

**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, Dean, Fielding, Garry, C. Gloster, H. Gloster, Goodwin, Hamblett, Haque, Harkness, Harrison, Hewitt, Hobin, Hudson, Hulme, A Hussain, F Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Jabbar, Jacques, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Phythian, Price, Roberts, Salamat, Shah, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Surjan, Sykes, Taylor, Toor, Ur-Rehman, Williamson and Williams

1           **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Consultation had been undertaken with Group Leaders to vary the order of the agenda due to the changes to the regulations. Councillor Fielding **MOVED** and Councillor Sykes **SECONDED** an amendment to Council Procedure 15.5 and proposed that timings would include the extensions, therefore, any Members wishing to speak would be granted 4 minutes and 30 seconds and those Members with a right of reply 6 minutes and 30 seconds. On being put to the vote, this was **AGREED**.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Leach.

2           **ATTENDANCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Due to the current pandemic and the virtual meeting, a roll call of elected members was taken, and at the same time, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, elected members declared the following interests:

Councillor Chauhan declared a personal interest at Item 9d by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

Councillor Garry declared a pecuniary interest at Item 11 by virtue of her husband's employment with Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor Chris Gloster declared a personal interest at Item 9d by virtue of his receipt of an occupational pension from Greater Manchester Police.

Councillor Hazel Gloster declared a personal interest at Item 9d by virtue of her husband's receipt of an occupational pension from Greater Manchester Pension Fund.

Councillor Hamblett declared a personal interest at Item 9d by virtue of his appointment to the MioCare Board.

3           **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 15TH JULY 2020 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

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

Councillor Hobin asked to make a statement. The Mayor responded that she had not been notified in advance of this meeting of any items of urgent business. Councillor Hobin was advised that if he wanted to raise a question, he could do so at the relevant Joint Authority minute.

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

There were no communications items.

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:

People and Place

Reference 2020-06: Petition regarding a Dangerous Dog (Failsworth East Ward) received on 9 July 2020 with 56 signatures

Commissioning

Reference 2020-05: E-Petition to Provide a Non-Refundable six Month Council Tax Discount for Every Household in Oldham received on 30 July 2020 with 282 signatures

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

7 **ELECTRONIC VOTING AT COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Legal Services regarding Electronic Voting at Council.

Meetings of the Council and Committees had been able to be held by remote attendance by reason of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. For the purposes of efficiency it was recommended that Rule 16A of the Council Procedure Rules was amended to permit the use of electronic voting at meetings.

**RESOLVED** that Council Procedure Rule 16A be amended to permit the use of electronic voting.

8 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

There were no items submitted by the Youth Council.

9 **QUESTIONS TIME**

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 the questions would be read out by the Mayor.



The following questions were submitted:

1. Question received from Syed Maruf Ali via Twitter:

“Can you please raise this question at the next full council meeting. What percentage of pupils from OL8 1 post code area have received their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice secondary school places? How many pupils from OL8 1 post code have been allocated a School places at: Hathershaw School OASIS Academy OASIS Leesbrook Oldham Academy North Royton and Crompton Newman RC College Using the proposed admission criteria of Blue Coat School 2, what percentage and number of pupils from OL8 1 Postcode area will be offer a place? Education is passport out of poverty and every young people should have access to good/outstanding attainment School and should not be discriminated using unfair admission criteria such as using religion or distance.”

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education responded that the from the OL8 1 post code secondary schools places were offered as follow: 57% of pupils had been offered their first preference, 15% offered second preference and 10% offered third preference. All data was from on time applications. The number of places allocated to pupils from the OL8 1 postal code for Hathershaw College was 82, Oasis Academy Oldham was 60, Oasis Academy Leesbrook was 20, Oldham Academy North was 29; EAC-T Royton and Crompton Academy was 6; and Newman RC College was 5. Due to the nature of the proposed admissions policy for 'Blue Coat 2', the number of pupils to be allocated with certain areas or postcodes could not be predicted. The current proposed admissions policy makes use of mile bands. Cases based on distance could be predicted but not areas or postcodes. There would be use of random allocation within the policy, but no postcode within those bands would be disadvantaged over another. Also, it could not be predicted what the levels of demand for a new school from any particular post code or area.

2. Question received from Robert Barnes via email:

“Transparency, Openness and Accountability should be the watchwords of local government. With that in mind, could the Council Leader please explain why public questions now have a time limit of 15 minutes? Could he also answer why he thinks it acceptable to change the constitution to ban criticism of elected members who are public servants and accountable to the electorate?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that prior to the changes at



the beginning of the 2019 Municipal Year, the Council meeting previously had items whose time limits added up to more than the three-and-a-half hours permitted by the guillotine. The agenda was changed so that items could be debated without timing out. Given that the full allowance for public questions was sometimes not used and that questions could be answered via other means such as contacting a local councillor directly, using the Council's website or calling the contact centre, it was thought that reducing the public question item was one of the several items on the agenda that could be shortened slightly. It was assured that criticism of elected members had not been banned if this referred to the change in the rules which meant that complaints about Council members' conduct were to go via the Council's Standards Committee which had always been the appropriate place for the complaints to go and where a resolution could be achieved. The Leader referred to times in the past where members of the public had raised issues of perceived misconduct by members at the Council meeting in a question and answer forum. If there was a complaint to be made about a member's conduct, details could be found on the Council's website.

3. Question received from Naz Islam via email:

"Given the mess created by the government around the results of A-level and GCSEs can the cabinet member say what impact this has had on the young people of Oldham?"

