

**COUNCIL**  
**06/11/2019 at 6.00 pm**



**Present:** The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Harrison (Chair)

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

1           **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from The Mayor Councillor Alexander, Councillor Hewitt, Councillor Hudson, Councillor A. Hussain, Councillor Iqbal and Councillor Williams.

2           **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 11TH SEPTEMBER 2019 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 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 8d by virtue of her appointment to the MioCare Board.

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

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

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

Councillor C. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest at Item 8d by virtue of his employment by Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor H. Gloster declared a pecuniary interest at Item 8d by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor Garry declared a pecuniary interest at Item 8d by virtue of her husband's employment by Greater Manchester Policy.

Councillor Roberts declared a personal interest at Item 8c, Cabinet Minutes 16 September 2019, by virtue of her appointment to the Positive Steps Board.

Councillor Harkness declared a personal interest at Item 8c, Cabinet Minutes 16 September 2019, by virtue of his appointment to the Positive Steps Board.

Councillor Shuttleworth declared a personal interest at Item 8c, Cabinet Minutes 16 September 2019, by virtue of his appointment to the Positive Steps Board.  
Councillor Malik declared a personal interest at Item 8c, Cabinet Minutes 16 September 2019, by virtue of his appointment to the Positive Steps Board.



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**

Council was advised that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Group Leaders had agreed to change the date of the December Council meeting due to the General Election taking place the following day. It was AGREED that the next Council meeting would take place on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

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

There were no petitions to be noted.

7 **LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Sean Fielding, delivered his Second Annual Statement. The Leader reflected on the budget cuts, Brexit and the upcoming General Election. The Leader noted that strong, local leadership was essential. The Leader highlighted getting the basics right which included investing in services that would create a cleaner and safer Oldham, giving every child a great start and opportunities for every adult to get on. The Leader reflected on the ambition to create places that thrive by supporting town centres to be places to shop, have fun, work and deliver needed homes. The Leader highlighted the opportunities that devolution to Greater Manchester offered and ensure that Oldham's voice was heard both in the city region and national stages.

The Leader highlighted progress made which included the investment in additional street cleaning capacity, new refuse vehicles and supporting communities hold clean-ups. The Council had been awarded a 4 out of 5 from Keep Britain Tidy. The Council had also won Best City in the North West in Bloom competition.

The Leader reflected on greater investment in roads, the £12 million commitment and the process to accommodate genuine local, democratic control over the highways improvement programme. The Leader also reflected on the cuts to the police, how the Council had stepped up and had run awareness campaigns on hate crime and child exploitation. The Leader also highlighted groups which supported the night-time economy which helped to reduce pressure on the NHS and police. The Leader also referred to the public space protection order to prevent fires on moors and open spaces. The Leader referred to

the next phase of the landlord licensing scheme to make housing safer and reduce the potential for exploitation of the growing number of private renters by landlords.



The Leader reflected on education and skills and referred to the intention to expand the number of places at good and outstanding schools to ensure that every child had access to a great education and referenced several projects and developments. The developments would represent over 4,000 additional places for Oldham students. The Leader highlighted the improvement in school results. The Leader reflected that there was plenty of work to do on education, but that things were moving in the right direction.

The Leader referred to access to well paid jobs for young people and the skills to access them. The Leader highlighted that the Council was one of the founding signatories on the GM Good Employment Charter and had encouraged other large employers to take the same step. The authority had focused on spending more of the Council's money with local businesses. The recent Get Oldham Working job fair had been attended by 1,200 people with 66 employers with job opportunities. This built on other opportunities that had been created by the Get Oldham Working service.

The Leader highlighted the Oldham Sixth Form College and also Oldham College which had achieved a good rating from Ofsted and announcing plans for a new construction skills centre part-funded by the GMCA.

The Leader highlighted what was happening in Oldham Town Centre and the progress made since his last annual statement. This included the new vision for the town based on bringing homes, jobs and culture into the town centre. Individual projects highlighted included the new Heritage and Arts Centre, new supermarket and hotel at Mumps, plans for the Coliseum, Tommyfield Market and Egyptian Rooms and the night-time economy as well as investment from the private sector. The Leaders also highlighted Royton and Uppermill which were going from strength to strength as well as Shaw, Lees and Failsworth.

The Leader highlighted the Local Improvement Fund for district projects. The Leader also highlighted the Northern Roots project which married nature, education, leisure and business and the work to provide the environment, districts, homes, leisure and work opportunities for the next generation of successful residents to choose to stay or return to Oldham.

The Leader reflected on the role at Greater Manchester level and highlighted the benefits of 'Our Pass'. The Leader highlighted the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and the call on the government to use updated figures to plan neighbourhoods now and in the future, the Clean Air Plan and work to develop softer relationships in Greater Manchester. The Leader highlighted that the Oldham Green New Deal would be

brought forward, the Community Cohesion Strategy, investment in education and roads and funding for Children's Services and youth activities. Engagement with residents would also grow. The challenges faced were significant. The Leader was proud of what had been achieved in the last twelve months and with the support of staff, partners and residents more could be achieved in the next twelve months.



**RESOLVED** that the content of the Leader's Annual Statement be noted.

## 8 QUESTION TIME

### 8a 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 Deputy Mayor.

The following questions were submitted:

#### 1. Question received from Ben Hibbs via email:

"How much do you consider cyclists when resurfacing roads in the Oldham area? Some roads have flat smooth surfaces (Oldham Rd out of Shaw; Grains Rd out of Delph) while others have loose gravel (Oldham Rd past Albion Farm Cafe; Milnrow Rd out of Shaw; Oldham Rd out Uppermill - all key local cycling routes). The loose gravel is dangerous and uninviting for road cyclists. It seems to be prioritising cars and trucks. We need to be much bolder and embrace active travel. Oldham has a huge opportunity to be a cycling (and active travel) haven... attracting new people, businesses, boosting the local economy and making the area an even more desirable place to live, its people healthier, its air cleaner and the area more environmentally friendly."

