenyon via email:

“Has the Leader of Oldham Council seen the YouTube footage of the Oldham Council Full meeting 12/12/19 where he falsely stated that YouTube footage was not edited to cover up Oldham Council's endeavours to hide the truth from the citizens of Oldham? Cllr Feilding also at this meeting suggests that I am lacking in respect for Oldham council and councillors. May I respectfully suggest to him that if he and his council were to become more respectable and adhere to their codes of conduct then I would gladly show them more respect? Does Sean Fielding feel ashamed and/or embarrassed that the sound was obviously switched off so that this simulacrum of a council could carry on hiding their misdemeanor's, collusion and cover-up from the public?”

At this point in the proceedings, the Leader was constantly interrupted by a member of the public and a disturbance occurred. The Mayor, as Chair of the meeting gave repeated warnings. The meeting was adjourned at 18.33 and reconvened at 18.34.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that, at the risk of sounding like John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Kenyon had asked the same question again with no substantial difference from last time. The Leader was aware of what was said at the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 because he had given the response. The Leader had given an account of what had happened and explained that, during the time of around 20 seconds when the audio went quieter, only the Mayor spoke and he had simply stated that there was a time limit for questions and that all questioners, in accordance with the rules, should stick to the text of the question they had originally submitted and that he needed to move on with the next public question. The Leader again clarified that it appeared that by having to appeal across the back of the stage to Mr. Kenyon – with his microphone turned off – the words of the Mayor were subsequently very quiet on the clip, but they could still be made audible by using a more powerful speaker. The Leader reiterated that there was not cover-up, no video or audio editing and no conspiracy. If Mr. Kenyon had stuck to the respect of asking the question that had been originally submitted then there would be no problems. Because the questioner did not like the factual answer provided, did not make it a conspiracy. For the avoidance of doubt, there would be no point in asking the question for the third time again and expecting a different answer. The webstream was run by a third party for Oldham Council. The picture coverage remained live, councillors' heads were moving on it and the sound had merely become muffled.



5. Question received from Melanie Platt via email:

“Please would the council undertake a policy measure to ensure that the old routes of railways are not blocked or compromised by new building work. It is now widely recognised that the Beeching axe went too far and some of these lines could be reactivated for rapid light transport in the future – providing they have not been blocked by new development. One such is the Oldham to Saddleworth line, which if converted to Metrolink through Clarksfield, Lees, Springhead, and Grotton would provide much needed traffic relief and also do much to lessen Oldham’s worst pollution blackspot at Bottom Of th’moor. This is not a plea to re-open the line, just that the possibility remains to do so for the future.”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, responded that the Council’s Local Plan already contained a policy which sought to protect former railway lines that may have an existing or potential transport use from development. That included use as a pedestrian footpath, cycle or bridleway or on to which a new public transport facility or an extension to an existing network might be introduced in the future. Former railway lines would continue to be protected under Local Plan Policy 17 on Gateways and Corridors unless an overriding need for the development can be demonstrated or they are already protected or allocated for another use in the Local Development Framework. The Local Plan document contained this policy and was available on the Council’s website at

[www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1445/development\\_plan\\_document-joint\\_core\\_strategy\\_and\\_development\\_management\\_policies](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1445/development_plan_document-joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies))

At this point in the meeting the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired. The Mayor reminded members that the Council had previously agreed that questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council. The following questions were submitted by Councillors on Ward or District matters:

1. Councillor Davis asked the following question:

“All the Councillors in Failsworth and Hollinwood have been working to get the CCTV cameras along the A62 corridor which runs through Failsworth West, back up and running. Could the relevant Cabinet Member please give an update on progress?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the cameras on the A62 corridor were now back up



and running and thanked the Councillors for their patience whilst the issue was resolved.



**Oldham**  
Council

2. Councillor Judd asked the following question:

“Residents of Cherwell Close in Hollinwood have experienced varying amounts of flooding in recent years, the worst of which occurred in 2016 where 3 homes were flooded causing extensive damage. This occurs when the main combined sewer is at full capacity leading to surcharging of the road gullies. United Utilities have a responsibility of ensuring their assets are designed to cope with a 1 in 30 year flooding event however the road gullies are surcharging with every event of heavy rain. Can anything be done to get United Utilities to assess and confirm the integrity of their assets on both Cherwell Close and the connecting Roman Road?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services responded that the highways gullies and associated pipework was adequate in terms of capacity. However, due to the amount of rainfall (an average month of rain fell in 24 hours), and deficiencies with the overall combined United Utilities sewer into which the highways system flowed, the water exceeded the capacity of the systems. Discussions with United Utilities were ongoing and a meeting scheduled on 26 March 2019. The Council had approached the Environment Agency for additional external funding for an extensive study in relation to Cherwell Close to be undertaken.

3. Councillor Malik asked the following question:

“Car parking for residents living near Oldham Royal Hospital has been an issue for a long time now, in particular on Godson Street and on Sandringham Park Estate. Hospital staff park their cars in the surrounding area causing major problem for the residents. Can the relevant Cabinet Member raise this matter with Oldham Royal Hospital and see whether a subsidised car parking scheme can be developed for its staff to alleviate the problem on around those streets on Coldhurst?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services responded that the Council had raised the issue with the Royal Oldham Hospital (ROH) on numerous occasions in the past with the hope that some form of action would be taken to alleviate the problem which had been acknowledged by ROH. The matter had also been elevated to the Hospital’s Estate Management Team who were currently working on a future master planning exercise for the hospital to see if this matter could be factored into any future site designs to address these parking issues.



4. Councillor H. Gloster asked the following question:

“Whilst on our Chief Exec’s ward visit in October 2018, we came across a derelict property at 5 Queen Street, Shaw which has a Section 215 notice in the window of the property dated 2014. To my knowledge this property has been empty and derelict for at least 20 years. Can I ask the relevant Cabinet Member when we can expect this property to be brought back into use to provide a home for someone in need?”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing, confirmed that the property at 5 Queen Street in Shaw was a long-term empty property and the Council had carried out works in 2014 in default of a legal notice served on the property. The owners were currently untracable and the cost of the works had been placed as a charge on the property. The Council was keen to bring this and other long-term empty properties back into use and officers would be asked to explore all options to bring the property back into use and report back promptly to inform of the outcome.