Councillor Mushtaq, Cabinet Member for Education responded that recent months had been challenging for children and young people in Oldham because of the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on their families and their education. Throughout the period, all schools and colleges had supported both learning on site and learning from home. The A-level and GCSE examination assessment processes enabled Oldham schools and colleges to acknowledge the work that the young people had put in during their course so far and this had fed into the final results that children and young people received. Changes to A-Level results had impacted on some Oldham students. Oldham's schools and colleges had worked with pupils to support them into their next steps. Universities had also updated offers which took account of the final results. Changes to GCSE results were made before they were issued. Oldham's schools and colleges were experienced in supporting young people to access the next stage of their education and had done so again this year. Councillor Mushtaq comments the work of schools and colleges in taking a person-centred approach and expressed his thanks to everyone involved.

4. Question received from Nicholas Georgiou via email:

"Could you please update on the Council's Green agenda. In terms of air quality, Bicycle lanes, Car use, regenerating the local economy to allow for increased economic activity brought about by home working. Hope I've made sense. Thank you for

your time.”



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Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Green responded that Oldham Council had adopted the UK’s first Green New Deal Strategy in March this year, which set stretching carbon neutrality targets for Council Buildings and Street Lighting by 2025 and for the borough as a whole by 2030. The Oldham Green New Deal Strategy contained pledges to improve air quality, make it easier for residents to take sustainable travel choices and to support Oldham’s economy to ‘go green’. Oldham will be part of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, which was considering a range of measures which included a Clean Air Zone, vehicle finance offers and electric vehicle infrastructure for taxis. An eight-week consultation would open in early October and Oldham residents were strongly encouraged to make their views known. Oldham Council had started to deliver Bee Network cycling and walking schemes, beginning with the refurbishment of the King Street roundabout bridged and other schemes were being designed which had been approved in the Greater Manchester Mayor’s schemes. As part of the Council’s Covid-19 response, it was being looked to bring forward some of the longer-term schemes more quickly to support people to make sustainable travel choices. The Council was looking to help home-owners on low incomes cut their energy bills, carbon emissions and make their homes more comfortable for working from home by securing Government Green Homes Grant funding to pay for improvements such as solid wall insulation and new, efficient and green electrical heating systems. The Council was also looking to enable Oldham residents to shop online with local suppliers by supporting the development of a new e-commerce website for Tommyfield Market and the borough, so that residents could receive fast delivery of top quality products made in Oldham, whilst supporting great local businesses at the same time.

5. Question received from Glyn Williams via email:

“Compliance with track and trace in pubs where I go out in Uppermill is mixed. Can the Council support hospitality businesses to overcome any difficulties they may have in operating a track and trace system in their businesses?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for the Covid-19 Response responded that any business that provided on-site services should collect details of staff, customers and visitors on their premises to support the NHS Test and Trace, however, this was currently not a legal requirement. It was proposed that this may become mandatory in the next few days. The information businesses were advised to collect was the individual’s name, date and time of their visit and a contact number. This could be done in a variety of ways such as using a book to record the details or via other booking technology. The information would then be retained for 21 days to support any contact tracing work that may be required.



Environmental Health Officers had carried out 622 Covid compliance checks between 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and during the checks, businesses who provided on-site services had been encourage by officers to collect information to support test and trace.



6. Question received from Helen Norton via email:

“I have noticed that Crime Lane in Daisy Nook has been blocked off in an attempt to stop fly tipping. I am glad that the Council have finally taken action on this as it has been a problem for years. Can the Council advise if it can take this approach at other locations where flytipping is also a problem? Namely the bottom half of Rose Hey Lane in Failsworth.”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture expressed appreciation for the work that had been done to close a flytipping hotspot at Crime Lane and that noticeable improvements had already been seen. In all locations where flytipping was experienced such as Rose Hay Lane Failsworth, the Council was considering options that it was able to take. As a public highway, there were steps that had to be taken in order that the public were consulted prior to any action be taking which included the closure of a road. Once consultation had been undertaken, the Council could then take the appropriate steps to close the road if this was possible. In some cases, this was not possible due to the residential or business properties located at some point along the road. The Council was already in the process of preparing documentation and sourcing the finance required for the closure of Rose Hay Lane to hopefully bring to an end the detrimental effect on the local area as well as the significant cost to the public purse for the repeated removal of fly tipping. A number of other sites were also being restricted within the use of vehicle height control barriers such as the entry to Crompton Moor where it was hoped high sided vehicles that were usually responsible were restricted. The Council would not become complacent, fly tippers would find alternative locations and it was up to all residents to keep their eyes open and report any unauthorised activity and hold the culprits to account and drive them out of town.

7. Question received from Mark Rooney via email:

“I have seen online a number of local libraries have now reopened. Can the council confirm when Royton library is likely to follow?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture, responded that following the opening of Oldham Library on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020, the Council extended the library offer by opening Chadderton, Failsworth and Delph on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> August and planned to open Crompton and Lees from Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> September. The Council had implemented a phased

approach to the re-opening of libraries to ensure that libraries could be opened safely and securely, adhering to national and local health and safety guidelines and addressed staffing capacity challenges. A significant number of library staff were currently redeployed supporting the wider council priorities in response to the pandemic including work at the PPE hub, Registrars, test and trace community conversations and council helpline. Once staffing capacity was increased, the opening of Royton and other libraries would be considered. In the meantime, residents could continue to access a range of services online or contact the library services if a home library service was required.

8. Question received from Robert Barnes via email:

“With Oldham experiencing a rise in the number of Covid19 cases and having to introduce measures to combat this, would Cllr Fielding please answer the following questions? On Tuesday 28 July 2020, the council website stated that ‘In addition a large number of our recent cases was in our Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities.(just over 65% in the last 7 days).’ However, on Wednesday 29 July 2020 the wording had been changed to ‘a significant proportion are from Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities’. Can the Leader please explain why, in the course of less than 24 hours, the wording was changed? Would the Council Leader please release the empirical data showing the breakdown for the number of cases for each individual ward? This matter is about Transparency, Openness and Accountability.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that the information related to coronavirus could and did change rapidly from time to time. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July Oldham was at risk from being put into a local lockdown. This meant that information that needed to be relayed to residents changed, at times, on an hourly basis. Between 12.05 am on July 28 and 4.16 pm July 29 the main coronavirus page on the council webpage was updated and rewritten 25 times as new information became available and needed to be disseminated to the residents of Oldham. The Council published weekly figures which showed case numbers in each ward since 5 August 2020 on the coronavirus statistics page.