Councillor Ali, Deputy Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services, responded that with regard to road surfacing within Oldham, all road users were considered when selecting and specifying the use of the different and most optimum materials for different situations and locations. All materials and treatments complied with national codes of practice and standards and were recommended by both the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Road Surface Treatment Association (RSTA). All materials were suitable when laid correctly and any materials laid where there was an issue of workmanship were resolved at the appropriate specialist contractors' own expense as soon as was practicable. The Council was currently in the process of trying to secure additional central funding for the implementation and promotion of active modes of travel in and around the borough, which if successful, would add to and complement schemes which sought to regenerate the area to bring in investment to boost the local economy. If successful, dedicated schemes that delivered routes

for walking and cycling would enhance connectivity, offer an alternative to the car achieving modal shift which would aid health improvement, wellbeing and air quality.



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2. Question received from Jackie Stanton via email:

“The reputation of OMBC appears to be at an all time low with residents describing this council as the worst in the history of the Borough. Some of the dissatisfaction can be traced back to the planning function of the council and the appalling Planning Committee Meeting held in July earlier this year. It continues with the extremely serious allegation of Child Sexual Exploitation There are allegations appearing daily on social media relating to alleged mis management and poor decision making by senior officers of the council There are suggestions that the councillors code of conduct has been breached by the leader and his deputies, this compounded by the leader refusing to answer a valid question submitted to a recent cabinet meeting. Would the Leader agree all these allegations are extremely serious and damaging to the Borough, will he tell us how he intends dealing with them and will he tell us if he is capable of restoring confidence in the council. Does he further agree that Oldham and its residents deserve better?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that the question submitted to the Cabinet meeting had been ruled out by the Monitoring Officer. Over the last few months, there had been daily postings on social media about planning and historic safeguarding incidents. These allegations had been combined with a series of personal online attacks on councillors, residents, MPs and council officers and often came from people with a clear political agenda. The Council would always take action where appropriate, which included the recently announced review into historic safeguarding by Dr. Mark Peel. However, too often, the allegations and claims made online were barefaced lies designed to purely stoke fears and score political points. Mrs. Stanton was correct to say that this was damaging to the borough. Day in and day out in Oldham, police officers, social workers, health workers, teachers, community groups, doctors, nurses and youth workers worked hard to protect children and vulnerable adults. Day in and day out staff cleaned the streets, cared for elderly residents or planted trees. Staff and residents saw the comments that never missed the opportunity to talk Oldham down. Like most places, Oldham had its fair share of challenges. The Leader’s Statement just made highlighted some of the many ways the Council was stepping up to address those challenges with a positive, energetic and innovative approach that stood in stark contrast to the online debate where nothing was ever good enough, everyone was corrupt and afraid of their neighbours. That was not the Oldham the Leader knew. The Oldham the Leader grew up in and lived in was one where people supported each other such as community clean ups, play in the Saddleworth Brass Band contest, raised money for charity or had a chat with stallholders in Tommyfield Market. The Leader encouraged anyone who had concerns about anything which was happening in

the borough to raise them through the appropriate channels. The Leader also encouraged people to think twice about the things read online and the motivations of many of the people who did the posting.



3. Question received from Syed Maruf Ali via Facebook:

“Oldham Council has designated eight areas for selective licensing of private landlords on the grounds of low housing demand. The areas are Alexandra, Coldhurst, Hathershaw, Hollinwood, Oldham Edge, Primrose Bank, St Mary’s and Waterhead. We need a solution which will root out rogue landlords and not one where good landlords face a complex array of licensing schemes and escalating costs. Many landlords are already on tight budget. Use existing powers to deal with bad landlords. This sort of approach tars all with the same brush. What does the decent landlord get for his £490? Do you have the Oldham council officers report why licensing of private landlords have been extended to Primrose Bank and Werneth?”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing, responded that the Council currently utilised its powers to deal with poor standards within the private rented sector. However, the only current provisions to be able to deal with poor management was through the use of Selective Licensing and this had enabled a large number of issues to be dealt with through a multi-agency approach. To 6 November 2019, there had been 1,169 condition audits of homes completed and 83 warrants executed. This resulted in 20 Emergency Prohibition Orders being served, 922 properties identified with licence condition breaches and a total of 3,126 defects identified. A review had been carried out recently regarding the current Selective Licensing Scheme. The review and future options would be discussed at Cabinet and then made available followed by consultation. The decent landlord got reassurance that they provided a safe home in good repair which met the legal obligations to tenants – all for less than £2 per week. Rogue landlords had to put defects right and bring homes up to standard and often costed far more if the landlord evaded registering and taken to court as a result.

4. Question received from Joshua Charters via email:

“In October Oldham Councils cabinet received a report updating on the progress of the new Saddleworth School. The children of Saddleworth have waited long enough for a building which is fit for purpose. Can the council confirm when it is expected that the new building will open for local students.”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, responded that the Council was working hard supporting the Department for Education (DfE) who was responsible for delivering and developing the school. The Council was focussed on ensure that a new school delivered for Oldham’s children was state of the art and something to be proud of. Work had started to ensure all the necessary legal and procurement processes were in place and

it was anticipated that the school would be ready for handover during the 2021/22 academic year.



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5. Question received from Mark Rooney via email:

“This time last year the Leader said that Oldham Council would apply for living wage accreditation. We have heard very little detail on this since. Can the Council confirm where this is up to? Everybody deserves to be paid a wage on which they can live and Oldham Council should set an example.”

