

**COUNCIL**  
**10/07/2019 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** The Mayor – Councillor G. Alexander (Chair)

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, Ali, Alyas, Ball, M Bashforth, S Bashforth, Briggs, Brownridge, Byrne, Chadderton, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Curley, Davis, Fielding, Garry, C. Gloster, H. Gloster, Hamblett, Haque, Harkness, Harrison, Hewitt, Hobin, Hulme, F Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Jabbar, Jacques, Judd, Leach, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Phythian, Price, Roberts, Salamat, Shah, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Surjan, Sykes, Taylor, Toor, Ur-Rehman, Williamson and Williams

1           **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dean, Hudson, Larkin and Sheldon.

2           **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 22ND MAY BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 be approved as a correct record.

3           **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 8 by virtue of her appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor S. Bashforth declared a personal interest at Item 8 by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Chauhan declared a personal interest in Item 8 by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board

Councillor Hamblett declared a personal interest in Item 8 by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board

Councillor Garry declared a pecuniary interest in Item 8 by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Police and a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor C. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest in Item 8 by virtue of his employment by Greater Manchester Police and a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor H. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest in Item 8 by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Police and a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Jabbar declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Mushtaq declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Haque declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor F. Hussain declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Ahmad declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Ali declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Akhtar declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Salamat declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Malik declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Harkness declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Al-Hamdani declared a pecuniary interest in Item 10, Motion 3 by virtue of his employment.

Councillor Hamblett declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1 by virtue of being an FCHO tenant.

Councillor Price declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 2.

Councillor Stretton declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 2 by virtue of her husband being over 75 years of age.

Councillor Ibrahim declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest in Item 9, Motion 1.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

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

There were no communications related to the business of Council.

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

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

Chief Executive

Reference 2019-09: Petition for the Public to Regain Our Trust in Oldham Council (Boroughwide) received on 26 June 2019 with 1,135 signatures

People and Place

Reference 2019-08: Petition regarding the 415 Bus Service (Chadderton Central Ward) received on 14 May 2019 with 174 signatures

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

7 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Youth Council PROPOSED the following MOTION:

“In the Year up to March 2018, in a report by the Office for National Statistics’ (ONS), analysis of knife crime figures showed that the number of fatal stabbings in England and Wales was at its highest level since 1946. With just less than 5,000 young people, aged 10 to 17, cautioned or convicted of a knife related crime and an 45% increase in the number of people, aged 16 to 24, that had been a victim of knife crime, it appears to be at epidemic levels.

It must be mentioned as well that this is not a London based problem as suggested by some media. Thankfully the report showed Oldham was not in the top ten when looking at numbers of homicides per 100,000 population, however, other North West areas were in the top 10 rankings of ‘worst place for killings’. In our 2018 Make Your Mark consultation, 2,167 young people voted to ‘Put an End to Knife Crime’ as their number one issues that needs to be tackled in Oldham. This was the top issue, coming higher than ending homelessness and equal pay for equal work. Given this was voted by our constituents we have made this a priority. As such Oldham Youth Council wanted to dig deeper into this issue so used 10-forward survey, going out into our communities to consult with young people to find out why they feel knife crime is an issue and what can be done to reduce it.

Our surveys would suggest that most of Oldham’s young people do not carry bladed weapons, but 14% of respondents did admit to having carried a knife. Half of these suggested they carried a knife for legitimate reasons, such as for Duke of Edinburgh Award or for eating their lunches, but the other half felt they needed it for protection. If this result is suggestive of the numbers of young people carrying bladed weapons it would seem to be much higher than the number of young people cautioned or convicted, which represents less than 1% of the 10 to 17-year-old population. The survey responses also showed that nearly 40% of young people knew someone who had carried a knife. While this doesn’t give an indication of levels of knife crime it may suggest that young people who do carry knives or bladed weapons are happy to share this fact to brag or intimidate, which, may lead to more fear in young people and a need for protection that they assume a knife brings.

Those who don’t carry knives were concerned that they could be arrested and that they could be injured by carrying knives. This would appear to show that current awareness and education is working for young people but probably only for those who wouldn’t pick up knives anyway. We as Oldham Youth Council have pledged to work with local schools and Oldham Council to help develop that training to keep getting the message across but also try and mitigate any fears coming from moral panics around knife crime.

We wanted to flip the questioning on its head by asking why most young people do not carry knives. The biggest response was that young people didn’t need to because they felt safe. This leads us to conclude that it is a perception of places being unsafe rather than real lived experience that leads young people to carrying weapons. Therefore, we feel that work needs to be done, with young people, to challenge the misconception

portrayed across the media that UK streets are dangerous. In working with young people to show that Oldham is a safe place to live, work and go to school we would hope to challenge the minority of young people that carry bladed weapons and prevent others from taking up knives.

Indeed, participants indicated that they felt that safety should come from adult support. Responses asked for a higher Police presence, not just to catch criminals but to engage the community. They suggested that organisations, such as the Police and Local Authority, should work with young people outside of the classroom to divert them from any potential negative behaviours, but also engage young people to help them feel safe and prevent the perceived need to carry knives. They asked for support from organisations, to provide places to go where they can receive help, advice and information as well as alternative positive activities to dissuade them from involvement in knife crime.

We as Oldham Youth Council recognise the benefits of young people engaging with adults, especially professionals whose role it is to work with and support young people. Recently the All-Parliamentary Group for Youth Affairs reported that the loss of youth services has contributed to the rise in knife crime, plus, that youth work provides a safe environment and a qualified youth worker to build trust and de-escalate conflict. The Report highlighted that those authorities where cuts to youth services were the largest had the biggest increases in knife crime related incidents.

We want Oldham to be a safe place for all, we want Oldham to ensure that all our children and young people are given every opportunity to grow up in a town where they can thrive and where they can reach their full potential.

We recognise that young people need access to high quality youth opportunities. Opportunities that enhance life chances, provide learning and development and enable young people to become positive and active citizens.

We propose that Oldham Council recognises that Oldham is committed to providing quality support and opportunities for all its young people and we ask that Oldham Council carry out an overview and scrutiny of the current youth offer across Oldham to ensure there is a broad range of high quality activities available to all young people, that are accessible, regardless of where they live.”

Councillor Fielding spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Shah spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Chadderton spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Williamson spoke in support of the Motion.

**RESOLVED** that the Council recognised that Oldham was committed to providing quality support and opportunities for all its young people and that the Council carry out an overview and scrutiny of the current youth offer across Oldham to ensure there was a broad range of high-quality activities available to all young people that were accessible, regardless of where they lived.

**QUESTION TIME**

**Oldham**  
Council

**a) Public Questions**

The Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda was Public Question Time. 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 Oldham Peace and Justice via email:

“Since July 2007, Oldham based Ferranti Technologies Ltd has operated as a subsidiary of Elbit Systems, Israel’s largest military company. It is based at Cairo House on Greenacres Road in Waterhead. Elbit Systems UK has licences to export to Israel.