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

b Questions to Leader and Cabinet

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

Question 1: Local is the New Normal

“My first question concerns the future of our district centres in the post-Covid world. This Administration has expended countless

officer hours, commissioned many specialist reports, and expended many millions of pounds on its regeneration plans for Oldham town centre over the years. Whilst some welcome progress has been made, much of the effort and expenditure has frankly come to nothing. Now Covid-19 has slain the latest plans. The prospects for the 'Creating a Better Place' master plan, first adopted by this Administration in July 2019 and involving an investment of £306 million, has just been reviewed by Cabinet and a third or £100 million axed off that budget. Covid has massively increased our costs, decimated our revenue, and now as a Council we quite simply do not now have the cash. The original plan envisaged a mixture of housing, retail, leisure and office developments. We need many thousands of new homes and I would rather they be built in Oldham Town Centre and on brownfield sites than developed at the expense of our Green Belt and green spaces. Now we will be restructuring existing retail, leisure and office spaces, rather than bringing new space into use. If you walk through the Town Square and Spindles Shopping Centres you can see the empty spaces. For over a decade now, footfall along Britain's high streets has been declining. Covid-19 has simply accelerated the trend. Office workers are not coming back to our Town Centre, including the Council's. Home-working is here to stay, and for many of us it will continue to be the only way to work or the only way we can work. For all the talk of investing in Oldham Town Centre to 'Create a Better Place', there has been no talk about, and no focus on, the other district centres in our Borough, except for Royton – which is still talk only. The Administration may have adopted a new mantra 'We are Oldham' but Oldham is not just the Town Centre, it is a Borough of Town and District Centres, each with a proud history and its own distinctive character. For local is the new normal. The Council's ambition of 'Creating a Better Place', there has been no mention of investing in these localities to make the local better. So, I would like to ask the Leader tonight whether he and his Cabinet colleagues will consider reallocating some of the investment intended for Oldham Town Centre to create 'Better Places' to live for those of us who live, shop, socialise or work in Lees, Royton, Chadderton, Failsworth, Shaw and the Saddleworth villages?"

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that it was unfair to say that the investment and regeneration strategy in and around Oldham Town Centre had come for nothing as that had overlooked the significant investment that had taken place in the Old Town Hall which had been converted into a cinema and restaurant complex which would very soon be full. The Leader referred to the well-publicised ambitions the Council had to make the Egyptian Room into a food market in the style of Altrincham Market and Produce Hall. The Leader added the residents of Oldham expected that under current circumstances when the Council was struggling in unprecedented financial pressures due to both coronavirus and ten years of cuts that looked set to continue, that the Council would review the 'Creating a Better Place' investment proposals and this had been done. The Leader added that there would be



no dialling down of ambition and would respond dynamically to the changes in the economy as a result of Covid-19. The Leader said that Councillor Sykes was right to acknowledge that more people would be working remotely but that this also provided an opportunity to move some Council staff who were currently based outside the Oldham Town Centre campus back into the Town Centre and support businesses within the Town Centre. The Leader also highlighted the ambition for the number of homes in Oldham Town Centre which had increased to 2,500 compared to 2,000 in the original version. This would protect areas of green belt and reduce the amount that would have to be allocated under the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and so the benefits would ripple out to all constituent parts of the towns and village of the borough as the Council would be able to withdraw sites from the GMSF being offset by the increased housing allocation in town. The Leader said that Oldham Labour were committed to all the Borough's towns. It was recognised that Oldham borough was a collection of very different unique places. There had been investment in Failsworth with the refurbishment of the Town Hall, investment in the retail offer in Failsworth District Centre and similar things were happening both organically and with support from the Council in places like Uppermill, Lees and Royton. The Leader added that most successful regeneration was where local people invested their own money in supporting the places they loved and cared about. The Leader was pleased with the growth in the night-time economy and the quality of the offer in Royton which had been, in the most part, driven by local people who had invested their own cash. The Leader added that it was often when communities put their hands in their pocket and support their local economy that the best results were seen. The Leader guaranteed that Oldham Council under the current administration, was behind people who wished to invest. Business grant schemes had been adjusted and the Business Support Team had been adapted to support this kind of activity. The Leader added that if Councillor Sykes had any examples from constituents in Shaw that wished to access the support the Council offered to improve the local economy and night-time offer, he was advised to contact the team.

#### Question 2: Full Pay for Anyone Forced to Self-isolate

"I agree with Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham who recently called for the Government to pay for anyone forced to self-isolate their full wages, where there is no employer to do so. The current situation is a nonsense and it discourages people from participating fully and faithfully in Track and Trace and from choosing to self-isolate. I will use two examples.

Person A: a low-paid employee working in the 'gig' economy, not knowing how many hours or how many days a week or a month they will work and forced to claim Universal Credit to make ends meet and battling between pay days with financial insecurity and the complexities and frustrations of the benefits system. Person



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A isn't entitled to full pay when they do not work; their employer only offers Statutory Sick Pay.

Person B: A self-employed tradesperson with a start-up business carrying out jobs for private customers in domestic dwellings.