5. Councillor Moores asked the following question:

“In April 2018, Shop Direct announced plans to close three sites located in Greater Manchester, and to relocate their operations to a purpose-built and automated facility in the East Midlands Gateway Development at Castle Donnington, Leicestershire. This will have a huge impact on the local economy with the loss 549 jobs at the Chadderton site (413 Shop Direct employees and 136 agency staff) and 1,341 jobs at the Shaw site (705 Shop Direct employees and 636 agency staff). Could the Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills, assure us that Oldham Council are taking steps to try and minimise the impact on individual employees, their families and the local economy. Could he also tell us if Central Government are offering any form of support?”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills responded that the Council, working with the Mayor’s office set up a task force to create a programme of activity to support those affected by the relocation. The Task Force included representatives from Bolton, Rochdale and Salford Councils, Shop Direct, DWP, USDAW and Growth Company. A lot of support had been provided to date and included 1-to-1 information advice and guidance sessions, 700 staff completed National Careers Service conversations creating individualised learning plans, 176 staff had enrolled onto apprenticeships, 350 staff had upskilled with health and safety, forklift truck refreshers, manual handling, etc., 583 staff had begun digital learning programmes and Maths and English would be launched by the end of March.

Shop Direct agreed to offer a package of time off work to pursue training activity (45 hours for functional skills, 20% of work time for apprentices). Get Oldham Working, Rochdale Employment Links and the Growth Company had been delivering sessions 7 days a week to align with shift patterns. The Council continued to work with Shop Direct seeking replacement commercial usage of the sites in Oldham. Unfortunately, whilst the Government announced a task force for employees affected by the closure of Honda in Swindon (Conservative), the Government had yet to make any offers of support for those affected in Oldham. The MPs had requested that Richard Harrington visit Shaw to provide support to those affected in Oldham. The visit had been scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> March.

6. Councillor Dean asked the following question:

“I have received representations from parents expressing their concern regarding exam results at Waterhead Academy, could the Cabinet member assure them that every effort is being made to work with the Academy to improve the recent results.”

Councillor P. Jacques, Cabinet Member for Education and Culture, responded that Waterhead Academy was part of the South Pennine Multi-Academy Trust who held accountability for the Academy’s outcomes. As a Local Authority, the Council worked closely with the Trust and all schools to support improvements in outcomes for Oldham’s children and young people. There were a huge range of accountability measures that schools and Academies were judged on and historically the measure that had been used included a number of A\* - C grades. The equivalent measure under the new performance framework was the percentage of pupils who achieved a standard pass (grades 9 to 4) in mathematics and English. In this measure Waterhead Academy achieved 42.0%, a slight increase on the previous academic year. The Local Authority was driving forward a number of school improvement initiatives across Oldham. Waterhead Academy, for the reasons highlighted, was one of the schools receiving a range of support from the Local Authority and other school improvement partners. This support had a particular focus on improving the attainment of disadvantaged students, particularly disadvantaged boys. The Trust continued to work hard to improve outcomes at the Academy and recent visits had shown that there was a calm and peaceful atmosphere around the academy. The evident positive ethos, supported by interventions from the Trust, the Local Authority and financially supported through Opportunity Area investment was expected to have a positive impact on the 2019 results.

7. Councillor Harrison asked the following question:



“About ten years ago, some blocks of flats were partially built on Near Birches Parade, Holts. For whatever reason, the developer abandoned them before completion. Over the years, the buildings and surrounding site became a target for fly tipping, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Consequently, I've received many valid complaints from Holts residents. Recently, the site was cleaned up and the entrance to the site boarded to keep people out. Can the cabinet member tell me if this is a sign that the flats are about to be developed to a habitable standard and made available as much needed homes.”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing responded that the site in question was in private ownership and was therefore unfortunately outside of the direct control of both the Council or any local Registered Provider. In such circumstances, the Council only had powers to act in the event that the property was not kept in a safe and secure condition, otherwise the Council was entirely reliant on the existing owner bringing the property into use. However, officers would continue to monitor the condition of the property and take any appropriate action as required.

8. Councillor Sykes asked the following question:

“The changing rooms at New Barn Playing Fields continue to fall in to rack and ruin, would the Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise tell me the plans for the future with this building? And would the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services please tell me what efforts are being made to get the building used again?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that the changing rooms at New Barn playing fields were included in the Council's Sports Pitch Strategy which was aimed at growing grass roots football in the borough. The Pitch Strategy was a requirement by the Football Foundation which enabled Oldham to secure funding for playing field projects. Sadly, this building had been the target of a spate of vandalism over recent months which had left the building with limited use until such time as building repairs could be undertaken. Approval was being sought to commit capital expenditure to resolve the issues in time for the new football season.

9. Councillor Hewitt asked the following question:

“The Council should note that local businesses in Saddleworth West and Lees, working with Greater Manchester Police and councillors, have formed a fully-constituted committee to realise the ambition to turn Lees High Street into a go-to area, rather than a drive through

place, taking good practice from the successes of other villages in the area. We ask that the member with special responsibilities for communities attend a forthcoming meeting of the Lees, Springhead and Grotton business hub and fully support our ambitions.”



Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Policing and Community Safety responded that the Business Group had been working with Council officers and Ward Members who had attended meetings to support the development and establishment of the group. The group were also being supported by Council Officers in preparing an application to the Lees Business Improvement Grant Scheme. This was an excellent example of local councillors and communities getting together in a cooperative way of working. The project could be highlighted as good practice.

10. Councillor Shuttleworth asked the following question:

“There have been a number of requests from Chadderton South residents for support with their appeal against the school placement of their children, and no doubt other members will be experiencing the same. I shall quote from one such frustrated parent from an email received on Sunday evening, but I have changed the name of the child.

'We have spent an enormous amount of time researching the schools in the borough and considered our application best suited to Sylvia's academic acumen. We assumed Sylvia would be given at least one of her three preferences. We also know there are children who have not asked for Radclyffe School within their application, however, they have been placed at our daughters preferred school. How is this lottery drawn? ' May I request that the Cabinet member for education explains how circumstances such as I have just highlighted can come about, i.e. one child not getting their preferred choice yet another being placed at that same school which they didn't apply for, and also request confirmation that each area of the borough has been treated equally and fairly when it comes to school placement.