Ferranti Technologies offers a wide range of products on its website, from Laser Guided Bombs, Sensors for Unmanned Aerial Systems, See Through Armour Headsets for use in Armoured Fighting Vehicles and Training simulators for Land, Sea and Air Combat, which are advertised as field proven, meaning battle tested, all with only 133 staff.

Whilst we appreciate that Oldham Council has limited power in this area, Oldham Peach and Justice wish to ask:

- Is the Council aware if Ferranti Technologies Ltd has supplied any of its wide range of weapons etc to Israel for use in attacks on Gaza or, in view of its limited staff, is Ferranti Technologies a platform for selling Elbit’s Israeli produced weapons, battle tested on Palestinians, in the UK and Europe?
- The Council support and encourage the transfer of Ferranti jobs to similar work in green technologies as part of your creative Green campaigns thereby saving local jobs and utilising the skill sets and technical expertise developed by the Ferranti workforce.
- The Council to back calls for an end to two way, UK-Israeli, weapons trade.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that to his knowledge the Council was not aware if Ferranti Technologies Limited had supplied weapons to Israel or acted as a platform for the supply of Israeli weapons to the UK and Europe. The Council would be prepared to use whatever influence and resources which could be afforded to support and encourage this and any other weapons firm to transfer to the manufacture of green technologies as a way of preserving the skilled jobs and putting those skills to an arguably better use.



2. Question received from Peter Brown via email:

“By virtue of the 1000+ public signatures will this Council accept the urgent need for change in which, when a member of the public makes a complaint against an elected councillor, no longer shall the elected councillor or this Council misuse and abuse the Data Protection Act to cover up the truth from the public. This has only led to the allowing of lies, deceit, collusion, and cover up and a disregard by highly paid council officers in being honest, open, transparent which should be the fundamental principles of this Council.

By what time scale can the public see a change in this Council’s one way system of secrecy regarding public complaints.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that he had spoken to Mr. Brown about Mr. Brown’s ambitions and what the Leader expected from the Labour Group. If the elected member chose not to permit the release of a response in a standards process then accordingly, in that circumstance, officers were obliged under the data protection legislation not to release the information. It was disputed that there was any deceit as the process was properly followed.

3. Question received from Warren Bates via email:

“The speech at the meeting above (20<sup>th</sup> March 2019) ‘in my opinion’ accusing the residents of Oldham who voted ‘LEAVE’ the EU by leader Councillor Howard Sykes was derogatory. And Councillor Sykes said in public when answering a public question at full council about his derogatory statement. That council minutes would clear him of accusations against vote ‘LEAVE’ which happened to be over 60% of residents in our Borough. Extract from his Statement ‘HERE’ common-sense has yet to prevail against the bigotry, narrow-mindedness of little Englanders and the swivel eyed Loons determined to break faith with our European neighbours this is frightening stuff.? He said the minutes would clear him? They ‘haven’t’. Who did he mean when 60% voted ‘LEAVE’ when he said ‘HERE’ before the rest of his speech when his Lib-Dem party’s policy is to ‘REMAIN’. Will you now Councillor Sykes apologise to the 60% of Oldhamers voted ‘LEAVE’?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise explained that could not provide a response as the question was not addressed to him and deferred to Councillor Sykes. Councillor Sykes provided a point of personal explanation under Council Procedure Rule 10.3.

“Thank you for giving me another opportunity to clarify what I very clearly meant in my question to the Leader of the Council at our meeting in December 2018. Can I also thank Mr. Bates for asking this question allowing me to further clarify any confusion that may have been caused to the good citizens of our Borough. Members will be aware that I responded to a near identical question to this one from Mr Charles Garrity at the March 2019 meeting. At that time, I made clear that my comments were directed at the politicians who brought us Brexit, the very people who have brought us to this point, rather than being directed at individual voters in this Borough, whether they voted leave or remain. For the benefit of questioner Mr Warren Bates, a former UKIP Councillor, I am happy to once again to clarify this matter and hopefully put this matter finally to bed. But I suspect not. Mr Bates only quotes an extract of my question, and one might speculate that this is for the purposes of mischief-making and mis-representing what I said. As with any question, it is important to look at this extract in the context of the entire question to properly appreciate it. So I would first urge anyone with an interest to view the entire question on the Council’s website at [https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200608/meetings/1940/live\\_council\\_meetings\\_online](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200608/meetings/1940/live_council_meetings_online) and do have a look on the council website not the edited versions and extracts that UKIP and its supporters have posted. To aid viewers, I asked the question 1 hour, 42 minutes and 36 seconds into the proceedings. Viewers may also wish to refer to my earlier reply to Mr. Garrity’s question submitted to the March 2019 Council which can be found using the same link. The question was read out by the Mayor in Mr. Garrity’s absence, starting at 17 minutes and 28 seconds into proceedings and I provided my personal clarification from 19 minutes and 53 seconds. I would now like to spell out what I mean with specific reference to the extract quoted by Mr Bates in his so-called question. Given that I previously referenced the former Soviet Union and the Western allies in the context of the Cold War, the ‘Here’ Mr Bates highlights clearly refers to the UK, not Oldham, and the UK’s political establishment rather than its people. I am personally convinced that to remain within the European Union is the in the best interests of our Borough and its people. As a member of the largest trading bloc in the world, Britain benefits from the most favourable terms of trade with its European neighbours, trade that is free of red-tape and bureaucracy. In addition, millions of British citizens every year enjoy the benefits of membership by being able to travel, learn, work, holiday, fall in love, marry, raise a family, and live freely in any of the European member states. And lastly and most importantly, we should not forget that the European Union, and before it the EEC, has ensured that the member nations of Europe have never gone to war since 1945 – a blessed and unprecedented 74 – years of peace that our forebears in

1914 and 1939 must have desperately hoped for. Consequently, my reference to ‘Little Englanders and Swivel Eyed Loons’ was specifically directed at those of our country’s political leaders who want to jeopardise this by so wilfully wishing to cast aside the many benefits of European Union membership. And they are also very happy to mislead the British public in order to do so. So they spoke of an illusory ‘£350 million a week for the NHS’ as a promise to the British people if we abandoned the club – or, as I put it, ‘breaking faith with the neighbours’ – even though our net financial contribution per annum, our membership fee so to speak, is only half that much. What they did not speak of were the consequences of a No Deal Brexit. “

At this point in the proceedings, the meeting was constantly interrupted by a member of the public. The Mayor, as Chair of the meeting, gave repeated warnings.

The meeting was adjourned at 18.46 and reconvened at 18.50.

Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Main Opposition, resumed his point of personal explanation:  
“This scenario is what I refer to as ‘frightening stuff’. A scenario where medicines are in short supply. Where there are food shortages, especially of perishable food, and price rises as a result. Of passenger jets and air freight being delayed, even assuming they have the right permits to fly. Of long queues of holidaymakers awaiting greater scrutiny of their new Blue passports by overzealous border officials. And of lorry parks and traffic jams tens of miles long along the highways of Southern England and Northern Ireland because of the many new checks that will need to be carried out as a result of new ‘hard borders’ being created between mainland Britain and mainland Europe, and between Northern Ireland and the Republic. This is indeed ‘frightening stuff’. This is not Project Fear, this is the Project Reality of a No Deal Brexit. I hope and trust that this will provide final clarification on this matter for Mr Bates and others with an interest in this matter tonight, and that we can now move on in this Chamber to addressing our other pressing business matters that impact on the lives of our Borough’s citizens tonight.”

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 by noted.

**b) Questions to Leader and Cabinet**

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



## Question 1: Keeping the Travelodge Tourist Pounds in Oldham



**Oldham**  
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“Although it hardly represents the ‘gamechanger’ that is predecessor promised for the Princes Gate site, I do welcome the Leader’s recent announcement that there will be a new Travelodge at Oldham Mumps, and the fact that he has indicated that there is a demand for more hotel accommodation in the town centre. A pity then that the Hotel Futures Project is dead in the water, but that is another story and I shall not go there tonight. No rather I will turn to a Travelodge related matter. If we are to truly maximise the benefits from this hotel development, we shall need to ensure that the spending made by guests staying there is, as far as possible, kept within our Borough. The new hotel’s location at Mumps will mean that Manchester will be all too easily accessible by Metrolink and the city’s bright lights will represent a magnet. I would like therefore to suggest that we look to work with the hotel’s proprietors to promote all that this Borough has to offer, and that would include our Coliseum Theatre, our Cinema complex, Gallery Oldham and our town centres shops, bars and eateries, as well as the delights of our Saddleworth villages. Can the Leader tell me if he would be prepared to look to work with the Town Centre Partnership and with our other partners in the leisure and retail industries to see if we can come up with a discount voucher scheme and other similar incentives for hotel guests at both this and any future hotels to keep their vital tourist pounds in our Borough?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that the development looked different than envisaged, but the reality was that the hotel and new supermarket would be the anchor that drove change in the Eastern Gateway of the Town Centre. This would lead to more residential development in Oldham Town Centre and more hotel development as there was significant interest in hotel provision beyond the Travelodge in other parts of Oldham. This would lead to new office accommodation and also lead to connectivity improvements which had been seen through Growth Deal 3 for pedestrian and cycling linkages between the Eastern Gateway and the Town Centre. The Travelodge was sited at the Oldham Mumps Metrolink stop but the Visit Oldham Strategy which Councillor Judd was working on, meant that it would not be a case of convincing people to stay at the hotel to spend their pounds in Oldham, people would be actively choosing to stay there because of the attractions in Oldham liked those mentioned, the Saddleworth hills, the Coliseum, of which other neighbouring towns were envious and other regeneration projects which were in the pipeline. It would not be the bright lights of Manchester but the bright lights of Oldham that would be encouraging people to stay there in the first place. There

was a commitment to ensure that everyone who stayed in the hotel would spend their pounds in Oldham Town centre and support the local economy. This would be a catalyst for change and a catalyst for improvements needed in Oldham Town Centre.



## Question 2: Let's Bring Back our Public Water Fountains

“My second question tonight relates to my concern for our environment and involves a practical proposal to make available drinking water to the public. In times past it was very common for municipal authorities and for individual philanthropists to provide drinking fountains, many very ornate, in public places. This enabled everyone to access clean, safe drinking water for free – I am sure many members will themselves have used them in the past, the one dispensing Buxton spring water in the centre of that town being especially noteworthy. I wonder though how many members here are aware that this practice has recently been revised by the Mayor of London who last year to his credit established a ‘drinking fountain fund’ with the support of the capital water utility provider, Thames Water. This will locate new fountains, or rehydration points as they are now known, initially at twenty locations across the capital and thereafter on a rolling programme. Apparently, Londoners drink an average of 175 bottles of water every year, so it is far better for them and our environment to encourage them to fill up for free into a reusable bottle, rather than drinking and discarding single-use bottles, many of whom end up in our oceans and in our sea-life. Citizens of our Borough may not perhaps consume so much bottled water, but any attempt on our part to replicate what has been done in London will make a tangible, practical contribution to making our Borough single-use plastic free. Certainly, places that would merit the location of such rehydration points in our Borough would be our many beautiful public parks. For example, last year in the height of summer, I visited Dovestone Reservoir and the water dispenser there was in great demand, but also in great need of renovation. So, my second question to the Leader, and it is rather a suggestion, is will he look to replicate this excellent scheme in Oldham, perhaps by using some of our airport dividend, by establishing at least one new drinking fountain in each of our district centres and would he also ask our own Mayor of Greater Manchester, to replicate it across the conurbation, working with United Utilities to do so?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that he would welcome the return of public water fountains in the way described. In December 2018, the Council had adopted the ‘Single Use Plastic Free’ Strategy, members had reusable plastic bottles. At the count on election night, single use bottles had not been allowed and

refillable bottles used. The Leader commented that public water fountains were a sound suggestion and suggested this be expanded to encourage fountains in other public places and buildings which people could access and the Leader committed to look into water fountains for Oldham. The Leader also accepted the suggestion of extending the scheme across Greater Manchester and would speak to the responsible portfolio holder and see if something started in Oldham and could be extended across the city region.

Councillor Curley, representing the Leader of the Conservative Group, asked the following question:

“In February this year we were informed by Highways that the failing road surfaces which had been refurbished during 2018 were to be repaired. I refer principally to the road surfaces on the A669 Oldham Road in Grasscroft, Lydgate, Springhead and Lees and also the A635 Manchester Road in Greenfield. These surfaces have continued to deteriorate and at major junctions the worn surface is a potential safety concern. Can the Cabinet member responsible please tell me when these surfaces are to be made good and is this still to be done at the contractor’s expense under a guarantee rather than council tax payer’s expense?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that he would look at the highways issues raised by Councillor Curley. The Leader highlighted the £12m investment in improvements to highways across the borough. There had been greater accountability and the commitment to looking at highway investments and opportunities for ward councillors to influence where improvements took place. In this instance, the reason for the detrimental works would be investigated and the work brought up to standard.