Person B goes out to work from a makeshift office under the stairs, and, as a self-employed person, if they don't work, they don't earn; they have no employer-based sick pay scheme. If our Persons A and B go for a well-earned pint in the pub at the end of the day – separately of course because under Oldham's rules they cannot meet in the same pub as members of two separate households – they are meant to record their personal details with the establishment in case there is a Covid infection there and they need to be traced. But why does Person A or Person B have any incentive to diligently fill in their details when, if they were subsequently contacted and forced to self-isolate, they will lose at least 10 days and possibly two weeks work, with little or no sick pay as a result? That is why you see Track and Trace records in pubs and elsewhere noting the presence of Batman and Bart and Lisa Simpson amongst their recent customers. Now the Government has now grudgingly agreed to pay the recipients of Universal Credit or Work Credits a paltry sum of £13 a day for any time that they are required to self-isolate. Oldham is one of the first pilot areas where this will apply. Would the Leader agree that this derisory sum will in no way recompense Person A and Person B from Oldham for their loss during self-isolation? And will he agree to join with me to introduce a meaningful compensation scheme? Then A and B can faithfully record their Track and Trace details and participate in self-isolation, and not have to disguise their movements using the names of fictitious superheroes or cartoon characters. Then we can fight and tackle the blight Covid-19 is causing to our Borough and the communities that live and work within it.”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that the examples illustrated the important point that people faced to their earnings if they were told to self-isolate. During conversations with the Government when the Council was successfully avoiding a local lockdown, the case was made around the loss of earnings, particularly for self-employed people. The loss of earnings was too great and people chose not to self-isolate which in-turn lead to a greater spread of coronavirus. The Leader was pleased that Councillor Sykes had raised the issue to Council and responded that he personally was a signatory to the petition on the 'Time Out to Help Out' Campaign which had been launched jointly with the Trade Unions and by the Mayors of both Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Regions and demanded a no loss of earnings which meant that no-one should be out of pocket and people should be able to claim for any lost wages whilst self-isolating, that quarantine was a civic duty, and not expected to lose out in the same way that people were not expected to lose out when on jury service. A simple claim system so that people continued to be paid as normal whether it was an employer or a self-employed person, in order to claim earnings back from the Government relatively easily and which would, in turn, deliver an effective

track and trace system so that people did give genuine names and did not feel it would be punitive to have to self-isolate. The Leader encouraged all members of all groups to sign the 'Time Out to Help Out' petition as it was true the paltry sum offered was not going to dissuade or act as enough of an incentive for people to self-isolate when they really needed to in order to protect the rest of the Borough.

Councillor Sheldon, on behalf of the Conservative Group ask the following question:

“The Council Leader will be aware of the letter that we, the Conservative Group, sent to him last week about Child Sexual Exploitation. It is an issue which rises above party politics and is an issue which demands a full and transparent investigation. With the growing allegations, will the Council Leader join us in writing to the Home Secretary asking for a full independent investigation into the current allegations and crimes yet to be discovered?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded:

“Councillor Sheldon has said that this is an issue that should rise above party politics but then uses it to make a political point. I have written back to the Conservative Group and I can read excerpts from the letter that I sent, which I am still waiting a response to. The Conservative Group, and indeed Councillor Sheldon in this meeting tonight, has made another assertion that there are criminal acts that have taken place. If there is evidence of criminal acts that have taken place then Councillor Sheldon, his colleagues, or anyone who has evidence of them need to submit them to the appropriate people for investigation. But what I would say is that keeping vulnerable children safe is the council's number one priority. Our children's safeguarding teams work tirelessly to make sure children are in the safest environments possible, that families are supported to keep children safe and that those who are victims of abuse are supported and cared for. The work that our children's services teams do saves lives. They have my full admiration and support and I know that many others in this chamber will support those sentiments. But that doesn't mean we can't improve what we do. Unfortunately, child abuse in all its forms, is far too common, and we have to continually improve our practice. In order to be reassured that we, as a council, are doing and have done everything we can to keep victims safe I asked the Greater Manchester Mayor to commission an independent review to look into the allegations that are circulating online. He appointed Malcolm Newsam and Gary Ridgway to oversee a review around these historic CSE allegations. Both Gary and Malcolm have extensive experience in social care and policing, taking on appointments by several government ministers in the past and carrying out reviews in other areas including Northamptonshire and, more recently, Manchester. The independent review is now underway and, when it is completed we will welcome its findings and acknowledge and learn from any areas they identify where

we could do better. Rather than proposing a new review, I would again implore those making allegations to work with the review team. Neither this review, or any other that people call for, whether it's commissioned by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority or by the Home Secretary, can look into allegations made on social media without any evidence – anyone who has any should come forward. People who experience child abuse have to be able to trust public authorities. I hope that the review will help build that trust, by pinpointing any failures in the past and showing people that our services are learning and improving. Allegations about child abuse or the credibility of the review team that do not have evidence to support them damage that trust, particularly when made by elected representatives. The recent approach taken by some members taken in this chamber including the Conservatives disappointingly undermines the trust and confidence that our residents have in children's social care. If people don't have confidence in social care they may be less willing to report concerns and, put simply that could place children in danger, and cost children's lives. I can only finish this contribution by again appealing to Councillor Sheldon and any other members in this chamber or anybody out there listening who has evidence of crimes or child abuse to submit it to the appropriate authorities, whether than be the police or the review team. Of course, I also need to say that when we originally asked the Combined Authority to commission a review, the group leaders of all political groups on the council were briefed on this, including Councillor Hudson, and so the Conservative Group should be well aware of the Terms of Reference, which are publicly available, and the work programme of the review.”