Councillor P. Jacques confirmed that there were no redirected admissions to The Radclyffe School. All pupils offered The Radclyffe School had The Radclyffe as one of their preferences. The Radclyffe School was oversubscribed on offer day. Once a school had more applications than it had spaces, the publicly available over-subscription criteria was used. Oldham Local Authority were not the admissions authority for all but on secondary school in Oldham, Saddleworth School, therefore the local authority only set the oversubscription criteria for Saddleworth. All the other schools set their own oversubscription criteria. All the details on the schools' policies were available both on the schools

website and the Oldham Council website at [http://www.oldham-council.co.uk/school\\_admissions/index.php/oldham-schools/](http://www.oldham-council.co.uk/school_admissions/index.php/oldham-schools/)



Once the Local Authority/school had ranked each application into a criteria, the system allowed all the schools oversubscription criteria to be applied to all preferences from all pupils. On the lead up to offer day, the system ranked all applicants in order of criteria and then worked out who was to be offered a place. It was set out how many pupils each school could take and the system then offered that set amount of places. Anyone not offered a preference was added to the waiting list. If a preference could not be offered, the pupil would be redirected (allocate a place not requested) to a school to ensure a place was allocated for that pupil. All on time applications were looked at first. If a pupil had applied on time and had been redirected, it meant that the schools for which they had made preferences were full with on-time applicants and that the pupil in question was not high enough up the criteria to be offered a place. The pupil would be added to the waiting lists of their preferences and then redirected to the nearest school with a space. The late applications were then look at and the same process applied. All applications were treated fairly and equally. All applications were treated fairly and equally. All applications were looked at against the same criteria using the exact same system. The oversubscription criteria differed from school to school but it was noted that oversubscription criteria only came in play if a school received more applications that it has places to offer. Preferences could not be guaranteed and the schools which were popular filled quickly. The frustration was understood and the authority was looking to expand places.

11. Councillor Pythian asked the following question:

“Please can the relevant Cabinet member inform us of progress on the investigation works being carried out in the Grasmere Road area of Royton North which are intended to find the cause of flooding in this area?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services responded that the study was currently underway in this area was part of an official detailed process to gather information according to multi-staged Environment Agency (EA) policies and requirements and this investigative stage was itself funded by the EA. The Council had been successful in gaining this initial funding already. This study comprised actual physical investigative works with subsequent detailed analysis and calculations was to be completed in May 2019 and issued to the EA for further consideration against other similar studies submitted

across the UK. After consideration, the EA could make further funding available for actual site construction of the necessary works. The Council, in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) had significant success in gaining additional funding from the EA for flood alleviation schemes across the Borough over the last few years, but it was noted that receiving funding from the EA was not guaranteed and was given according to their timeframes.

12. Councillor Curley asked the following question:

“Last Summer we had to deal with the horrendous fires on Saddleworth Moor. At the time much was made of efforts to combat the then current situation and to plan for possible future eventualities. However, the worst fears of the community were realised much earlier this year with the unseasonably warm period in February heralding more fires which were even described by Sky News as “Apocalyptic”. The situation at Dovestone reservoir has been a constant source of worry and frustration with access problems and the potential for further fires and environmental damage a constant danger. Dovestone is frequently referred to by OMBC as one of the centrepieces of the tourist attractions for the borough. Through the provision of the Dovestone Marshalls we have seen that Marshalls can alleviate much of this problem. The funding for this however was only supposed to be temporary, yet Councillors were again asked to commit more of their individual budgets this year and have now committed 20% of their budgets for this purpose. Will the Cabinet member responsible provide guaranteed future funding for Marshalls and other measures as well as leading in seeking funding from other stakeholders such as United Utilities, The Peak Park Authority and in particular Hollow Oak Limited (a company of the Purico group) as the Marshalls ensure that there is safe access to the properties at Heytop and New Barn for the residents there who are tenants of the properties owned by Hollow Oak. It is only fair therefore that Hollow Oak pay towards the safety of their tenants so we can help safeguard the homes, farms and local environment. After all this area is of huge significance to the whole Borough and Gtr Manchester. It is only right that OMBC must lead on financing these measures.”

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources responded that the Council recognised the good work undertaken by the marshalls last year and was mindful of the damage caused by the recent fires. The Council was supportive of the initiative and would assess the level of resources required to support its continuation and positively seek external contributions. All parties would be contacted to assess the best approach going forward including the deployment of resources as appropriate.

13. Councillor Briggs asked the following question:

“One of my constituents is experiencing great difficulty in negotiating the very poor condition of the pavements close to his house, in his wheelchair, rendering him virtually housebound. While I appreciate the vast amount of this Labour council’s investment in repairing and resurfacing our roads, please can the relevant cabinet member advise me of the plans for investment in our pavements?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services responded that within the Council’s proposed highways investment programme over the next three years, there was an overall allowance of £300K to carry out some targeted footway resurfacing works – this would be used for tackling footways on a purely condition based approach at present, and any issues of a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) nature, e.g. damaged dropped kerbs, damaged tactile paving where fitted would be repaired. In terms of initial implementation of DDA compliant facilities at junctions across the whole Borough, generally these are only implemented as part of an appropriate related capital improvement scheme and not currently as a complete programme across the borough.

At this point in the meeting, the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

**RESOLVED** that the questions and responses provided be noted.

**NOTE:** Councillor G. Alexander left the meeting during this item.

3 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Larkin, Councillor Turner and Councillor Williamson.

4 **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER 2018 AND 27TH FEBRUARY 2019 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and the Budget Council meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

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

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, elected members declared the following interests:

Councillor M. Bashforth declared a personal interest in Item 15b by virtue of her appointment to the MioCare Board.



Councillor Chauhan declared a personal interest in Item 15b by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Heffernan declared a personal interest in Item 15b by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor F. Hussain declared a personal interest in Item 15b by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Garry declared a pecuniary interest in Item 15a by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor C. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest in Item 15a by virtue of his employment by Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor H. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest in Item 15a by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor Mushtaq declared a personal interest in Item 13 by virtue of his appointment as a Governor at the Oldham College.

Councillor Roberts declared a personal interest in Item 12(d) by virtue of her appointment as at Trustee on Positive Steps Oldham.

Councillor P. Jacques declared a personal interest in Item 12(d) by virtue of his appointment as at Trustee on Positive Steps Oldham.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

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

The Mayor advised that Councillor Heffernan would be retiring at the end of the current Municipal Year.