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 Taylor asked the following question:

“Over the last few months I have become aware that an increasing number of residents are audio recording conversations, with Councillors and Officers, without their knowledge. This could be regarded as being to say the least impolite and lead to a loss of trust. Could the relevant Cabinet Member tell us if the Council have a policy that would cover this type of occurrence and what advice could be offered Officers and elected members who become aware that a conversation is being recorded?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Justice and Communities responded that the Council did not have a policy regarding the audio recording of conversations in the circumstances described. Recording a conversation in secret, of itself, was not a criminal offence and not prohibited. If the recording was for personal use, then the person making the recording did not need to obtain consent or let the other person know. However, if the recording had been shared without the consent of the participants or if the recording was to be used in evidence at Court or a Tribunal, then complex legal arguments might arise as to whether the recording would be admissible as evidence. In addition, if the recording was sold to third parties or released in public without the consent of the participants then this could constitute a criminal offence, but the circumstances of each case would need to be considered on its merits. At all times, the Council endeavoured to comply with the legislation and Information Commissioner's guidance on data protection. When an officer or Member had concerns that a conversation had been recorded without consent they should seek advice, in the first instance, from either the Council's Information Governance or Legal Services teams.

2. Councillor Moores asked the following question:

“A hot topic at this time of year is the annual round of appeals for school places. A number of parents, carers and educational professionals have raised concerns about what is a difficult and emotional process. Could the Cabinet Member for Education tell: how many appeals were submitted for secondary places? How many appeals were submitted for primary places? How many appeals both at primary and secondary were successful? How many schools will be exceeding their PAN due to pupils being admitted on appeal? What is being put in place to mitigate the impact on schools that exceed their PAN? How appeals panel members are recruited and what training they are given.”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded that 393 secondary appeals had been submitted, 69 had been withdrawn, 313 heard to date (10 Jul) and were still ongoing with 11 to be heard. 123 primary appeals had been submitted, 30 had been withdrawn, 76 heard to date (10 Jul) and were still ongoing with 17 to be heard. So far, 11 primary appeals and 36 secondary appeals had been successful. All school will have exceeded their PAN, parents could only appeal if the school had reached its PAN therefore any upheld appeal take them over PAN. Additional funding to a school based on pupil numbers came into play the session after the pupils were placed. If a school needed immediate support, then the local authority could consider this using contingency growth funding which was

available from the DSG. Panel members were volunteers which were found through Governors meetings, word of mouth and some were already panel members for other authorities. Panel members filled out an application form. All were trained in school appeals legislation before sitting on the panel. Training could be both internal and external and was undertaken as a minimum of every 2 years. The next internal training session would be on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

3. Councillor Garry asked the following question:

“Jean Purdy was the third member of the team that developed in vitro fertilisation leading to the birth of Louise Brown at Oldham Hospital, but Jean is not remembered on the plaque commemorating this historic first – I welcome the efforts of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care to rectify this omission and ask him to update Council on progress in getting her contribution recognised.”

Councillor Chauhan, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care responded and apologised to Jean and Sister Harrison all other female colleagues who had contributed to the invention. Councillor Chauhan was delighted to inform Council that the hospital had agreed to recognise Jean and Sister Harrison for their significant role and to work with the Council on this recognition. This had been a whole team effort.

4. Councillor Harkness asked a question related to the Saddleworth Whit Friday Walks and the Band Contest which were free events. Some contests have become financially challenged. The District Executive had contributed £15k along with individual members contributions. The changes that Council had made by abandoning community politics and local funding away from local decision makers meant that there was a risk for the sustainability of the band contest. Would the Cabinet Member now guarantee they would fund the £15k shortfall to ensure the band contest tradition could live on and not cease to exist by the shortsightedness of the policy and also pledge to fund the marshalls at Dovestone to protect moorland.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that there was no risk to the band contest or marshalls. The only reason for risk to the marshalls and the band contest would be if the councillors did not work together and fund collectively in the same way as other councillors in other parts of the borough had found time to do.

5. Councillor M. Bashforth asked the following question:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services let us know if it has been possible to meet the request made to full Council by the Children in Care Council to waive prescription charges for care leavers?”



Councillor Chadderton, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services was pleased to announce that agreement had been reached between the NHS, the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which had been signed off at the Commissioning Partnership Board on 30 May. A process would now need to be put into place within a policy and thought given about how it would be put into practice. The deadline for that was the end of the month to then go to the Corporate Parenting Panel in September with a launch in Carers Week in October.

6. Councillor Malik asked the following question:

“Plans for regeneration of the Oldham Town Centre are moving forward and a new vision has recently been adopted by Cabinet – could the Leader of the Council tell us whether there has been any assessment of the impact of earlier regeneration including the Odeon Cinema and creation of Parliament Square and, if so, what it says?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member For Economy and Enterprise responded that since the opening of the Cinema in autumn 2017, well in excess of half a million customers have visited Oldham. This had resulted in a significant increase in footfall in the area, benefiting both existing and new businesses, some of which had extended their opening hours. Over 100 jobs had been created directly by the Old Town Hall, 75% of which went to local residents. A number of business had opened directly as a result of Odeon such as Molino’s and Nando’s. There were more businesses to fill the vacant units coming forward in the next few months. The refurbishment of the Old Town Hall was an asset owned by the Council which had generated income for the Council where previously it had been a significant liability. The hall had been on the risk register of listed building prior to refurbishment. The costs for keeping the building watertight was incredible. The investment into the Town Hall had taken a liability off the balance sheet, generated income and brought more people into the town centre.

7. Councillor Davis asked the following question:

“At PVfM while scrutinising the budget for 2019/20, I raised concerns about the loss of the Promobility Scheme, which is the wheelchair rental and electric scooters for the members of the public with mobility needs in the town centre, because this is needed for an accessible town centre. It was agreed to look at this proposal – could the Cabinet member responsible please

give me an update on progress in finding another partner to help run this service?”



**Oldham**  
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Councillor Chauhan, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care responded that over the last 10 years the Council had had to find more than £208m worth of savings and the Council had looked at every service area provided and unfortunately this included the grant funding for the Promobility service. It was recognised that the wheelchair and electric scooter hire element of the service was valued by many Town Centre visitors. The Council approached the provider of the Promobility service before they closed with an offer to provide just this element, but they indicated that they could not take this forward. The Council had now approached several other organisations about this opportunity. There had been encouraging interest and viewings of possible accommodation. Applications were currently being invited to provide a wheelchair and electric scooter hire offer in the Town Centre.

8. Councillor C. Gloster asked a question related to safety cameras in his ward and across the borough that did not work. Residents had reported cars travelling at high speed, but the camera had not been activated. The camera remained a visible deterrent and as such, the location of the camera was not given but had been shared with the Cabinet Member and TfGM. The issue was that Drivesafe had gone totally digital making wet film cameras obsolete. There was a programme of replacements, but it was a slow process with no indication as to which lights had been or likely to be upgraded. The cameras in Oldham were Oldham assets, but such was the reluctance of TfGM to give any information, they would not reveal how many sites had been upgraded across the borough or indeed any. Does the Cabinet Member share the view that these sites are essential to deter drivers and subsequently prevent people from being killed or seriously injured and in a position to apply pressure from TfGM to ensure that wet film sites in the borough were upgraded as soon as possible?

Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services, agreed that safety cameras were in place for a purpose. Councillor Ur-Rehman requested Councillor Gloster forward the information to him and to raise with TfGM.

9. Councillor Moores asked the following question:

“Last week I noticed a number of articles in the press, regarding PCN’s Primary Care Networks. The press statement went on to say, family doctors will lead teams that include pharmacists, paramedics, nurses, physio’s and counsellors, that the initiative was intended to allow

GP's to spend more time with the sickest patients and that there was a deadline for introduction of PCN's of June 2019. Could the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care please tell us how this fits in with Oldham's Moves toward the integration of health and social care and the introduction of social prescribing across the borough?"

Councillor Chauhan, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care responded that in January 2019 clusters had been formed beforehand to be translated into PCN's. Social prescribing was already in place with activities in West Oldham which look at the whole person rather than single conditions. Councillor Chauhan would provide all members with a full response.

10. Councillor Jacques asked the following question:

"I have a resident who lives near Hollinwood junction who is extremely concerned about the air quality during peak times, particularly between 4.30 and 6.30 when there is a lot of standing traffic. Can the cabinet member responsible for air quality inform us what actions are being done to improve this issue in Oldham, particularly in areas where there are high volumes of traffic?"

Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, responded that pollution from road traffic was linked to a wide range of serious illnesses and conditions. It contributed to the equivalent of 1,200 deaths a year in Greater Manchester alone. Many local roads in our region have levels of harmful nitrogen dioxide (NO<sup>2</sup>) which were above the legal limits. The Government had instructed Oldham with the other 9 Local Authorities in Greater Manchester to take quick action to reduce NO<sup>2</sup> emissions, which were mainly produced by older diesel engines. Greater Manchester local authorities were working together with TfGM to develop a Clean Air Plan to tackle air pollution on local roads. Key proposals were to introduce a Clean Air Zone across the whole of Greater Manchester in two phases from 2021 and 2023; a multi-million pound funding package to support local businesses which included sole traders to upgrade to cleaner vehicles; and to treble the number of electric vehicle public charging points. The Council, in conjunction with TfGM, had just completed a detailed 'conversation' exercise with the public and the responses were currently being analysed before the formal consultation on the detailed proposal which begins in the autumn.

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.





**c) Questions on Cabinet Minutes**

To note the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on the undermentioned dates and to receive any questions on any items within the minutes from members of the Council who were not members of the Cabinet and receive responses from Cabinet Members. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were submitted.

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor Murphy, Cabinet Minutes, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019, Item 6, Greater Manchester's Clean Air Plan – Tackling Nitrogen Dioxide Exceedances at the Roadside – Outline Business Case. Councillor Murphy noted that it was known trees reduced pollution and a tree survey had been completed. Trees provided beauty and reduced emissions. Councillor Murphy asked if there were any plans to submit a bid to the urban tree plan and to increase the number of trees and if funding could be ringfenced dedicated to tree planting through Section 106 from planning applications as part of GMSF.

Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services responded that a bid had been submitted to plant trees in the borough and would look into the suggestion on ringfencing S106 funds.

2. Councillor C. Gloster, Cabinet Minutes, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019, Item 8, 3-Year Highways Improvement Programme (2019/20 – 2021/22). Councillor C. Gloster asked if there were any plans to fix Low Crompton Road which was used by residents and businesses? Ward councillors had reported that the road was in a bad state of repair.

Councillor Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services, responded that consultation had taken place on the Improvement Programme which included detailed conversations with ward councillors. The Highways Improvement Programme was available on the website.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided be noted.

**d) Questions on Joint Arrangements / Partnerships**

To note the minutes of the following Joint Authority and Partnership meetings and the relevant spokesperson to respond to questions from Members.



The minutes of the following Joint Authorities and Partnerships meetings were submitted as follows:

Greater Manchester Combined Authority	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2019 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2019 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2019
Greater Manchester Health and Care Board	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
Police and Crime Panel	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2019
National Park Authority	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2019 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2019
Health and Wellbeing Board	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2019 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
MioCare Board	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Oldham Leadership Board	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2019

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor Sykes, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Minutes, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 68/13 Town Centre Challenge: Future High Streets Fund Prospectus. Councillor Sykes asked the following question:

“Back in March of this year you will remember I asked the Leader about the persisting issue of St. Paul’s Methodist Church in my ward of Shaw. The unfortunate collapse in February saw the closure of roads and a commendable response by emergency services for containing the situation. What we now need to do is ensure council services sort out the issue of the derelict site and work with the Methodist Church to provide a viable and workable community solution. The building is now being cared for and undergoing repairs by the Methodist Church, but what is the future of this Place of Worship grade II listed building? Following road closures and the ongoing repair work, would it make more sense that the site could be fit into Oldham Borough Council’s housing framework and serve as a lived-in example of how we think of using our existing buildings and not continuously attack our finite green belt. Up and down the borough there are empty buildings in a similar condition to St. Paul’s, I gave reference in March, to empty Banks, post offices and Pubs. Is St. Paul’s to become yet another tombstone of Shaw town centre? The council has left Shaw out of its Phase 1 application for a Government financed Future High Streets Fund. I strongly feel if the

Council does not take this issue seriously Shaw will miss the deadline for summer 2020 as well, and the subsequent regeneration provided by such a grant. Back in April 2019, myself and Liberal Democrat councillors colleagues were in contact with the Methodist Church and Historic England and we have been informed the building will become safe as a result of the repair work. However, as we could still be left with yet another disused space in our community, what is being done about the long-term future of St. Paul's or will money continue to be sunk into a pile of old stones which will be an ongoing blight on Shaw and Crompton?"

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded and informed the meeting that the Future High Streets fund bid had progress to the next stage to transform the Oldham Town Centre from retail into leisure. Councillor Fielding was happy for the site in Shaw to be nominated. The Brownfield Register was updated every year and members were encouraged to put forward nominations. The Mayor would have further opportunities to nominate for the borough to nominate future areas and if Councillor Sykes made a case for Shaw, the Leader would be happy to receive it.

2. Councillor Hamblett, GM Health and Care Board Minutes, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019, HCB 17/19, Taking Charge – The Next Five Years. Councillor Hamblett asked about the transfer of patients from a surgery at Trent Road and be given priority to transfer to Crompton Health Centre as this would work in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Mayor's ambition to have health as a priority in all public policies and the ease of access to the centre of Shaw.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, committed to look at his question and circulate a written response.