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 McLaren asked the following question:

“I have been contacted by a local resident who only recently left the house. She has now been on the bus three times, each time she goes on the bus, she wears a mask as instructed, but on all three occasions someone, sometimes two people have been allowed to board the bus with no mask on. This is a cause of great concern for the resident. So could I ask the relevant Cabinet Member what can be done about this?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture responded that there were a number of exemptions for the requirement to wear a mask so it could be possible that some of those people who weren't wearing masks were doing it for legitimate reasons. Handwashing and social distancing were the two most important ways of combatting the virus but the short answer to the question was that at the moment it was not possible for the Council to make people wear masks if

they chose not to, but the Cabinet Member stressed that choosing not to wear a mask was a selfish act and urged everybody to follow the rules that had been set down.

2 Councillor Surjan asked the following question:

“We know that traffic accidents on the road are very high and in the month of May alone during lockdown, Fire Rescue were call out 72 times for Road Traffic Collisions. With the message being sent out people should avoid public transport we know many will turn to cars to get to places thus increasing risks. This statistic mentioned is only those that are recorded, I’m sure there are dozens more which haven’t been reported to GMP and even more near misses. For a few months now residents have raised concerns of speeding and dangerous driving on Mars Street in Coldhurst with many children being put at risk and their cars being damaged (i.e. wing mirrors knocked off) by reckless young drivers and lorry drivers. They were informed nothing could be done as there were not official data recorded. Just two weeks ago I sent a photo of a car that had smashed into the bollards on Mars St, thankfully no one was hurt. The cost of fixing those bollards will no doubt come from tax payers money. Will the relevant Cabinet Member reassure residents of the area that this matter will be looked into? And look to put plans in place to reduce reckless driving across the wider borough by young drivers and lorry drivers?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture responded that the Council took road safety very seriously. Unfortunately, what was being experienced in Oldham and elsewhere in the country was a general increase in motorists travelling at higher speeds than normal. This could be elated to there being lower traffic volumes and absence of Police presence and in rural settings the attraction of the challenging nature of the routes. Speed limits were set in accordance with DfT guidelines and in consultation with the police and were designed to reflect the nature and characteristics of the road and the environment it was in. However, reckless driving and those who wished to ignore the Highway Code or the posted limited could not be legislated which is why the police were relied upon to enforce limits as currently local authorities could not penalise speeding drivers as such activity was deemed a Moving Traffic Offence and out of the Council’s jurisdiction. That said, Traffic and Road Safety officers would be pleased to work with the elected member and investigate what could be done to mitigate the current unsocial activity and enhance the existing traffic management facilities. With regard to the actual damage referred to in the question, the area had been inspected and two damaged concrete bollards identified. A work order had been issued for the footway to be made safe





and the bollards replaced.

3. Councillor Haque asked the following question:

“I note that the Government has extended the ban on courts hearing landlord’s applications for possession until the 20th September and is now requiring that tenants are given 6-months notice rather than 3 until at least the end of March 2021. Can the Cabinet Member for Housing tell us what is known about the likely impact of Covid 19 on tenants in Oldham and whether she thinks the measures so far announced are enough to prevent large numbers of evictions and people losing their homes?”

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Planning responded that the majority of registered social landlords in Oldham had signed up to the National Federation of Housing Association pledges which were:

1. Keeping people secure at home: No one would be evicted from a housing association home as a result of financial hardship caused by coronavirus, where they were working (or engaging) with their housing association to get their payments back on track.
2. Helping people to get the support they need: Housing Associations were helping residents to access benefits and other support to alleviate financial hardship, which included supporting people to get work where possible.
3. Acting compassionately and quickly where people were struggling: Housing associations would work with any resident who was struggling to find arrangements to pay rent that was manageable for them in the long term. Legal action would only be taken in serious circumstances – as a last resort where a resident would not agree a plan with their landlord to help them pay their rent, or where it was needed urgently in cases of domestic abuse or of anti-social behaviour that was putting other residents or communities at risk. The pledges would help residents who resided in socially rented homes. The Housing Advice Team was also working with private landlords to understand issues that they were facing as a result of Covid 19. What would also help was if discretionary housing payments (DHP) could be increased and ‘rules’ around its use relaxed, for example, at the moment only people eligible for support with housing costs could access DHP. This excluded any households on a higher income who might have been affected by Covid and unable to afford their rent, in turn, this affected private landlords who could not get their rent and so they could also face financial hardship. The extension of the eviction ban was welcomed though more generally there was an urgent need to reform how costs were covered by housing benefit or the housing element of Universal

Credit. The local housing allowance needed to permanently meet local market rents. The bedroom tax and benefit cap be abolished. The combine impact of these measures could mean that residents receiving housing support significantly below their rent found it difficult to pay their rent and also meet their other household costs.

4. Councillor Williamson asked the following question:

“The Government recently gave the Council £215,000 to use in ‘reopening town centres’. What has this money been spent on?”

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that the key focus for the funding was to support the reopening of the town centres and high streets in district centres shopping districts and community shopping locations, especially in vulnerable communities. Oldham Council had and continued to put a huge amount of effort to offer sound and evidenced-based information to businesses and residents during the Covid-19 emergency. This project and additional funding was helping to target activities in alignment with the CV19 Management Plan, and had allowed the Council to build and add value to initial works and activities underway. Specific activities included:

- Supported the development of an action plan for how to continue to safely reopen the high street and local economy;
- Communications and public information were managed to ensure the reopening of high streets across the borough were done successfully and safely;
- Business engagement and awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening was and could be managed successfully and safely; and
- Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening could be managed successfully and safely.

5. Councillor Hulme asked the following question:

“Over the past 6 months schools, colleges and community facilities were all shut down leaving many of Oldham’s young people at a loose end for large parts of the day, potentially resulting in them engaging in behaviour that could be dangerous or considered anti-social. Could the cabinet member responsible for youth services please tell us what was put in place to interact with young people and to divert them away from these types of activity?”