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services responded that the Council was firmly committed to becoming an accredited Living Wage employer and welcomed the opportunity to provide an update on progress. Oldham Council had paid the Foundation Living Wage since April 2015 which had benefited around 500 employees within the Council. Before that date, the Council was already paying far higher than the national minimum hourly rate for Council workers, as a commitment to pay the Oldham Living Wage since April 2012. Since then the Council had encouraged other businesses and organisations in the Borough to sign up to the Council’s Fair Employment Charter as part of building a fair and prosperous local economy, linked to the Council’s co-operative values. Part of the Charter was to pay a Living Wage which the Council had championed by paying the Foundation Living Wage, encouraged other organisations and businesses across Oldham to do the same. Paying the Foundation Living Wage had huge benefits both for staff and their employers, helped to motivate staff and increased staff retention, as well as rewarding employees fairly for their work. The Council had also been working with schools to ensure all maintained schools in Oldham paid the Foundation Living Wage, increasing staff wages across the education sector. The Council had also supported partner organisations, Unity Partnership and MioCare ensuring they also pay the Foundation Living Wage to all their staff while work continued to work with all suppliers to encourage them to pay the Foundation Living Wage, helping even more people in Oldham earn a fair days pay. Over the last twelve months the Council had been working with the Living Wage Foundation to ensure that the application for the formal Foundation Living Wage accreditation would be compliant with requirements which included demonstrating how the Council would work with all suppliers to encourage them to pay the Foundation Living Wage. The Council had been able to send through the application, evidencing progress for consideration. It was hoped to announce the outcome of the application very soon.

6. Question received from Huma Bibi received via email:

“The Greater Manchester Spatial framework could have huge implications for Oldham if it happens. Why is the Council still using 2014 population projections for housing numbers when 2016 projections are lower. If the council used the 2016 figures could it not release less of our precious green belt for development?”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing, responded that the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) set out standard methodology for identifying local housing need. The methodology stipulated that the baseline should be set using the 2014-based household projections for England. Central Government considered using this baseline would provide stability for planning authorities and communities, ensured that historic under-delivery and declining affordability were reflected and consistent with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. NPPG stated that any method which relied on using the 2016-based household projections would not be considered to be following the standard method as those projections were not considered to provide an appropriate basis. The GMCA had lobbied to get this policy changed and had become more ridiculous as the 2018 figures showed a further slow-down in population growth. The borough breakdown would be published next year. Current planning policy reduced decision-making powers to make decisions which met the needs of residents and reduce the need for development on green belt.

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

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 18:44 and reconvened at 19:46.

**NOTE:** Councillors F. Hussain and Ahmad left the meeting during this item.

8b Questions to Leader and Cabinet

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

The meeting was adjourned at 19:52 and reconvened at 20:07.

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

Question 1: Oldham's Brexit Preparations

"Boris Johnson plans to take us out of the European Union and will implement his deal if he wins the General Election. Oldham Borough has received and continues to receive thousands of pounds in EU funding. We still wait for any clarity on the 'Prosperity Fund' which is supposed to replace all EU funding. There is a real fear despite the promises that the 'cake will be smaller' and places like Oldham will lose out. The UK Government has also paid Oldham Council £315,000 for so called 'Brexit Preparations'. Our future is now less



clear and more uncertain, so we must prepare and prepare for the worst. Of the £315,000 of UK Brexit preparation money, Oldham Council has currently spent £35,000 in total. £20,000 has gone on foodbanks and £15,000 making sure that European child nationals in care receive settled status before the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> of October. So that leaves a rather substantial post of money £280,000 to be exact. I am most interested to know what this Council has planned to do with the money. I hope there are already measures in place, however, if there are no detailed plans, can I be advised what the timeframe for release of the funds and a spending plan be put forward.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that it was correct that the Council had received funding in aid of Brexit preparations and a further £105k was expected. It was correct that £20k had been spent on foodbanks and a further £15k was spent to help child foreign nationals achieve settled status. Unfortunately, due to the lack of detail around the type of Brexit expected, which had been put back to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, it was thought more prudent not to draw up detailed plans until the position was known.

Question 2: Progress 8 in Oldham Schools

“The relatively new accountability measure for Secondary Schools is called Progress 8. Progress 8 tracks how pupils make progress from the end of Primary school to the final stages of High school. Schools used to be judged on performance, whereas now this measure is based on pupil progression. Once again in Oldham, as with other education matters, our score is below the nation average. Regrettably our Progress 8 score is also behind the national average. What is even more concerning, is that four of our secondary schools fall into the well below average category. To put this into perspective, those same four schools are in the bottom 12% of all schools, nationally. This year, four out of 13 schools locally are well below average and five out of 13 are below average. This is worse than last year; we have not improved; the direction of travel is in the wrong direction. We are performing much worse than the national average, but also worse than our neighbours in Rochdale and Manchester. Now credit where credit is due, Waterhead Academy, is the only school that shows improved performance, others are deteriorating. We have seen an overhaul of the SEN provision locally after Oldham Borough received a damning report by OFSTED in 2018. Despite this, Oldham Borough persistently fails to give the standards of results that parents and pupils want and expect. How will your administration address this perpetual underperformance in our Secondary Schools? The situation is getting worse and not better. I am interested to know when the Labour Council will reverse the stagnation or decline in standards that have plagued our local education system since 2011.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, referred to the information as set out earlier in the Annual Statement. Education was a top priority. The Council had invested £37m in new school facilities and in the expansion of good and outstanding schools to ensure young people had access to the quality of education deserved. Many of the performance measures in education in Oldham were improving faster than the national average. The Leader added that it was not fair to criticise the level of education in Oldham. The Council was committed

to improving education. There was a set of talented officers who supported the schools and support was promoted between different establishments. The Leader referred to the strong record on education, that investment would continue and was confident about improvements.



Councillor Sheldon, Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group, asked a question related to the General Election, preparations for Brexit and advice being available.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded that the Council was making preparations in readiness for Brexit. Only a small amount of the funding from Government had been spent so far as referred to earlier.

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 Davis asked the following question:

“Can the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills comment on the impact that cuts imposed by the Conservatives/Liberal Democratic Alliance and subsequent Tory governments have had on the Sure Start Service and whether he thinks that Labour’s proposed National Education Service would allow us to re-invest in this vital service for families?”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded that education funding had been reduced since 2011 and a 2019 report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies stated that nationally, there had been a reduction in the number of children’s centres by up to 1,000 since the peak in 2010 and funding by two-thirds to £600m in 2017/19. As well as the reductions, the Council had less funding due to government policies such as Free Schools. The service proposed by the Labour party would join up a currently disjointed Education and Skills System.