3. Councillor Al-Hamdani, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) minutes, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 66/19 GM 5 Year Environment Plan. Councillor Al-Hamdani's question related to the achievement of carbon neutrality and Oldham leading by example. Councillor Al-Hamdani asked about a number of substantial issues on planning applications, incoming information and delivery on applications. If the Council was unable to deliver on planning applications due process, how could the Council deliver a plan that achieved on environmental issues through a thematic plan on buildings, energy and transport. What could be done on what was going on in the planning department?

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded and explained that he had received correspondence regarding the planning process. Councillor Fielding asked Councillor Al-Hamdani to email his concerns. There was a commitment to be carbon-neutral by 2038.

4. Councillor H. Gloster, Police and Crime Panel Minutes, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019, PCP/19/04, 2019/20 PCC Component of the Mayoral Precept. Councillor H. Gloster asked about conductors on trams and asked what discussion had taken place, where and when, and when would conductors be seen on the trams? Shaw residents were paying higher fares than most in Oldham and users expected to feel safe when using the tram network.

Councillor Williams, Police and Crime Panel Representative responded that work was still ongoing on the spending and the placement of the PCSOs.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Joint Authorities and Partnership meetings as detailed in the report be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided be noted.

**NOTE:** Councillor Ibrahim and Councillor Williamson left the meeting during this item.

9

**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Abolition of Section 21 No Fault Evictions

Councillor Leach MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED the following motion:

“This Council notes that:

- No fault evictions introduced under Section 21 of the 1988 Housing Act, allow landlords to evict tenants, without having to give a reason, once the term of the tenancy has expired;
- 80% of England’s 11 million renters are on tenancies with fixed terms of six months or a year; after this period has ended, landlords can evict their tenants under Section 21 without cause;
- Research published by The Observer campaign group Generation Rent indicates that Section 21 evictions are now the single biggest cause of homelessness in England; and that
- In 2017, the Scottish Government made tenancies indefinite and banned no-fault evictions under the terms of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016.

This Council believes Abolishing Section 21 no-fault evictions:

- Would help to make renting more secure and communities more stable, improve standards and increase tenant confidence;
- Would further help to tackle homelessness, which should be a priority for government at all levels; and
- Should happen as soon as practicably possible.

The Council therefore:

- Welcomes the UK Government announcement in April of plans to consult on new legislation to abolish Section 21 no-fault evictions in England; and
- Resolves to work with the Unfair Evictions Campaign led by Generation Rent, the New Economics Foundation and renters' unions, to bring about the swift abolition of Section 21 no-fault evictions."

Councillor Al-Hamdani spoke in support of the Motion.  
Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion.  
Councillor Curley spoke in support of the Motion.  
Councillor Chadderton spoke in support of the Motion.  
Councillor Judd spoke in support of the Motion.  
Councillor Roberts spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Leach exercised her right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The UK Government announcement of plans to consult on new legislation to abolish Section 21 no-fault evictions in England be welcomed.
2. The Council resolved to work with the Unfair Evictions Campaign led by Generation Rent, the New Economics Foundation and renters' union to bring about the swift abolition of Section 21 no-fault evictions.

Motion 2 – Calling on the Government to Fund Free TV Licences for all over 75s

Councillor Stretton MOVED and Councillor Hulme SECONDED the following MOTION:

"This Council notes that the government has withdrawn funding from the BBC which has hitherto covered the cost of free TV Licences for all pensioners over the age of 75. The government shifted the responsibility for deciding whether the free TV License should continue to be available to all pensioners and, if so, how it would be funded to the BBC in 2015. The BBC have announced that after the end of June next year the free TV Licence will only be available to households where there is a pensioner over the age of 75 who is in receipt of Pension Credits.

This Council also notes the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report that says one in 6 pensioners are living in poverty and pensioner poverty is rising. Furthermore, in the most recent government statistics for take up of pension credits (2016-17) only 6 out of 10 pensioners who were entitled to the benefit claimed it and only 64 percent of the total amount of Pension Credit that could have been claimed was claimed.

The Council believes it is clear that the cost of a TV Licence at £154.50 will be prohibitive for many and as a result many pensioners will be without the benefit of TV.

This Council calls upon the Government to reinstate the funding to the BBC to enable the retention of the free colour TV licence for all over 75's.

This Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Borough's three MPs calling on them to demand the government reinstate the funding to the BBC to allow free TV licences for all over 75s."

#### AMENDMENT

The Chief Executive had been notified that Councillor Williamson had to leave the meeting and was unable to Move the Motion and notice had been given that Councillor Sykes would Move the Motion in her absence which was AGREED.

Councillor Sykes MOVED and Councillor Harkness SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

"At the end of paragraph 3 add a new sentence:

'By promoting the take-up of Pension Credit by all of those eligible to do so, the Council would be taking a practical action to help address pensioner poverty, whilst helping guarantee entitlement to a free TV licence for those pensioners aged 75 or over living with poverty.'

Add a further bullet point at the end:

'This Council also resolves to work with our partners who advise or provide services to older residents in this borough to promote the take up of Pension Credit by residents who are eligible for this benefit, but who currently fail to claim. The take-up campaign should highlight the entitlement to a free TV licence for those aged 75 or over in receipt of Pension Credit.'

The motion as amended to read:

"This Council notes that the government has withdrawn funding from the BBC which has hitherto covered the cost of free TV Licences for all pensioners over the age of 75. The government shifted the responsibility for deciding whether the free TV License should continue to be available to all pensioners and, if so, how it would be funded to the BBC in 2015. The BBC have announced that after the end of June next year the free TV Licence will only be available to households where there is a pensioner over the age of 75 who is in receipt of Pension Credits.

This Council also notes the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report that says one in 6 pensioners are living in poverty and pensioner poverty is rising. Furthermore, in the most recent government statistics for take up of pension credits (2016-17) only 6 out of 10 pensioners who were entitled to the benefit claimed it and only 64 percent of the total amount of Pension Credit that could have been claimed was claimed.

The Council believes it is clear that the cost of a TV Licence at £154.50 will be prohibitive for many and as a result many pensioners will be without the benefit of TV. By promoting the take-up of Pension Credit by all of those eligible to do so, the Council would be taking a practical action to help address

pensioner poverty, whilst helping guarantee entitlement to a free TV licence for those pensioners aged 75 or over living with poverty.

This Council calls upon the Government to reinstate the funding to the BBC to enable the retention of the free colour TV licence for all over 75's.

This Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Borough's three MPs calling on them to demand the government reinstate the funding to the BBC to allow free TV licences for all over 75s.

This Council also resolves to work with our partners who advise or provide services to older residents in this borough to promote the take up of Pension Credit by residents who are eligible for this benefit, but who currently fail to claim. The take-up campaign should highlight the entitlement to a free TV licence for those aged 75 or over in receipt of Pension Credit."

Councillor Stretton in moving the MOTION ACCEPTED the AMENDMENT.

A vote was then taken on the AMENDMENT.

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

Councillor Harkness who spoke in support of the Substantive Motion.