Councillors Sykes and Williams paid tribute to the work of Councillor Heffernan. Councillor Heffernan responded.

**NOTE:** Councillor Rehman left the meeting during this item.

8 **TO RECEIVE AND NOTE PETITIONS RECEIVED RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor advised that four petitions had been received for noting by Council:

People and Place

Reference 2019-01: Petition regarding Kershaw Street area – Access to Chamber Road (Shaw Ward) received on 2 January 2019 with 53 signatures

Reference 2019-02: Petition for Speed Restriction on Den Lane, Springhead (Saddleworth West and Lees Ward) received on 15 January 2019 with 257 signatures.

Reference 2019-03: Petition regarding Limited Waiting Restrictions, North Side, Beal Lane (Shaw Ward) received on 15 January 2019 with 248 signatures

Reference 2019-06: Petition regarding the Condition of the Footpath from Crossley Estate to Dairy Street (Chadderton Central Ward) received on 8 March 2019 with 476 signatures



**RESOLVED** that the petitions received since the last meeting of the Council be noted.

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## **OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

### Suffrage and Peterloo

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Chadderton SECONDED the following motion be WITHDRAWN.

“In 2018 Oldham has celebrated the centenary of women’s parliamentary suffrage and the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of universal adult suffrage.

This Council welcomes the installation of Annie Kenney’s statue in Parliament Square and the unveiling on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018, the anniversary of the first general election when women could stand as candidates and vote.

This Council recognises that the struggle for equality and the right to vote was long and hard fought. We reaffirm our commitment to commemorating the Peterloo Massacre of 16<sup>th</sup> August 1819 as a significant contribution to the struggle.

This Council resolves to:

1. Thank everyone who has contributed to commemorative and celebratory activities, events and everyone who has helped to raise the money to pay for Annie Kenney’s statue.
2. To invite Oldham residents and community organisations to join with the Council in commemorating Peterloo and the fight for equal rights.”

**RESOLVED** that the MOTION be WITHDRAWN.

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## **YOUTH COUNCIL**

There were no items submitted by the Youth Council.

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## **LEADER AND CABINET QUESTION TIME**

The Leader of the Main Opposition, Councillor Sykes, raised the following two questions:

Question 1: More Oldham Children Being Failed

“Tonight I would like to return to an issue that I have raised many times in the past – educational performance in this borough. Or to be blunt the lack of it! I was recently dismayed to hear that another school in Oldham has failed an Ofsted inspection – the Oasis Academy Oldham – and that both Oasis and Waterhead Academy still fall way below the minimum standards expected. Both schools are listed by the Department of Education as amongst the worst 346 schools in the country – hardly an accolade that the or we should be proud of. Oldham Council and its educational partners have had years to turn around Oldham’s academic performance. But, yet again, we

see another negative report of an Oldham school rated 'inadequate' and in need of 'improvement' in several key areas, including the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. When the Oldham Education and Skills Commission Chair Baroness Estelle Morris stated in the publication of its long-awaited report in January 2016, that 'we are on the edge of being able to achieve great things here in Oldham', her words did not containe 'but not yet'. Three years on and we are still 'not yet'. This Labour Administration has promised time and again that the findings of the Commission, and the work of the Partnership that was established to deliver them, would bring about a transformation in our educational attainment, but we have yet to feel or see any real change. In his foreword to the 2016 Education and Skills Commission report, former leader Jim McMahon said: 'We should not be satisfied with anything less (than a good education for all of our children) but, sadly, far too many children are still not reaching their full potential.' What is most saddening and maddening is the case of Oasis is that the most able pupils are report to have 'underachieved significantly'. It is not these children who have failed, it is we who have failed them for this represents a major failing on the part of the Academy, our education and this Administration. Can the Leader tell me tonight what has been done, will be done and when, to ensure that we do not fail any more children at the Oasis and Waterhead Academies, or indeed at any of our secondary educational establishments in this Borough?"

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that he shared the passion for getting education right in the borough. The Leader acknowledged that standards, particularly in the secondary sector, were not in a place where the Council wanted them to be and had not allowed children to realise their full potential. The central focus of the new Administration since May was education. Considerable pledges had been made on turning around the fortunes of schools. The pledges were incredibly difficult to realise and achieve given the fragmentation of the education system and the pressure that both the schools and the Council faced in terms of funding school improvement. The two schools, Waterhead Academy, which had had a change of sponsor as a result of its performance being below what was liked and the Oasis Academy, as a result of its Ofsted Inspection and the results which had been given back in the summer, had been served with a termination notice to the sponsor and so the central focus of Oldham's Labour Administration was to improve the educational outcomes in the borough. The Leader expressed regret at the focus on 2 academy schools because of the reality that the picture within Oldham, when considered as a whole, was much more positive. The three pledges on education which had been made less than 12 months ago were already reaping benefits in terms of the number of children that attended a good or outstanding school. There were more children attending schools in good or outstanding places than there were when the Leader assumed his role. A commitment had been made to invest significant amounts of money in improving the environment that young people were taught in as one barrier to young people achieving was the quality of their

environment. The Leader expressed his pleasure regarding a recent visit to Saddleworth School that day after the Planning Committee had approved the planning application to build the new school facility the children had been waiting for. The Leader also referred to the commitment of every child being school ready prior to entering the schools gates on their first day of primary school. Oldham had been recognised across Greater Manchester for achievements on this front with more children making more progress than any other borough. There had also been recognition nationally, Propps Hall Primary School had recently been recognised as being in the top 3% of primary schools in the country. There was a positive picture of change in Oldham on Education and it was a picture that would continue. The ripples of that positive change would be ensured to reach Oasis and Waterhead Academies.