2. Councillor Hulme asked the following question:

“Could I thank the Leader for attending a meeting of Saddleworth Parish Council to discuss how the Parish and Borough Councils can work more closely together? I think it is the view of members from all parties present that the meeting was constructive. It was notable that the only party unrepresented was ‘Saddleworth First!’. Does the Leader share my disappointment and surprise that members of a party whose very name suggests that they want to put the interests of Saddleworth First did exactly the opposite that evening by not even bothering to attend the meeting?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise expressed his surprise that ‘Saddleworth First’ had not attended the meeting. The Leader added that the name of the party had also changed to ‘Proud of Oldham and Saddleworth’. The Leader acknowledged that the Parish Council

was made up of a majority of parties other than Labour. The Leader reflected that a constructive relationship could be built upon as a result of the meeting. The Parish Council and Council could work together on issues such as planning and transport amongst others and that this would be positive for both the Parish Council and Council.



3. Councillor Ibrahim asked the following question:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Housing tell us how many families are currently living in temporary accommodation waiting for a new home, how this compares with this time last year and what action is needed to solve this housing crisis?”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing, responded that the figures were shocking and showed a marked increase in families in crisis in Oldham. The temporary accommodation placement figures in Quarter 2 for 2018/19 was 67 households and Quarter 2 in 2019/20 was 148 households, over twice as many families which needed the stop gap. The present figure was 146. The actions required to address the issues would have to come from Central Government policy changes, as despite best efforts, the Council could not address the issues within the current policies and resources available. Welfare policies needed to change, housing benefit no longer covered rents, the detrimental impact of Universal Credit; the benefit cap and two child benefit limit all needed to go. The government promised reform of Section 21 no fault evictions – the major cause of homelessness – but nothing had changed. Current housing policy delivered for the few, not the many. A pledge in 2014 to deliver a Starter Homes Policy had not been honoured. Oldham needed a Government to deliver a stand alone Housing Minister to tackle the housing crisis; one million genuinely affordable homes in 10 years; grant funding of £4bn for social homes; scrap the idea that 80% of market rent was affordable and rents pegged to incomes; end Right-to-Buy; ending rough sleeping in one term of office, new renter’s rights and First buy homes for young people costing no more than 1/3 of incomes.

4. Councillor Williamson asked a question related to primary school placements. Councillor Williamson questioned that a number of years ago Shaw and Crompton Ward Councillors received a briefing and informed that if a family moved into the area there would not be a local primary school placement for them and Councillors asked for input to which schools were to be approached. Councillor Williamson asked if primary school placements were still an issue in Shaw and Crompton and what progress had been made since that meeting to address that issue.

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, would ask for the information and respond back to Councillor Williamson.

5. Councillor Judd asked the following question:

“Oldham Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency and

is bringing forward a comprehensive strategy to develop green Oldham and tackle climate change – could the Cabinet Member responsible please comment on how Labour’s Green New Deal will help the Council to achieve its objectives?”



Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services responded that in July of this year, the Council pledged to bring forward an “Oldham Green New Deal Strategy”, the first local authority in the country to do so, aiming to apply the principles of Labour’s national Green New Deal at a local level. This strategy would aim to deliver against the Council’s environmental commitments whilst securing the benefits of action on climate change and the environment for Oldham residents and businesses, in terms of jobs, training, savings on energy bills and a higher quality of life. Oldham could not achieve all this alone, however, and support from Central Government was essential. The Labour Party’s Green New Deal Programme included proposals to:

- Boost investment in renewable energy, potentially through a new regime of financial incentives. This could support the Council’s ambition to build solar farms and develop community energy groups, helping to meet council decarbonisation targets for 2025 for the Council and 2030 for the Borough.
- Support industries affected by the low carbon transition. This could help Oldham’s businesses to ‘go green’ and become more competitive, protecting jobs and creating new high quality ones.
- Support new forms of public and community ownership of low carbon infrastructure. This could support the Council’s ambition to set up an Oldham Energy Company to keep the value of green energy, local and boosting community groups such as Oldham Community Power and Saddleworth Hydro.

6. Councillor S. Bashforth asked the following question:

“Why is Salmon Fields Road flooding so much it needs to be closed on a seemingly regular basis? Salmon Fields Road is the main route for the adjacent industrial estate, Moss Lane Industrial Estate, the proposed industrial area on the old Higginshaw Gas Works site and as a bypass for Turf Lane. Who is responsible for the water control here? And when will this increasingly serious problem be resolved?”

Councillor Ali, Deputy Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services responded that the flood water was emanating from the adjacent Council owned land which was the route of a former railway line. This former railway line was served by a drainage system which was now failing and causing water to surcharge onto the highway during periods of heavy rain. The Council was currently undertaking emergency works which would help to alleviate the flooding at this location in the short to medium term, and a scheme was being progressed also to identify a long-term solution to resolve the problem.

7. Councillor Shuttleworth asked the following question:

“In 2018 I raised a question relating to the vacant former police station on Broadgate in Chadderton and the response in part at that time was: The Scenes Of Crimes Officers (SOCO) are going to be moving in and operating from the building, however this will require the building to undergo a refurbishment and is being modified for this purpose. It is anticipated that the work will take place in 2019/2020. May I ask the Cabinet Member for an update.”

Councillor Shah, Statutory Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Justice and Communities responded that the Council had no information on progress at this time. Enquiries would be made to Greater Manchester Police as the owner of the building and an update would be provided when received.