Councillor Ur-Rehman spoke in support of the Substantive Motion.

Councillor Stretton exercised her right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Borough's three MPs calling on them to demand that government reinstate the funding to the BBC to allow free TV licences for all over 75s.
2. The Council would work with our partners who advised or provided services to older residents in this borough to promote the take up Pension Credit by residents who were eligible for this benefit, but who currently failed to claim. The take-up campaign should highlight the entitlement to a free TV licence for those aged 75 or over in receipt of Pension Credit.

**NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Making a Commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Councillor Sykes MOVED and Councillor Al-Hamdani SECONDED the following MOTION:

“Council welcomes the UK Government’s commitment to the delivery of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the world community at the United Nations in September 2015. The goals form part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which seeks to eradicate extreme poverty, address inequality and injustice, and promote sustainable development and peace.

The goals are to:

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Wishing to replicate the UK Government’s position on the goals, this Council resolves to make a similar commitment to their delivery, as far as is practicable and within its power and resources, and calls upon the Health and Overview and Scrutiny Boards to identify the work that is already being done by the Council and its partners and what more can be done, and to present a report with its finding and recommendations to a future meeting of full Council.”

Councillor Judd spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Ball spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Jabbar spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Murphy spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Fielding spoke in support of the Motion.



Councillor Shah spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sykes exercised his right of reply.

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



**RESOLVED** that the Council, wishing to replicate the UK Government's position on the goals to make a similar commitment to their delivery, as far as was practicable and within its power and resources, called upon the Health and Overview and Scrutiny Boards to identify the work that was already being done by the Council and its partners and what more could be done and to present a report with its findings and recommendations to a future meeting of full Council.

#### Motion 2 – Restoring Government Funding for Brownfield Housing Development

The Chief Executive had been notified that Councillor Williamson had to leave the meeting and was unable to Move the Motion and notice had been given that Councillor Harkness would Move the Motion in her absence and Councillor Sykes would Second the Motion which was AGREED.

Councillor Harkness MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the following MOTION:

“Council notes that:

- The Conservative Government in its white paper ‘Fixing our Broken Housing Market’ stated that more homes should be build by ‘maximising the contribution from brownfield sites.’
- Brownfield sites suffer from significant contamination, whether below-ground or in a building’s construction, which is the result of previous industrial use as cotton mills; chemical and coal gas plants; coal mines; and dye works.
- Decontaminating such sites is very expensive at an average cost of £250,000 per acre and this cost often renders housing developments unaffordable.
- According to Department of Trade figures, approximately 1 million acres of brownfield sites are contaminated
- Much of this land is in Northern towns, like Oldham, a legacy of their industrial past.
- In the Outline Housing Package agreed between the ten Greater Manchester authorities and the Conservative Government in 2017, a ‘land fund’ worth up to £50 million was pledged by central government to support the development of housing on brownfield sites by paying for the cost of remediation.
- The Conservative Government has recently reneged on this pledge.

Council condemns the decision by the Conservative Government to withdraw its offer of the Outline Housing Package, which will make the delivery of new homes on

brownfield sites unaffordable and force more development onto the Green Belt, a direct contradiction of the Government's own stated policy.

Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Housing urging the minister to restore the Outline Housing Package to fund the remediation of brownfield sites in Greater Manchester.
- Copy in our local MPs, the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the leaders of the other Greater Manchester local authorities and the Chair of the Local Government Association asking them for the support for Oldham's position."

Councillor Harkness did not exercise his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED** that the Chief Executive be asked to:

1. Write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Housing urging the minister to restore the Outline Housing Package to fund the remediation of brownfield sites in Greater Manchester.
2. Copy in the borough's local MPs, the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the leaders of the other Greater Manchester local authorities and the Chair of the Local Government Association asking them for their support for Oldham's position.

#### Motion 3 – Adopting the Fair Tax Declaration

Councillor C. Gloster and Councillor Hamblett **SECONDED** the following MOTION:

"Council notes that:

- 6 – 14 July 2019 is Fair Tax Week 2019.
- Polling by the Institute for Business Ethics finds that corporate tax avoidance has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern for the British public in relation to business conduct.
- It has been conservatively estimated that losses through just one form of tax avoidance, multinational profit-shifting, could be costing the UK some £7bn per annum in lost corporation tax revenues.
- An estimated 15% of public contracts have been won by companies with links to tax havens.
- 6 in 10 members of the public believe that UK Government and Councils should examine the tax practices of such prospective contractors as part of the procurement process.
- The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct.

Council believes that, as a publicly-funded body and a major procurer of goods and services, it should demonstrate good tax conduct.

Council therefore resolves to sign the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration, and furthermore to lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities, by:

- Ensuring contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay any due employment taxes.
- Shunning the use of offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
- Undertaking due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
- Ensuring that there is clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers and their consolidated profit & loss position, given that a lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing.
- Promoting Fair Tax Mark certification to local businesses, our contractors and in any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due.
- Supporting local Fair Tax Week events and celebrating the tax contribution made by responsible businesses.
- Supporting Calls for urgent reform of EU and UK law to enable municipalities to revise their procurement policies and better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct.

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

**RESOLVED** that the Council for Fair Tax Declaration be signed, and furthermore the Council lead by example and demonstrate good in our tax conduct right across our activities by:

- Ensuring contractors implement IR35 robustly and pay any due employment taxes.
- Shunning the use of offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty.
- Due diligence being undertaken to ensure that not-for-profit structures were not being used inappropriately as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates.
- Clarity be ensured on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers and their consolidated profit & loss position, given that a lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing.
- Fair Tax Mark certification be promoted to local businesses, our contractors and in any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporate tax was due.
- Local Fair Tax Events be supported and the tax contribution made by responsible businesses be celebrated.

- Calls for urgent reforms of EU and UK law be supported to enable municipalities to revise their procurement policies and better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct.

11 **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.

**RESOLVED** that the update on Actions from Council be noted.

12 **REVISION TO THE COUNCIL'S NJC GRADING STRUCTURE FOLLOWING THE 2019 NJC GREEN BOOK PAY AWARD**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor C. Gloster seconded a report regarding the revision to the Council's NJC grading structure following the 2019 NJC Green Book Pay Award. The 2019 NJC Green Book pay award has, as part of the settlement, realigned the national pay spine to ensure future compliance with the National Minimum / Living Wage and to even the spaces out between the cash value of each spinal column point. As Oldham Council is a member of the Local Government Association (LGA), the Council was bound by the outcome of negotiated agreements between the national unions and the LGA employers' side. The Council was now obliged to meet employees' contractual requirements to review the local NJC grading structure to be able to comply with these national provisions.