Councillor Moores, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded within information related to what had been delivered by the Youth Services and partners. The Youth Service had been active in

supporting young people throughout the lockdown. There had been some limitations in what could be delivered face-to-face. From the start of lockdown in March, the Youth Service had delivered an extensive 7 day-a-week programme of online sessions, one-to-one support to vulnerable young people and community-based engagement. The face-to-face work had steadily increased in line with the end of lock down and the changes in Government restrictions but was fully risk assessed and adhered to social distancing and Covid safe procedures. The Youth Service had delivered a comprehensive summer programme of activities with an average of 40 sessions per week delivered online and face to face along side a range of wider summer activities offered from a range of organisations across Oldham. Oldham Youth Service had worked closed with Police and Community Safety colleagues so they were able to respond to any potential anti-social behaviour or other youth related issues. They were also involved in supporting the GM Safe4Summer campaign. The Youth Service continued with the youth work offer and were supporting the community engagement programme currently taking place across Oldham to support the fight against Covid and were supporting the return to school, developing youth engagement sessions across localities in Oldham and offering targeted programmes to schools, colleges and communities to support young people. As well as the Council's own Youth Service, organisations within the community and voluntary sector delivered an offer to young people and continued to increase that offer as the restrictions and guidelines to youth sector organisations changed. The Cabinet Member expressed this thanks to the teams for the support provided during this period.

6. Councillor Phythian asked the following question:

“Many Oldham residents are struggling financially at the present time, they are having to make decisions about paying their rent and utility bills or buying food. Oldham Food Bank, is a volunteer led organisation that provides outstanding support for residents who have found themselves in this position. What support have Oldham Council given to the Food Bank during this very difficult period?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for the Covid-19 Response responded that the Council had and continued to support the Food Bank in a number of ways which included to continue to charge a peppercorn-only rent for premises; purchased refrigeration equipment for the Food Bank at the start of the pandemic; provided staff support, up to 10 staff, as a minimum, on a regular basis over 7 days a week; provided officer support related to the setting up of a bulk

purchasing arrangement with suppliers, established supply links to FareShareGM and linked the Food Bank into other sources of food donations which had come in from across Greater Manchester. In addition, Environmental Services had provided the foodbank with veg boxes from produced grown through the summer. In terms of funding, £20K had been set aside from the Growing Oldham Feeding Ambition (GOFA) to provide financial support. Funding had been approved in principle from the DEFRA Local Authority Emergency Assistance Scheme to support the longer-term sustainability of the Food Bank. It was important that the support offered across Team Oldham be recognised and the excellent partnership that had formed in particular between the Council, Action Together and the Foodbank to support the borough's most vulnerable communities during this difficult time. The partnership working continued to ensure that people could continue to access food as the economic impact of Covid 19 was felt.

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

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 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were submitted.

Members raised the following questions:

Councillor Murphy asked the following question related to Cabinet, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020, Item 6 – GM Clean Air Update:

“Private motor vehicles are subject to an annual emissions test when they have an MOT test, which is carried out by inserting a tube into the exhaust and measuring it using a calibrated emissions tester. However, when taxis are checked through the taxi test, the emissions are only visually checked. Can the relevant Cabinet Member explain why there is this discrepancy between the emissions testing of private cars and taxis? There are hundreds of taxis on our roads today. They are driven more miles per year than an average motor vehicle, they are on the road for longer and their engines are idled for longer periods of time so a taxi could cause a lot more air pollution. When we are trying to make sure we have clean air, why should taxis not have the same checks as our cars? And can the Cabinet Member say exactly how many taxis are licensed to operate in our borough today?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and



Culture responded that she could not explain the difference in emission checks but that the work on clear air was about doing away with current commercial vehicles, taxis, private hires, delivery vehicles, lorries and buses and the reduction of pollution by making all the vehicles in Greater Manchester that drove around Greater Manchester, particularly the ones that spent a lot of time idling, not giving out the NO<sup>2</sup> particles. The Clean Air Strategy that Greater Manchester was developing was what the Cabinet Minute was about and the consultation exercise that was due to start on 8 October and addressed modification of vehicles going forward which involved support to those people who had those vehicles getting cleaner vehicles. In terms of the number of taxis and private hires operating in Oldham, Councillor Brownridge did not know but would find out and provide that information to Councillor Murphy.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 be noted.
2. The question and response provided be noted.

d Questions on Joint Arrangements

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 Partnership meetings were submitted as follows:

AGMA Executive Board	26 June 2020
Greater Manchester Transport Committee	10 July 2020
GM Waste and Recycling Committee	12 March 2020
Health and Wellbeing Board 2019	12 November
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	26 June 2020
	31 July 2020
MioCare Board	23 April 2020
Peak Park District Authority	3 July 2020
	24 July 2020
Police and Crime Panel	30 June 2020

Members asked the following questions:

1. Councillor Williamson asked the following question on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority minutes, 31 July 2020, Item GMCA 122/20 – Brownfield Land Fund and Getting Building Fund:  
“The minute records that of the Government’s £400m Brownfield Land Fund, £81.1m has been allocated for Greater Manchester over the next five years, and that Greater Manchester has also been allocated £54m as part of the ‘Getting Building Fund’ to support post Covid-19 building recovery, to be spent by 31 March 2022. Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell me how much of this money will be



coming to Oldham and how this Council intends to spend it?"



Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills responded that none of the funding pot had yet been allocated so it was unclear at the moment how much would be allocated to Oldham. The funding was to be used to bring forward sites for residential development on brownfield land that could evidence market failure. GMCA were co-ordinating bids to the fund and submissions had been put forward in Oldham which sought a total of £17.942 million grant. Future updates could be provided.