8. Councillor Harkness asked a question related to recent incidents in Dobcross. Councillor Harkness thanked officers for their work following the incidents. Councillor Harkness stated that the Cabinet Member would be aware of a motion that the Liberal Democrats had put forward around a lorry watch scheme. Councillor Harkness asked if the Council would look into putting weight restrictions and signage in place in the area of Dobcross. Councillor Harkness also advised that residents were petitioning for a 20-mph default speed limit. The Liberal Democrats had proposed that Oldham join the ‘20’s Plenty’ campaign which would have assumed a borough wide 20 mph speed limit which was not taken up. Councillor Harkness asked if this could be looked at again or at least look at introducing such a scheme for Dobcross.

Councillor Ali, Deputy Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services, responded that he would look into the issue and respond to Councillor Harkness.

9. Councillor Shuttleworth asked the following question:

“As the highways team gear up for whatever the winter months may throw our way would the relevant Cabinet Member be good enough to advise the likely spend on the gritting of our roads in order to make them as safe as reasonably possible.”

Councillor Ali, Deputy Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services, responded that the cost of winter gritting was entirely dependent upon what the winter months brought, but the best use of staff and resources was considered and actioned at all times, from purchasing salt in the summer months when the cost was significantly less expensive to very close monitoring of weather conditions to optimise available resources in the most cost effective way. The primary aim was to keep the primary highway network free of ice and snow at all times as far as was reasonably possible to help ensure a safe journey for all commuters with efforts concentrated on areas that would benefit the most people.

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

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



**Oldham**  
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8c

#### Questions on Cabinet Minutes

Council were requested to note the minutes of the Cabinet meetings 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 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and the urgent key decisions taken from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 to 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were submitted.

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor Al-Hamdani, Cabinet Minutes 16 September 2019, Item 7, Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme 2019/20 Quarter 1. Councillor Al-Hamdani asked why there was no budget for the replacement or repair of vehicle activated signs in the borough. Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the review?

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded that the review of the signs was ongoing. The importance of the signs was noted as they had been installed for a reason. It was hoped that funding could be allocated. The Leader reminded that bids could be made into the Local Improvement Fund (LIF).

2. Councillor Harkness, Cabinet Minutes, 19 August 2019, Item 11, Delph New Road / A62 Huddersfield Road Flood Alleviation Scheme. Councillor Harkness welcomed the work to address the flooding issues in Delph. Councillor Harkness asked for reassurance that high-risk areas had been inspected appropriately and that gully maintenance had been addressed appropriately with appropriate plans in place for unexpected flooding.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded that flooding issues were taken seriously and referred to the investment made in Environmental Services. Councillor Fielding asked Councillor Harkness to provide information on any issues. The Leader also responded that officers were continually monitoring flooding issues.

3. Councillor Sheldon, Cabinet Minutes 19 August 2019, Item 10, Plant Hire Contract. Councillor Sheldon asked about flooding and blocked drains. Councillor Sheldon did not believe that grids being emptied once a year was adequate especially with the leafy lanes in Saddleworth. When grids were blocked they were reported. Councillor Sheldon asked if extra cleaning vehicles could be moved to different parts of the borough to address the grids.

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council, responded that she would speak to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services and ask him to respond.

4. Councillor Byrne, Cabinet Minutes, 19 August 2019, Item 11, Delph New Road / A62 Huddersfield Road Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Councillor Byrne raised the issue of the problem of slurry which had resulted from the engineering work on the A62 and the exit from Gatehead and the incident of the memorial in Dobcross being knocked down. Councillor Byrne expressed her thanks and commended the work of engineers and officers in all departments who worked to get repairs in place.



**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and the urgent key decisions taken from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 to 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided be noted.

**NOTE:** Councillors Alyas and Salamat left the meeting during this item.

8d

Questions on Joint Arrangements/Partnerships

Council was asked to note the minutes of the following Joint Authority and Partnership meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members.

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

Greater Manchester Transport Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2019 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
National Park Authority	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
MioCare Board	8 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
Oldham Leadership Board	11 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Health and Wellbeing Board	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
Police and Crime Panel	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2019
Commissioning Partnership Board	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	26 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2019 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
Greater Manchester Health and Care Board	26 <sup>th</sup> July 2019

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor H. Gloster, Oldham Leadership Board, 26 September 2019, Item 3, Oldham Climate Change Emergency. Councillor H. Gloster referred to new buildings being environmentally friendly and if triple glazing, installation of solar panels and electric charging should be included. Councillor H. Gloster asked what plans were in place to ensure environmental resourcefulness for new and renovated buildings? If there was not a plan in place which would such a scheme be adopted?

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that Green New Deal would be brought forward soon which would answer and details would be shared in due course.



2. Councillor Hamblett, GMCA Minutes, 26 July 2019, Item 164/19 – Greater Manchester Model – White Paper on Unified Public Services for the People of Greater Manchester. Councillor Hamblett asked about Oldham Services and now that Unity Partnership was wholly owned by the Council what steps would be taken for both organisations to work together and improve the provision of services to Oldham.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council gave assurance that since the company had become wholly owned services would work closely to eliminate duplication and perform better.

3. Councillor Davis, GMCA Minutes 26 July 2019, Item 168/19, Voluntary Sector Accord. Councillor Davis asked for an update on what was happening in Oldham.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded that he was proud of the way the sector operated and highlighted the work of the Street Angels, work in partnership with church groups and that the scheme encompassed all groups who were unfortunate to find themselves homeless.

4. Councillor Moores, GM Waste and Recycling Committee, 18 July 2019, Item WRC19/19, Household Waste and Recycling Centre Access Restriction Policy. Councillor Moores welcomed the measure to control trade waste and asked about the impact on domestic waste and would the scheme be introduced consistently and residents kept advised of changes.

Councillor Toor, spokesperson for the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee responded that she would work with officers to seek clarification.

5. Councillor Leach, Greater Manchester Transport Committee, 13 September 2019, Item GMTTC/38/19, Rail Stations Access for All Mid-Tier Programme. Councillor Leach referred to the statement of paying for taxis to Stalybridge due to the accessibility issues at Greenfield Station and what information could be given to constituents and sought clarification on the sustainability of the scheme.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council responded that the inaccessibility problems at Greenfield Station had been raised repeatedly as the station had not received investment. The taxi scheme was still live and would be paid for by the operator.