The Council developed proposals to revise the local NJC grading structure and opened negotiations with local and regional trades union officers. Following those negotiations, amendments were made to the original proposals to secure an 'in-principle' collective agreement deemed to be acceptable to both parties, subject to the agreement of union members and full Council. The amendment were presented to Council for a decision on adoption of the amendments to the NJC grading structure.

**RESOLVED** that the revised NJC grading structure for staff on Green Book terms and conditions, as outlined at Appendix 2 of the report, with an effective implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 be adopted.

13 **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS AND MEMBERS ALLOWANCES**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Legal Services which presented proposed changes and amendments to the Council's Constitution.

The proposed changes and amendments related to references to Deputy Chief Executive generic delegations to include Strategic Directors (apart from specific delegations to the Deputy Chief Executive's relevant portfolio), Councillors Annual

Reports be submitted to Full Council in March every year for noting and specific delegations to the Strategic Director of Commissioning.

The report also referred to an amendment to the Petitions Protocol which removed reference to District Executives and replaced with District Lead / Coordinator and Deputy Chief Executive / Strategic Director.

The report requested the reinstatement of the allowance for transport duties. The Transport for Greater Manchester Committee (soon to be constituted as 'The Greater Manchester Transport Committee') allowance would be subject to future decisions as the allowance was an agreement between GMA and each district council of Greater Manchester. Pending a future decision, it was recommended that the previous arrangement continued (i.e. an allowance of £4,069) and that it be enabled to be claimed notwithstanding if a member was already in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance.

#### Options/Alternatives

Option 1 – Approve the recommendations subject to agreement of other reports on the agenda.

Option 2 – Do not approve the recommendations and provide alternatives to the proposals.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

1. The proposed amendments / changes to the Constitution as detailed in the report be approved.
2. Any future changes to the Specific Officer Functions be delegated to the Monitoring Officer and report to the next available Council.

14

## **HOUSING STRATEGY**

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED a report which presented an updated Housing Strategy. The previous Housing Strategy (2015 – 2018) was approved by Cabinet in April 2015. It was a three-year document and reflected the key housing challenges and opportunities facing Oldham at that time. Good practice dictated that housing strategies were reviewed every five years and no longer than every seven years. In addition, the local authority had a statutory responsibility which was usually articulated through the periodic publications of a housing strategy and housing stock conditions surveys.

Oldham has a diverse housing market which stretched out from the town centre surrounded by inner ring of high density and compact terraced housing neighbourhoods which were increasingly areas of regeneration priority to out suburbs, semi-rural parish standalone settlements and dispersed rural settlements within green belt and countryside.

There had been significant changes in the local housing market and the service operating model since the last housing strategy

was refreshed which included devolution with agreement to meeting housing targets through a Greater Manchester spatial planning process, new burdens in national planning methodologies and standards which dictated the need for a completely new approach as to how statutory planning and housing responsibilities were met. The new Housing Strategy would complement our existing homelessness strategy, linked to the 30-year Housing Revenue Account business plan and set out the evidence base for the development of the new Local Plan. The new Housing Strategy also responded to the travel of direction towards working in a new integrated health and social care service cluster model being driven by Oldham Cares. The Housing Strategy pick up one if its key themes on the key function housing played in supporting health and social care integration and wider public service reform.

A key objective of the development of a new housing strategy had been to reset the housing delivery governance framework that could start to tackle the challenges identified in the evidence base and help meet the opportunities to achieve the housing priority themes acknowledged over the short, medium and long-term. The accompanying delivery plan sought to begin to start to locate housing and place shaping at the heard of Oldham's collective vision for the Borough.

The new Housing Strategy would:

- Enable the Council to determine priorities in each district or local housing market area as defined by the LHNA evidence base;
- Inform bids for both public and private funding to support the development of new homes in Oldham;
- Support the Council and its partners to make more informed People and Place making decisions about the targeting and future integrated commissioning priorities under, for example, the Integrated Care Organisation (Oldham Cares) and underpin external funding bids to support investment in existing housing services and stock in Oldham.
- Enable the Council to focus and develop new policies and ways of working that better fit the operating environment.
- Inform the Council to progress its energy conservation work and to satisfy the Council's obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 and subsequent guidance.

Councillor Brownridge spoke in support of the report.  
Councillor Al-Hamdani spoke in support of the report.  
Councillor S. Bashforth spoke in support of the report.  
Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the report.

Councillor Roberts exercised her right of reply.

**RESOLVED** that the Housing Strategy adopted by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be noted.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREEN OLDHAM

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED a report which provided an update on Oldham's progress on tackling climate change and other environmental issues over the last few years and the Council's ongoing commitments to the agenda as well as the benefits the activities brought to Oldham residents and businesses.

The report set out Oldham's achievements over the past few years and the commitment to continue to make sure that Oldham was a leading local authority area on climate change and the environment, for the benefit of residents, businesses and future generations.

The borough was on target to meet the 2020 target for a 48% cut in emissions on a 1990 baseline. The Council's performance in cutting the carbon emissions associated with its estate had been good. The report also highlighted renewal energy generation, community energy programmes, waste, recycling & enforcement, transport, housing, 'Green and Blue Infrastructure', Alexandra Park Eco-Centre and Northern Roots and the Green Oldham Strategy.

Councillor Ball spoke in support of the report.  
 Councillor C. Gloster spoke in support of the report.  
 Councillor Murphy spoke in support of the report.  
 Councillor Judd spoke in support of the report.  
 Councillor Williams spoke in support of the report.  
 Councillor Ur-Rehman spoke in support of the report.

Councillor Jabbar exercised his right of reply.

### RESOLVED that:

1. The progress Oldham had made to date in tackling climate change and other environmental issues be noted.
2. Oldham's leadership role at Greater Manchester level and more widely be noted.
3. The Council's continuing commitment to action on climate change and the environment and the ambitions for the future be noted.

## AGMA CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report which informed members that the AGMA Executive Board had agreed a number of amendments to the AGMA Constitution following a review by the GMCA Monitoring Officer. The main revisions were requested to reflect the change in GM Transport Governance arrangements. Following the making of the Transport Order, districts, GMCA and the Mayor had agreed to establish a new GM Transport Committee as a joint committee of the 10 districts, the GMCA and the Mayor and to enter into a new Operating Agreement.

In addition, the number of substitute members had been reduced to 1 member and it was suggested that this be the same substitute as appointed to the GMCA.

Furthermore, the range of functions carried out by AGMA had significantly reduced due to the increase in the functions of the GMCA since 2017 by way of new Statutory Orders. Work related to a number of functions was now undertaken within the GMCA and, where relevant, commended to the Greater Manchester constituent councils by the GMCA.



**RESOLVED that:**

1. The amendments agreed by AGMA Executive Board and GMCA to the AGMA Constitution be noted.
2. The revised AGMA Constitution as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be agreed.
3. the appointment of Councillor Shah as the substitute member for the AGMA Executive Board be agreed.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.20 pm