2. Councillor Al-Hamdani asked the following question on the Greater Manchester Transport Committee minutes, 10 July 2020, Minute GMTC 50/20 Mayoral Update and on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority minutes, 31 July 2020, Minute GMCA 125/20, the Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund (MCF) and Emergency Active Travel Funding, Tranche 1

—  
“As people are being urged to return to school and to work, the Government allocation £250-million for an ‘Emergency Active Travel Fund’ to encourage everyone to walk or cycle where possible instead of taking public transport or returning to their cars. Greater Manchester received £15,872,000. The Transport Secretary also issued new Statutory Guidance on 9 May to all Highways Authorities, requiring them to deliver ‘transformative change’ within an urgent timeframe. The Guidance included recommendations to consider ‘pop-up’ cycle facilities, widening footways, ‘school streets’ schemes, and reducing speed limits. Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell me how much money from the Greater Manchester ‘pot’ Oldham has received and what this Council has or proposes to do with it to meet the requirements and aspirations of the Statutory Guidance? And can the Cabinet Member also currently tell me what mechanism exists to consult with cyclists in this borough on our proposed cycle schemes?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture responded that whilst the Government had indicated that Greater Manchester could receive up to £15.9 million from its Emergency Active Travel Fund, the Council still had to go through a competitive bidding process to access the Fund. Government had split the fund into two bidding tranches and required single bids from Combined Authority areas. Greater Manchester submitted a bid to Tranche 1 and had an initial allocation of £3.1m approved for the regions Tranche 1 schemes which in Oldham included pedestrian improvements in Oldham Town Centre. No GM local authority had received any direct funding but would be able to recover the cost of delivering their agreed Tranche 1 schemes from the GM Allocation. The government's decision on the region's Tranche 2 bid to secure the remaining indicative GM allocation was still awaited. In addition to this Government funding, the GM Mayor had made £0.5m of emergency funding available to each GM local authority to support the Safe Streets Save Live campaign

and the Council was busy making changes across the borough to support social distancing and active travel, including installation of new road markings, signing and footway widening.



3. Councillor Harkness asked the following question on the Peak District National Park Authority Minutes, 24 July 2020, Minute 54/20 – National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2019/20 – “The killing of Birds of Prey in the Peak District National Park includes parts of Saddleworth Moor. In a recent report by the investigation team of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, it is reported that the Peak District National Park is one of the worse parts of the UK for the illegal killing of rare birds of prey. Locally, in May, a buzzard was found with fatal injuries on land used for game bird shooting in Diggle and two years ago a red kite was seen being shot, and two owls were found shot dead on Saddleworth Moor. There have also been shooting incidents, suspicions of poisoning and raids by egg robbers on nests in other parts of the Park. All birds of prey are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. To intentionally kill or injure one is a criminal offence, punishable by an unlimited fine or up to six months in jail. But the deaths of every one of these beautiful and majestic creatures are not only deplorable crimes; they represent an irreplaceable loss to our natural environment and to humanity. The Peak District Annual Monitoring Report refers to moorland birds, and specifically birds of prey on Page 7, but the detail is quite vague. I would like to ask the Council’s representative to the Peak District National Park Board whether this issue has been discussed at recent Board meetings and what the outcome was? I would be especially interested to hear what action is being taken by the Board to work with the Police. RSPB, local wildlife charities and land owners like United Utilities and Yorkshire Water to end this menace and to bring offenders to book. If the issue has not been discussed, please can I ask him to raise it with the Chair and Board at the earliest opportunity?”

Councillor McLaren, Oldham Council's representative on the Peak District National Park Authority confirmed that the Annual Monitoring Report had been discussed at the meeting but with no specific reference made to birds of prey. Councillor McLaren would seek further advice and information and report back to all members of Council.

4. Councillor H. Gloster asked the following question on the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee Minutes, 12 March 2020, Minute WRC 20/21 Waste Management Contract Update – “At the start of 2020, vehicle number plate recognition and restrictions on the number of visits to municipal tips were introduced in this borough. Can the Cabinet Member tell me if this has had an adverse impact on fly-tipping incidents? How many reports of fly tipping have there been in the current year compared to the comparable period last year? And how much are we currently spending per annum cleaning



up after fly-tippers? And can the Cabinet member tell me if there is any clear indication of a change in behaviour on fly-tipping due to the closure of recycling centres under coronavirus, and can the Council provide an estimated breakdown of what proportion of any increases are related to that, rather than to the change in restrictions on visits, by comparing the data pre-lockdown, under lockdown and post-lockdown?”

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Culture responded that the information requested was currently being investigated. It was to be appreciated that the information would take some extensive investigation to enable the information to be pulled together. The Cabinet Member would endeavour to get the requested information at the earliest opportunity and forward it via email.

5. Councillor Hobin asked the following question related to Police and Crime Panel Minutes, 30 June 2020, Minute PCP/20/20 – Police and Crime Team Update –  
Councillor Hobin referred to the question asked earlier.  
“Over the last few days and weeks, some things had come to light that casts a shadow over the Council, a shadow which casts and calls into question the integrity of the Council, and as a result of this, the integrity into every member here tonight. I am very proud to represent my constituency, unfortunately at times I feel no pride in being part of this Council. Of course it’s to talk of the Child Sexual Exploitation allegations and the Council’s response. It’s clear to me and many others that the review in place is not fit for purpose. The scope is too narrow, the governance nowhere near independent enough regardless of what Councillor Fielding says, I am sure the public, when they see pictures of him and his good friend the GM Mayor, will call into question how independent this is. It’s too big an issue to be dealt with in what is pretty much a self-managed review. I believe it is now time to request a fully independent investigation and a public inquiry into all possible aspects of possible child sexual exploitation in our borough and this investigation should be with full legal standing. This is not a party political issue. This is more important than that. Every day children’s future dreams are being turned into nightmares. It’s our duty above all else to protect our children and not to decide because of which party you are in how you’re going to represent them. You should be representing your constituents, the ones that have trusted you personally by electing you in. If I quote from Edmund Burke ‘all that is required for evil to triumph is good men to do nothing’. I refuse to do nothing on this. The revelations of the Administration, apparently keeping secrets regarding council members criminal charges and convictions recently has diminished any trust or belief in this Council. I understand why Councillor Fielding said the number one priority is child protection and that’s what it should be. He also questioned people coming forward to the Council, but when the Leader of the Council has called allegations barefaced lies in the past on 2 occasions, when he’s gone