## Question 2: Save Shaw's High Street

"I am sure that the Leader will be well-aware of the recent incident around midnight on 20/21 February involving the partial collapse of the roof of the historic St. Paul's Methodist Church in Shaw. The collapse led to masonry and brickwork being cascaded onto surrounding streets and on an adjoining nursery. For the record, I would like to place on record my thanks to those Council officers and emergency service staff who responded so quickly and professionally in assessing the danger to the public and in making the site safe. St. Paul's is not, however, unique. It is one of several significant buildings in Shaw which now lie empty and forlorn. In addition to the church, there are our four former banks – Barclays, Midland, Yorkshire and the Royal Bank of Scotland and the Old Post Office and the former Butterworths building, once a thriving DIY store left for decades that is presently a haven for an increasing number of pigeons and anti-social activities. These empty buildings were part of our ward walk with the Chief Executive before Christmas. All the above buildings are in need of a new purpose and my worry is that as time passes their deterioration will escalate. We also have a market that is on its uppers and a high street that appears to be attracting more and more charity shops. I have written recently to the Leader in connection with the concerns that I have to save the shops on our high streets in Oldham town centre and in the district centres of Uppermill, Lees, Chadderton, Royton, and Failsworth as well as Shaw. Can I suggest to the Leader that the Council and its partners look to develop a Daytime Economy Taskforce to compliment the new Night-time group. They would work to devise a strategy to revitalise the daytime retail and leisure economies on our high streets. Can I suggest that we take a hard look at the recommendations of the recent reports published by Sir John Timpson and the Institute of Place Management and Manchester Metropolitan University. I have also suggested that we bid for monies from the Government's new Future High Streets Fund. I am at least pleased that we are doing that, but I am disappointed that the Council has not chosen to bid for Shaw. With this money we could have returned the empty buildings back into use, possibly into much needed homes. This would also bring more footfall

into our district centre. In light of this latest disappointment, can the Leader offer me any consolation in at least agreeing to assign senior Council officers to work with the Shaw and Crompton elected members and local partners to try to find a workable solution to Shaw's empty buildings and improving the retail and high street offer?"



Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council shared the concerns of the changing nature of the high streets and the prevalence of empty buildings on High Streets throughout the borough. The Leader had made a significant pledge around improvements to town centres and in adapting them so that the centres could thrive and be successful with the decline of the retail sector. Shaw was not the only place to have a significant number of heritage assets for which a suitable alternative use had not yet been found. The Leader was keen to look at the opportunities for more leisure and dining in the town centres, opportunities for more residential to support the footfall at all times of the day to get away from town centres becoming desolate after 6.00 p.m. Significant plans had been drawn up to take forward regeneration intentions for the town centres, particularly in Oldham at this time within which residential development would play a major part. Outside of Oldham there had been significant investment in Royton Town Centre which had been nominated for the Mayor's Town Centre Challenge and a range of support leveraged from the Town Centre Challenge. The Leader announced that a very strong bid had been made to the £675m High Street Funds which had been made available by the Government. It was hoped to bring more money into Oldham to bring empty units back into use and get more people choosing Oldham and the other town centres as a place to live and visit and a place to enjoy. The Future High Street Fund was not the only funding available. Consultation had recently closed on the Accessible Oldham Fund which was £6m of funding devolved down to Greater Manchester which was about improving connectivity around Oldham Town Centre so that people could get around more easily and visit a whole range of things on offer when the development was completed. The Leader shared concerns about the nature of the High Street. It was acknowledged that bids were submitted to every fund available. There were plans to ensure that the borough's town centres continued to thrive and be successful places in the future.

Councillor Hudson, Leader of the Conservative Group asked if a satisfactory conclusion could be brought about regarding Dawson's Field being handed over to the Saddleworth Parish Council. Councillor Hudson informed the Leader that Councillor Judd promised to speak to Councillor Sheldon regarding handing over the field. Councillor Hudson said that he would leave it with Councillors Sheldon and Judd to bring about a satisfactory conclusion.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded with thanks to Councillor Hudson regarding his remarks and hoped that a positive response would be provided.



The Mayor reminded the meeting that the Council had agreed that, following the Leaders' allocated questions, questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council.

1. Councillor Leach asked the following question:

“As part of its drive for greater efficiency, the Council is encouraging residents and businesses to use on-line facilities. However, there are many residents, especially older people and the most vulnerable, who may not be able to use on-line services. Would the responsible Cabinet Member please explain what will be done to ensure that everyone will continue to be provided the services they need and answers to any questions they may need to have answered?”

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources responded that he was pleased the councillor had attended some of the workshops on Resident First and seen the issues that were debated. The Council was committed to making sure anyone who could not access online services that there were alternatives. Those alternatives were available at various locations throughout the whole of the borough, but the main face-to-face service was at Access Oldham, based on the ground floor of the Civic Centre. Elected Members and service users would continue to be consulted on the roll out of Resident First, Members were encouraged to attend workshops and provide view on what was proposed.

2. Councillor Williams asked the following question:

“The news that development of a new Lidl food store and hotel at Oldham Mumps is planned is welcome. However, residents of Oldham could justifiably be sceptical since previous proposals for this site have barely left the concept stage. Could the relevant cabinet member confirm the likely timeline of the development at Prince's Gate to reassure Oldhamers that this will actually happen?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise agreed with concerns about premature announcements being made before certainty to deliver them. The Council exchanged contracts for a sale of the site at Prince's Gate at Mumps with Lidl at the end of February. Lidl were currently finalising the terms of an agreement with a hotel operator which should be completed shortly. Following this agreement Lidl were aiming to submit a planning application for the scheme in late April. Subject to this being approved, works on site were planned to

commence in the Autumn with the Lidl and the hotel opening in late 2020. This was the beginning of an exciting time and there would be no more announcements until it could be done. The area was a gateway to Oldham for people who travelling from the Saddleworth area, up Ripponden Road and from Shaw and Crompton. Something prestigious would need to be done as part of the development. As a result of conversations with a number of developers about possible residential schemes, other retail schemes or leisure schemes, there was significant interest particularly with the certainty on the deal with Lidl and the hotel. The new hotel at Prince's Gate was the first step. The Leader responded that this was happening soon and would act as a catalyst for wider development in the area which included significant interest of other high quality hotel providers to set up in Oldham and take advantage of transport links.