6. Councillor Al-Hamdani, Health and Wellbeing Board, 25 June 2019, Item 11, Suicide Prevention Update. Councillor Al-Hamdani asked a question related to mental health in Oldham and the issue of nitrous oxide and its long-term effects. Councillor Al-Hamdani asked if there were any statistics on the impact of this on the health of young people in the borough and any additional programmes which assisted in prevention?



Councillor Harrison, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board responded that she would find out the information and respond to Councillor Al-Hamdani.



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7. Councillor Goodwin, Greater Manchester Transport Authority, 9 August 2019, Item 8, Forthcoming Changes to the Bus Network. Councillor Goodwin referred to the Number 81 service and that the service had been reduced. Councillor Goodwin asked that the opportunity be taken to take part in the consultation on the bus service on the Transport for Greater Manchester website to take back control of the buses.

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council, responded that First Bus had been engaged when making the changes but had not provided details on the reduction of services. Residents were reminded to respond to the consultation.

**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.

9

**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Better Buses for Greater Manchester

Councillor Ball MOVED and Councillor Hulme SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This council notes that following deregulation of the UK bus network outside of London in the 1980s, bus companies run whatever routes they like, charging what they like, with various ticketing structures. This means that in 2017 there were 140 types of tickets available in Greater Manchester, across 22 different bus companies, and usage is declining as passengers opt for similar alternatives.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority is now consulting on how our buses are run, proposing to introduce a franchising system that will make the bus network better coordinated, simpler, more far reaching, and responsive to the needs of residents rather than for private profit.

This council resolves to:

- Encourage residents to complete the GMCA’s consultation into bus franchising.
- Explain the benefits of bus franchising for Oldham.
- Request that the Chief Executive write to Mayor Andy Burnham on the matter, calling on him to choose to regulate our buses in Greater Manchester, which he has the power to do following the consultation.”

Councillors Sykes spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Chadderton SECONDED that the MOTION be MOVED to the VOTE.

Councillor Ball did not exercise her right of reply.

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



**RESOLVED that:**

1. Residents would be encouraged to complete the GMCA's consultation into bus franchising.
2. The benefits of bus franchising for Oldham would be explained.
3. The Chief Executive be requested to write to Mayor Andy Burnham on the matter, calling on him to choose to regulate our buses in Greater Manchester, which he had the power to do following the consultation.

Motion 2 – Free Personal Care

Councillor Harrison MOVED and Councillor Chadderton SECONDED the following MOTION:

“The Council notes that over a million older people in England are struggling with unmet care needs and believes that in light of an ageing population we need bold changes to deliver a long-term funding solution for social care.

The Council believes that it is fundamentally unfair that to access basic care many older people face catastrophic costs that can run into hundreds of thousands of pounds, wipe out a lifetime of savings, and force families to sell their homes.

The Council also believes that England's care system needs major reform to provide a long-term sustainable funding solution and to make care free at the point of use.

The Council therefore supports the introduction of free personal care for all older people in England, alongside a new social care contribution to fully fund the policy on a sustainable basis.

The Council calls on the Government to take the necessary steps to implement this policy as swiftly as possible to end the care crisis and properly support older people in the borough of Oldham.

This Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to:

1. Write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care urging swift action to bring forward proposals to reform and fund the social care system to a decent standard for all.
2. Write to our three local MP(s) to support the campaign for free personal care, and to speak up in favour of the policy in the House of Commons and through their wider activity.”

Councillor Sykes spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Hamblett spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Chauhan exercised his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care urging swift action to bring forward proposals to reform and fund the social care system to a decent standard for all.
2. The Chief Executive be instructed to write to the three local MPs to support the campaign for free personal care, and to speak up in favour of the policy in the House of Commons and through their wider activity.

10

**NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

Motion 1 – Clean Air Outside Our Schools

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

“This Council notes that:

- Our residents, staff and children are exposed to unsafe levels of pollutants outside of schools at peak times in the morning and afternoon.
- Road transport is one of the biggest contributors to particulate matter and pollution in Oldham Borough.
- Epidemiological studies show that symptoms of bronchitis in asthmatic children increase in association with long-term exposure to pollutants, as well as stunting lung growth.
- Only a handful of schools across the country are trialling ‘No Vehicle Idling zones’ yet they bring many health benefits.
- Air pollution poses a serious threat to the health and development of young people. While many of the policy interventions to rectify this problem would have to come from central Government or the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, this Council can do more and needs to be proactive on this issue.
- That there should be No-Vehicle-Idling zones around schools across the Borough.

This Council resolves to:

- Review the work done by No-Vehicle-Idling nationally in other local authorities and work this into Oldham’s action plan for No-Vehicle-Idling Zones.
- Implement No-Vehicle-Idling Zones, around as many primary schools in the Borough as possible, by the end of 2022.
- Work closely with schools that are part of the scheme to inform parents and carers of the No-Vehicle-Idling Zones.
- Encourage local businesses to sponsor green walls on school buildings and tree planting near schools and the appropriate cabinet member include this in their action plan.”

Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sheldon spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor McLaren spoke on the Motion.

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.