3. Councillor Brownridge asked the following question:

“The Leader has expressed a desire to see residential developments take place in Oldham Town Centre as part of the revised plans for regeneration. Could the relevant cabinet member confirm the number of residential properties that are currently planned to be developed in Oldham Town Centre? Oldham Town Centre has a number of brownfield sites which could be brought online as part of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework to reduce the overall green belt allocation.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that he would like to see more residential development in Oldham Town Centre and capitalise on the transport links and out location close to Manchester City Centre and being on the edge of the Peak District in the same way as hotel opportunities as stated in the previous response. Currently, the Council had found 2007 potential new residential dwellings that were located in Oldham Town Centre and recently concluded the consultation on Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) at which a number of those who had expressed opinions on that consultation not just in outright opposition to some of the proposals but there were also many constructive suggestions from residents about other brownfield sites that had the potential to be brought online as residential developments, many in Oldham Town Centre. The Leader was clear that the 2007 figure was an absolute minimum. Oldham Town Centre could be a fantastic place to live in the way that many other satellite towns around major cities already were, capitalise on assets and maximise the residential opportunities in Oldham to support the retail, leisure and dining economy and hopefully, a by-product of that would be a reduction of the

pressure on the green belt which were a part of the proposals under GMSF.



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4. Councillor C. Gloster asked the following question:

“According to the Office for National Statistics, knife crime last year has risen to its highest level for a decade up 8% 39,818 offences, and sadly 739 people have lost their lives to knives. One of the highest rates in offending is Greater Manchester with 112 offences per 100,000 population, about half as much again as the average rate for England and Wales. Like the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick, I recognise that a chronic underfunding of Police numbers under this government reduce the chances of an offender being detected or apprehended, and so reduce the deterrent effect, but the fact is that people, mostly young people, for their own reasons are making a choice to go out equipped with a knife in the first place. Please can the Cabinet Member tell me what is being done to educate our young people about the dangers posed to others, and to themselves, when they choose to carry a knife?”

Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Policing and Community Safety referred to the gross underfunding of the police forces across the UK which was affecting policing forces in dealing with not only knife crime but other crimes which were blighting society. In terms of the continued development of a robust offer of prevention, diversion for young people identified as being involved in the risk of serious violence including weapons related behaviour, was a priority for the Community Safety and Cohesion Partnership. Community Safety Services had a dedicated officer who was working with colleagues from the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board and across the wider partnership to delivery input to young people through schools on the dangers and legal implications of carrying weapons. In addition to a universal education offer, more targeted prevention work was available and being delivered by colleagues in Positive Steps. A new service had been developed which would work to contextualise safeguarding principles. The service, which was being run as a pilot, would work with schools and within neighbourhoods and would be running parallel to the rollout of the new scheme being introduced in Oldham by Greater Manchester Police to ensure schools had access to police officers. Also, knife crime was the top priority for Oldham Youth Council and the Council would work closely with the Youth Council to address their concerns about the dangers of knife crime.

5. Councillor Moores asked the following question:

“In 2013 this Council took the difficult decision to cease funding school crossing patrols throughout the borough and move to a traded service with schools, at that time OMBC employed approximately 40 lollipop men and women. We all know that since 2013 school budgets have become severely stretched and schools are finding it harder to balance the books, could the relevant Cabinet Member, please advise us how many school crossing patrols are currently in operation within Oldham?”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills responded that the Council currently had 29 school crossing patrols in operation in Oldham, but there could be more as it was understood that some of the secondary school academy trusts had made their own arrangements to undertake this type of service themselves.

6. Councillor E. Jacques asked the following question:

“Following the recent Ofsted inspection of The Oldham College and consequent ‘GOOD’ rating along with the upcoming devolution of the Adult Education Budget can the cabinet member for employment and skills please tell me what the implications will be for the residents of Oldham.”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills responded that the Council was committed to supporting all schools and colleges to be good or outstanding. The Council congratulated The Oldham College on being judged good – this was an important judgement for the College and the Borough. The Council was supporting The Oldham College as it embarked on a new strategic plan, which would hopefully be enhanced with a new Construction Skills Centre. The devolution of the Adult Education Budget meant that £92.3m of adult skills funding would be commissioned and managed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority from August 2019. The Council would work with The Oldham College and other providers (including the Council’s Outstanding Lifelong Learning Service) and GMCA to create a new plan which would support the development and delivery of high quality adult supervision.

At this point in the meeting, the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

**RESOLVED** that the questions and responses provided be noted.

**OBSERVATIONS ON ANY ITEMS WITHIN THE MINUTES FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, AND RECEIVE RESPONSES FROM CABINET MEMBERS**



The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were submitted.

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor Murphy, Cabinet Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Items 7 and 8, Fleet Replacement Programme and Waste Management Replacement Vehicle Fleet. Councillor Murphy asked if the vehicles purchased were eco-friendly and exempt from congestion charges.

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services confirmed the vehicles were eco-friendly and efficient.

2. Councillor Heffernan, Cabinet Minutes 19 November 2018, Items 11 and 18, Eastern Gateway at Oldham Mumps. Councillor Heffernan raised the announcement that had been made about Marks and Spencer. Councillor Heffernan referred to Marks and Spencer closing stores and not opening new stores within 10 miles of an existing store. The announcement of Lidl opening a store at Princes Gate. How many more changes to regeneration were to come?

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise referred to his previous answers about Princes Gate.

Members raised the following observations:

Councillor Harkness raised two observations:

1. Cabinet Minutes, 28 January 2019, Item 6, Pursuit of Accreditation by the Living Wage Foundation to be a Living Wage Employer. Councillor Harkness reminded Council of a previous Liberal Democrat motion to seek accreditation and welcomed the report but that it had taken longer than hoped.
2. Cabinet Minutes, 17 December 2018, Item 8, Single Use Plastics. Councillor Harkness welcomed the adoption of the policy.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided be noted.
3. The observations be noted.



**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**Motion 1

Councillor P. Jacques MOVED and Councillor Ali SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This council notes the strong link between child poverty, educational performance and earnings in adult life. A rounded, high quality education, inside and outside the classroom, that equips young people with the tools to lead fulfilling and productive lives should be the expectation for all Oldham residents.

As a borough, we already have plenty to be proud of, including four out of five Oldham children attending a good or outstanding school, Oldham College’s recent good rating from Ofsted, improvements at Key Stages 1 and 2 across reading, writing and maths, and at Key Stage 5, with the percentage of Oldham students achieving grades A\* - C now within 1% of national averages.

There is still a lot to do, however, particularly in early years and at Key Stage 4. This work is made difficult by the fragmented nature of our education system, but this council remains committed to supporting all our young people, whether they attend a maintained school, academy or free school.”

Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Mushtaq spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor H. Gloster spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor E. Jacques spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Shah spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Jabbar spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Murphy spoke on the Motion.

Councillor S. Bashforth spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Fielding spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor P. Jacques exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, 52 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION and 0 votes were cast AGAINST with 2 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. Investing in capacity building at good and outstanding schools be continued so that more of young people can attend the school of their choice.
2. Partner organisations and parents be worked with to ensure all children arrive on their first day of school ready to learn.
3. Support to schools be continued to work together and share best practice, learning from one another for the benefit of all our young people.

4. Work be expanded to tackle holiday hunger and create breakfast clubs in schools across the borough
5. Evidence be submitted to the forthcoming Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into local government finance, highlighting the impact of funding cuts on services and restrictions this placed on the council's ability to support our schools and tackle the concerning levels of child poverty in the borough."

### Motion 2

The Mayor informed the meeting that the time limit for this item had expired.

Councillor Ur-Rehman MOVED and Councillor Williams SECONDED the following MOTION be put to the vote.

"This Council notes with concern the growing threat to our communities and particularly our young people from violent crime. Since March 2010 in Oldham, recorded violence with injury has increased by 64% and possession of weapons has increased by 124%, while violence without injury has increased by 441%. Some of this may be due to changes to reporting methods, but it is increasingly difficult to accept the Conservative government's argument that there is no correlation with police cuts that have seen 21,000 officers removed from service.

The New Economics Foundation have recently estimated that austerity has cost the UK economy £100 billion in lost economic growth. In this context, the government is asking residents to pay twice for their police force. The council condemns the government's agenda, pass the burden of police funding to local taxpayers via the police precept.

Whilst the decision of the Deputy Mayor to use the police precept goes some way to reversing Tory cuts, through the recruitment of at least 320 additional police officers and the introduction of more officers instead of PCSOs on the bus and tram network, it should not be necessary."

Councillor Ur-Rehman did not exercise his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be requested to write to Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, highlighting the concerning rise in violence crime in Oldham and the need for fairer funding that reflects local need.
2. Stronger relationships be built between councillors, communities and the police by developing new district working methods.
3. Work in and with communities be built to understand the causes of and solutions to violent crime, taking a holistic

approach similar to that which has seen success in Scotland.



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## **NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

### Motion 1 – Tackling Dog Fouling and Nuisance

Councillor C. Gloster MOVED and Councillor Murphy SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This Council notes that:

- Though most dog owners are law-abiding, a small number of irresponsible owners still fail to clean up after their dogs or control them in public places
- The law requires owners to clean up after their dogs in public places, to keep control of their pets, and to ensure their animal is micro-chipped and displays a dog collar with name and address of the owner
- Under powers granted to the Council under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, this Council introduced a borough-wide Public Space Protection Order to replace fix existing Dog Control Orders.

In October 2014, following the adoption of a motion by Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Board looked at additional measures to combat dog fouling and nuisance, however, none were adopted.

Council recognises that, with the passage of time, new innovative practices and the greater use of technology have in other local authorities had a proven impact in addressing these issues.

This Council wishing to more effectively prevent dog fouling and nuisance in this borough resolves to:

- Apply the maximum on-the-spot fixed penalty applicable under the law (currently £100) where offences occur within areas covered by the Public Space Protection Order
- Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Board to:
- Re-examine current examples of best practice, and the powers granted to it in recent legislation, to determine which can, and should, be adopted in this borough;
- Confer with The Dogs Trust to establish the ways in which the Council might work in partnership with them to address dog fouling, promote micro-chipping, or other improve animal welfare;

And then bring a report back on this matter to Council at the earliest opportunity.

In moving the Motion, Councillor C. Gloster explained that consultation to apply the maximum on-the-spot fixed penalty (currently £100) would have take place.

Councillor Hudson spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Fielding MOVED and Councillor Chauhan SECONDED the MOTION be put to the VOTE. The MOVE to the VOTE was AGREED.



Councillor C. Gloster exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, 53 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION and 0 votes were cast AGAINST with 1 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. Consultation be undertaken on the application of the maximum on-the-spot fixed penalty applicable under the law (currently £100) where offences occurred within areas covered by the Public Space Protection Order.
2. The Overview and Scrutiny Board be asked to:
  - a. Re-examine current examples of best practice, and the powers granted to it in recent legislation, to determine which could, and should, be adopted in this borough;
  - b. Confer with The Dog Trust to establish the ways in which the Council might work in partnership with them to address dog fouling, promote micro-chipping, or otherwise improve animal welfare;

And then bring a report back on this matter to Council at the earliest opportunity.

Motion 2 – Tackling Speeding

Councillor Harkness MOVED and Councillor H. Gloster SECONDED the following MOTION:

“Council notes that speeding continues to be a factor in road collisions and that a pedestrian is four times more likely to die if they are hit by a vehicle travelling at forty miles per hour than they are at 30 mph.

It is therefore imperative the Council working with the Police and residents seek to reduce excessive vehicular speeds in this borough, especially outside schools, on minor residential roads and in rural areas.

Council believes that we should work with our residents’ groups to deter and catch offenders and that we should employ mobile technology in order to do so.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Overview and Scrutiny Board to:

- Identify, with the assistance of District Executives, local police and the Council’s highways officers, locations not currently equipped with a speed camera which might benefit from one for consideration by the Drive Safe Greater Manchester Casualty Reduction Partnership.
- Explore the availability of funding to purchase and deploy mobile speed cameras to catch offenders, change driver behaviour and improve road safety.

- Investigate how the Council and the police can work with community and residents' groups to establish Community Speed Watch schemes and Community Concern speed enforcement sites in the Borough
- Explore the merits of establishing 'bus gates' at sites outside schools and look at establishing a pilot project. ('Bus gates' limit vehicular through traffic outside schools to cycles and local buses at the start and end of the school day, with a fixed penalty for transgressors.)

Councillor Chauhan MOVED and Councillor Chadderton SECONDED the MOTION be put to the VOTE. The MOVE to the VOTE was AGREED.

Councillor Harkness did not exercise his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Board be asked to:

- Identify, with the assistance of District Executives, local police and the Council's highways officers, locations not currently equipped with a speed camera which might benefit from one for consideration by the Drive Safe Greater Manchester Casualty Reduction Partnership.
- Explore the availability of funding to purchase and deploy mobile speed cameras to catch offenders, change driver behaviour and improve road safety.
- Investigate how the Council and the police can work with community and residents' groups to establish Community Speed Watch schemes and Community Concern speed enforcement sites in the Borough
- Explore the merits of establishing 'bus gates' at sites outside schools and look at establishing a pilot project. ('Bus gates' limit vehicular through traffic outside schools to cycles and local buses at the start and end of the school day, with a fixed penalty for transgressors.)