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On being put to the vote, that the MOTION be REFERRED to Overview and Scrutiny Board was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED** that under Council Procedure Rule 8.4(d) the motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Motion 2 – Anti-Bullying Week 2019 ‘Change Starts with Us’

Councillor Harkness MOVED and Councillor Hamblett SECONDED the following MOTION:

“This year’s Anti-Bullying Week has the theme ‘Change Starts with Us’ and is happening from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

This Council unfortunately notes that:

- Trades Union Congress (TUC) research revealed nearly a third of people have been bullied at their workplace. Of those bullied, half said it had an adverse impact on their performance at work.
- Female employees are more likely to be victims of bullying than males.
- People of all ages are bullied because of their race, culture, faith, appearance, identity, socioeconomic status, interests/hobbies, academic ability, mannerisms, and whether they are young carers or looked after children. This bullying can take place in person or online.
- Nearly half of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people have been bullied at school for being LGBTQIA+. Children with disabilities and those with special educational needs are around twice as likely to be bullied.
- Bullying pervades every level of human society, even the Houses of Commons. Dame Laura Cox’s report into the Bullying and Harassment of House of Commons staff in 2018 revealed a dysfunctional workplace – particularly faced by women. Bullying and sexual harassment was reported to have long been ‘tolerated and concealed’.
- Sometimes this bullying takes place in the home and serves as domestic abuse and violence.

This Council resolves to:

- Have the relevant cabinet member communicate with schools in Oldham Borough about the packs released especially for primary and secondary schools from the Anti-Bullying Alliance. These will include lesson plans, activity ideas, cross curricular activities for students and teachers.
- Allow people to access a link to the Anti-Bullying Alliance website from the Council web page that gives bullying support and advice.
- Have Oldham Council sign up as a supporter of Anti-Bullying Week.
- Build on the #Stop work done by Oldham Youth Council in 2016 on highlighting that bullying is not ok.

- To join the UK-wide Anti-Bullying Alliance, which already comprises over 140 organisations and individuals.
- Develop an Anti-Bullying training programme for councillors and review the current Council anti-bullying policy.
- To adopt the Anti-Bullying Alliance’s definition of bullying and that Oldham Council staff are encouraged to undertake the Anti-Bullying Alliance’s online training module, so they can feel more confident in identifying and calling out or reporting bullying behaviour.
- To deal with workplace bullying more effectively, the Council will provide a link to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) on the Council Anti-Bullying policy webpage.”

Councillor Mushtaq spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor C. Gloster spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Harkness did not exercise his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The relevant Cabinet Member would communicate with schools in Oldham Borough about the packs released especially for primary and secondary schools from the Anti-Bullying Alliance. These included lesson plans, activity ideas, cross-curricular activities for students and teachers.
2. Access be allowed via a link to the Anti-Bullying Alliance website from the Council’s web page that gives bullying support and advice.
3. Oldham Council sign up as a supporter of Anti-Bullying Week.
4. The #Stop work done by Oldham Youth Council in 2016 be built on highlighting that bullying was not ok.
5. The Council join the UK-wide Anti-Bullying Alliance which already comprised over 140 organisations and individuals.
6. An anti-bullying training programme for councillors and the current anti-bullying policy be reviewed.
7. The Anti-Bullying Alliance’s definition of bullying be adopted and that Oldham Staff were encouraged to undertake the Anti-Bullying Alliance’s online training module so they could feel more confident in the identification and calling out or reporting bullying behaviour.
8. The Council would provide a link to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) on the Council’s Anti-Bullying policy webpage.

Motion 3 – Take the Franchise off Northern Rail

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

“This Council notes that:

- There is a contingency plan to renationalise Northern Rail by the government.
- The current Northern Rail franchise has consistently failed to deliver on services it was contracted to provide.
- There are significant cross-party calls to remove the franchise from the current operators.
- Customers are experiencing a poor and sometimes non-existent service from Northern Rail.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Minister of Transport asking them to remove the current operators and place the franchise with someone more capable of delivering the service required.
- Work closely with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to find a new operator to give the current Northern Rail customers the rail service they are entitled to.”

## AMENDMENT

Councillor Leach MOVED and Councillor S. Bashforth SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

“Delete bullet point 1 after this Council notes.

Insert ‘the current Northern Rail franchise has consistently failed to delivery on services it was contracted to provide and is just one example of a failed policy which provides profits for rail operators while increasing fares for passengers and an outdated and fragmented service.’

Delete remaining bullet points.

Delete both bullet points after ‘This council resolves to’ and insert

‘This Council believes that it is time to take back the railways into public ownership by a public ownership of the railways bill to repeal the Railways Act 1993 under which the Conservatives privatised our railways.

This Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Transport asking for the franchise to be withdrawn from Northern Rail and for the service to be run in the interests of passengers under public control rather than that of rail franchisees.’

The amended motion to read:

“This Council notes that the current Northern Rail franchise has consistently failed to deliver on services it was contracted to provide and is just one example of a failed policy which provides profits for rail operators while increasing fares for passengers and an outdated and fragmented service.

This Council believes that it is time to take back the railways into public ownership by a public ownership of the railways bill to repeal the Railways Act 1993 under which the Conservatives privatised our railways.

This Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Transport asking for the franchise to be withdrawn from Northern Rail and for the service to be run in the interests

of passengers under public control rather than that of rail franchisees.”

Councillor Sykes exercised his right of reply.  
Councillor Leach exercised her right of reply.

A vote was then taken on the AMENDMENT.

On being put to the vote, 36 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and 12 votes were cast AGAINST with 0 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore CARRIED.

Councillor Sykes did not exercise his right of reply.

On being put to the vote, 36 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the SUBSTANTIVE MOTION and 0 votes were cast AGAINST with 12 ABSTENTIONS. The SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** that the Chief Executive be asked to write to the Minister for Transport asking for the franchise to be withdrawn from Northern Rail and for the service to be run in the interests of passengers under public control rather than that of rail franchisees.

#### 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 issues raised at those meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the action taken regarding motions and actions from previous Council meetings be agreed and correspondence and updates received be noted.

#### 12 **2018/19 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Councillor Jabbar MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED the report of the Director of Finance which presented the Council’s recently approved 2018/19 Audited Statement of Accounts, the External Auditor (Mazars LLP) Audit Completion Report (ACR) and Annual Audit Letter.

The audited Statement of Accounts was presented to the audit Committee on 25 June 2019 and subsequently approved on 10 July 2019. A report on the 2018/19 Statement of Accounts was presented for consideration to Cabinet at its meeting on 16 September 2019, whereby the accounts were noted and commended to Full Council.