### Motion 3 – Pensions Scheme Divestment from Fracking and Fossil Fuels

Councillor Heffernan MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the following MOTION:

“Council notes that:

- Given the adverse impact of fracking, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has recently agreed to put planning measures in place for a 'presumption' against fracking operations in Greater Manchester.
- Despite this, the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, as the largest in the country, has over £1.2 billion invested in coal, oil and gas companies, including over £150,000 invested with companies engaged in fracking operations in neighbouring Lancashire



Council therefore resolves to request the Chief Executive write to the Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Pension Scheme and the Mayor of Greater Manchester asking them to review this position, and to take action to resolve this dilemma.”



Councillor Heffernan did not exercise his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED that** the Chief Executive write to the Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester Pension Scheme and the Mayor of Greater Manchester asking them to review this position, and to take action to resolve this dilemma.

- 15a To note the Minutes of the following Joint Authority meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members

The minutes of the following Joint Authority meetings were submitted as follows:

Police and Crime Panel	29 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	14 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
	15 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
GMCA and AGMA Executive Board	11 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)	
Greater Manchester Health and Care Board	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Transport for Greater Manchester	9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
National Park Authority	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2019
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	
Waste and Recycling Committee	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2019

Members raised the following questions:

Councillor Murphy, Police and Crime Panel Minutes, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018, PCP/18/24, Greater Manchester Police and Crime Plan – Forward Plan 2018/19. Councillor Murphy noted the brevity of the minutes and the only one further meeting was scheduled. Councillor Murphy asked if another set of meetings had been arranged and when the Policing Plan for 2020 be seen?

Councillor S. Williams, Deputy Cabinet Member for Policing and Community Safety and the Police and Crime Panel representative responded that there were two elements to the Police and Crime Panel which included the Panel and the Steering Group. The Steering Group dealt with the Plan. The Plan could be circulated. The Panel had received information on the precept at th meeting held on 29 January 2019.



There were no observations raised.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Joint Authority meetings as detailed in the report be noted.
2. The question and response provided be noted.
3. Information related to the Police and Crime Panel be circulated.

- 15b To note the Minutes of the following Partnership meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members

The minutes of the following Partnership meetings were submitted as follows:

Oldham Leadership Board	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Health and Wellbeing Board	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
MioCare Board	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2018

There were no questions raised.

There were no observations raised.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Partnership meetings as detailed in the report be noted.

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**WELFARE REFORM UPDATE**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED a report of the Director of Finance which presented a status update on the Government's Welfare Reform Programme. The Government's Welfare Reforms continued to have an impact on the residents of Oldham. Most of the Government's cuts to the welfare budget as part of the wider austerity programme had been implemented. Universal Credit was yet to be implemented in full and 2019/20 would see the fourth consecutive year of the freeze on working age benefits. The report provided the current position with particular focus on the impact of the roll out of Universal Credit in the report.

The Welfare Reform dashboard which was detailed at Appendix 1 of the report set out the current position which detailed the number and location of benefit claimants and unemployment levels in the borough. This also included details of support provided by the Council to vulnerable residents which included awards of Discretionary Housing Payments to those who experienced difficulty in covering housing costs and awards made through the Local Welfare Provision (LWP) scheme to support those experiencing extreme financial hardship. The report also detailed Unemployment and Claimant levels, the claimant count as at December 2018 was 6,380 which was an increase of 51.5% since the implementation of Universal Credit full service in April 2017. The impact of Universal Credit was outlined in the report and benefits freeze. The report also

detailed the Council's commitment to seek national accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.



Councillor Toor spoke on the report.  
Councillor Williams spoke on the report.  
Councillor Harkness spoke on the report.  
Councillor Goodwin spoke on the report.  
Councillor S. Bashforth spoke on the report.  
Councillor Roberts spoke on the report.  
Councillor Sykes spoke on the report.

Councillor Jabber exercised his right of reply.

**RESOLVED that** the Welfare Reform Update be noted.

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### **UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Legal Services which informed members of actions that had been taken following previous Council meetings and provided feedback on other issues raised at the meeting. Members noted the lack of responses from Debbie Abrahams MP and Angela Rayner MP. Members also noted letter in response to Post Offices and the lack of assurances about the future of the Post Office. Members noted response from the Department for Work and Pensions related to the Universal Credit Motion.

Councillor Sykes spoke on the report.  
Councillor Taylor spoke on the report.  
Councillor Judd spoke on the report.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The update on Actions from Council be noted.
2. Debbie Abrahams MP and Angela Rayner MP be contacted regarding responses to motions.

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### **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive – People and Place regarding the adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI set out how the Council would involve the community in the preparation and revision of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications.

The Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required local planning authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Oldham first adopted its SCI in April 2007. It was reviewed in 2010 and 2016 to take account of change to national planning guidance, legislation and reflect that the ten Greater Manchester authorities agreed to produce a joint Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) in 2015.

Since the SCI was reviewed and adopted in 2016, the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF) and its guidance had been published. These required councils set out their policies for giving advice and assistance to neighbourhood planning groups and their policies for involving communities and other interested parties in the preliminary stages of plan making. It was also felt that the SCI needed refreshing as GMSF progressed and the Local Plan Review.



Consultation had taken place. The SCT had been updated to reflect comments and reflect that the NPPF had been updated.

#### Options/Alternatives

Option 1 – Adopt the SCI and make it available to view alongside the Schedule of Comments and the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). The advantage of this option was that it would provide certainty to residents, developers and other key groups and organisations as to the consultation methods the council would use. In addition, it would also ensure that planning consultations were carried out in accordance with the most up-to-date legislation and guidance. There were no disadvantages to this option.

Option 2 – Not to adopt the SCI and make it available to view alongside the Schedule of Comments and the EqIA. There were no advantages to this option. The disadvantages would be that the Council would have to rely on outdated SCI which did not reflect the latest legislation, national planning guidance and the Council's Corporate Plan and the Oldham Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2019 be adopted and be made available to view alongside the schedule of comments and the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.25 pm