The report highlighted:

- The content of the External Auditors Audit Completion Report and subsequent Letter on the Conclusion of Pending Matters (Appendices 3 and 4) and Annual Audit Letter (Appendix 5) which contained the unqualified opinion on the Statement of Accounts and positive value for money opinion.

- The overall revenue outturn position for 2018/19 was a surplus of £0.849m. This was an increase on the favourable variance of £0.255m projected at Month 9 that was reported to Cabinet on 25 March 2019.
- The year-end variances that were attributable to each portfolio.
- Schools balances at 31 March 2019 were £6.925m but were offset by the deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) of £2.723m leaving a net balance of £4.202m held within other earmarked reserves.
- The final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balance was £21.305m.
- The balance on the Collection Fund was a surplus of £4.147m.
- The small reduction in revenue account earmarked reserves of £2.108m to a level of £80.623m, an increase in other earmarked reserves to a level of £12.935m and an increase in balances to £14.840m, reflective of the revenue outturn position.
- Expenditure on the Council's Capital Programme for 2018/19 was £48.564m, which was a small increase on the Month 9 forecast expenditure of £48.267m. The increase in expenditure required funding allocated to future years to be re-profiled to fully finance the Capital Programme in 2018/19.
- Capital Receipts in year totalled £6.180m, which when taken with the brought forward balance, gave a total of £14.927m, which was used to finance the Capital Programme in year.
- The significant items in each of the primary financial statements.
- Changes to the draft Statement of Accounts.
- The performance of the Finance Team in the closure of the accounts.

The presentation of the Audited Statement of Accounts and related documents provided all members with the opportunity to review the Council's year-end financial position (following completion of the audit by the Council's External Auditors, Mazars LLP).

Councillor C. Gloster spoke on the report.

Councillor Jabbar exercise his right of reply.

**RESOLVED** that the Council's final accounts position for 2018/19, the Statement of Accounts, the Audit Completion Report and the Annual Audit Letter be noted.

13

### **POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW 2019**

Consideration was given to a report of the (Acting) Returning Officer which presented proposals on polling arrangements for Oldham as a result of a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations.



The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 required the Council to undertake regular reviews of all polling districts and polling areas in its area. The Act provided that the next review must be held between 1 October 2019 and 31 January 2020. Subsequent reviews must be every five years within a sixteen-month period beginning with 1 October 2023.

Comments on the proposals had been considered by the Returning Officers and recommendations for each ward were set out at Appendix A to the report.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Polling District Review which incorporated changes considered appropriate be approved.
2. The proposed changes to polling districts and polling districts incorporating the recommendations as attached at Appendix A in respect of Chadderton North, Failsworth East and Werneth be approved.
3. The Chief Executive, as Returning Officer, in consultation with Group Leaders, be authorised to identify an alternative polling station, if necessary, for any other polling stations unavailable on the date of the election.

14

**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 Reform Programme continued to have an impact on the residents of Oldham. Most of the Government's cuts to the Welfare budget, as part of wider austerity measures, had been implemented. Universal Credit was yet to fully rolled out and 2019/20 saw the fourth consecutive year of the freeze on working age benefits.

The Welfare Reform dashboard attached at Appendix 1 to the report set out the current position. The report provided as snapshot of the current position which detailed the number of location of benefit claimants and unemployment levels in the borough and included details of the support provided by the Council to vulnerable residents including awards of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to support those experiencing difficulty in covering housing costs and the issue of food bank vouchers to support those experiencing extreme financial hardship. Deprivation and the associated costs were also incorporated into the report and included homelessness and the cost of temporary accommodation.

The report outlined Universal Credit and the Conditionality Regime, Unemployment and Claimant Levels, changes to Universal Credit, benefit freeze on 'working age' benefits, Coordinated Crisis Support Pilot, Holiday Hunger Scheme and Living Wage.

Councillor Ali spoke on the report.

Councillor Jabbar did not exercise his right of reply.

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

15

**REVISION OF BYELAWS MADE UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES & MUSEUMS ACT, 1964**

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval for the revision of Byelaws under Section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museum Act, 1964.

The current byelaws had not been formally updated since 1985. Byelaws had been drafted in 2011 and 2016 but had not been approved the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The Society of Chief Librarians revised the existing model library byelaws for England which reflected changes in how people used libraries whilst maintaining suitable protections. The Secretary of State for DCMS approved the new set of model library byelaws in 2017. The revised byelaws as outlined in the report were in line with the revised model byelaws.

The differences between the old and new model byelaws were outlined in the report.

**RESOLVED** that the byelaws made under Section 19 of the Public Libraries & Museum Act, 1964 as amended and updated as detailed in Appendix 1b to the report be approved.

16

**REVIEW OF JNC PINK BOOK YOUTH WORKERS GRADING STRUCTURE**

Consideration was given to a report regarding the 2019 JNC Pink Book Youth Workers pay award, as part of the national collective agreement has removed the lowest Spinal Column Point, Point 2. As the Council was a member of the Local Government Association (LGA), who had negotiated the agreement with the relevant trades unions on our behalf, the Council was now obliged to meet the employees' contractual requirements to review the Council's grading structure to comply with these national provisions.

Following the collective agreement between the LGA and associated Trades Unions (UNISON, Unite the Union, University and College Union and National Education Union), individual councils had to accommodate the removal of Point 2. The Council was required to review Youth Worker grades, as the entry level grade was First Level 1 – 2, which had now been deleted. The affected workers would be moved onto First Level 3 – 6 and the Youth Service would like to re-establish First Level 7 – 10 to create a more progressive career structure for sessional and locally qualified Youth Workers. The Council had enhanced the previous lowest salary within Youth Work to ensure staff were paid the Foundation Living Wage.

**RESOLVED** that the revised JNC Pink Book Youth Workers grading structure, as outlined in Section 3 of the report, be

adopted with an effective implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019.



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The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 10.14 pm