public saying people are scaremongering on the internet, how do you expect people to come to trust in the Council? I think it is time now for this Council to all come together and demand an independent public inquiry into what is going on. I would like to see and I propose a full recorded vote tonight by members here and now to press this Administration on referring to the Home Office and the Local Government Minister a request for a full independent inquiry into child sexual exploitation in this borough and any other activity. Anything short of this, I believe, is a dereliction of duty, anything other than this points to an Administration that is scared of any truth being discovered but it certainly doesn't show this Council as the transparent Council they want it to be. I would ask members to join with me in forcing this issue. We need to vote, we need to push this Administration into a proper independent inquiry into what is going on in this borough. Until we do that there are children at harm every single night. We cannot sort this out until we know what's gone on in the past. I ask the Council for a full recorded vote of all members so we know who is on line with use and who isn't. Who are protecting people they shouldn't be and who are not looking after the interests of their constituents."

Councillor Fielding, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills reiterated some things that had already been said and some things that Councillor Hobin had alluded to but which had not been said in the meeting but had been said publicly in the past. Councillor Hobin had been advised to provide evidence which supported his assertion that there had been crimes committed or that there were flaws with the independent review which had already been commissioned. Councillor Hobin so far had failed to provide anything. If the Council were to request a new review from a Central Government department, the likelihood was that they would commission Malcolm Newsam and Gary Ridgway to do the work, as they were the people used in the past. Any new review would only slow down the answers Councillor Hobin claimed he wanted. Councillor Hobin and his associates online seemed mainly interested in spreading doubt in public services which was in itself placing young people in danger. There had been seen those who knew what the rules for council meetings were and for things like Freedom of Information requests, doing the wrong thing, seemingly on purpose, so a cover up could be claimed when they didn't get the answers. The Council had committed that when the independent review reported its findings, Group Leaders would be brought together too consider any next steps to be taken and if the review unearthed any criminality that would be dealt with by the police. The Leader asked once again that Councillor Hobin and others to bring forward any evidence that they had rather than spreading baseless accusations that undermined the fantastic work that Children's Services teams did and placed children at risk by potentially dissuading those with information about abuse coming forward.

The Mayor advised that a vote could not be taken on a

statement. If Councillor Hobin wished to submit a motion to the next meeting of Council, which has been seconded by another member under Opposition Business, this would be debated and voted upon.

**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.

10

**NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

Motion: Planning for the Future

The Mayor had received notice that Councillor Roberts wished to alter the Motion. The altered Motion had been circulated to Members. The motion could be altered with the consent of the Secunder and agreement of Full Council. Full Council agreed to the Motion being altered.

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Dean SECONDED the following ALTERED MOTION:

“This council notes the Government’s extension of permitted development rights and the recent publication of a white paper on planning reform, ‘Planning for the Future’.

The proposals in the white paper are to replace the established planning system with a new system whereby land is classified into ‘growth’, ‘renewal’ or ‘protection’ zones, with outline permission granted automatically where a development meets the criteria for the relevant zone. This will fundamentally undermine democratic local control.

This council notes the significant concerns raised by key bodies to the proposals. The Royal Institute of British Architects have suggested that the plans are ‘shameful’ and would do ‘almost nothing to guarantee the deliver of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes’. Homelessness charity Shelter have argued that social housing ‘could face extinction’ if the proposals go ahead. The Town and Country Planning Association have noted the success of the current system for volume house builders, the huge number of permissions granted that remain undelivered, and the threat the proposals make to local democracy. This council agrees that such a fundamental attack on democratic rights in the planning system demands cross party support and undertakes to consult all elected Members in formulating a response.

This council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to respond to the Planning for the Future consultation, to include the following:

- Oldham Council’s rejection of the proposals in the strongest form
- The range of sites in Oldham that have planning permission but are not currently being taken forward by developers, and which are not included in the Government’s assessment of whether Oldham Council is delivering enough development.



- The additional barriers to development arising from the cost of Brownfield land remediation and the need for sustainable subsidy to make sites viable
- The importance of a robust, transparent planning process, with democratic control at its heart, to safeguard local communities and promote local priorities
- The need for quality, affordable homes in Oldham, and the risk that the new proposals will fail to deliver. Replacing section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions, which the National Housing Federation notes are the single biggest contributor to new affordable homes in the country, with a much smaller Infrastructure Levy, will massively reduce the targets for contributions, rather than trying to find ways to reach the current targets, which are so badly needed.
- That affordability varies across the country and that the proposals in the White paper offer nothing for those needing housing at a social rent.
- The outcomes through the cross-party consultation.

Councillor Al-Hamdani spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor H. Gloster spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Sheldon spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Harkness spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Curley spoke against the Motion.

Councillor Roberts exercised her right of reply.

On being put to the vote, 49 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the ALTERED MOTION and 3 votes were cast AGAINST with 1 ABSTENTION. The ALTERED MOTION was therefore CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** that the Chief Executive be asked to respond to the Planning for the Future consultation and that the following be included:

1. Oldham Council's rejection of the proposals in the strongest form.
2. The range of sites in Oldham that have planning permission but were not currently being taken forward by developers, and which were not included in the Government's assessment of whether Oldham Council was delivering enough development.
3. The additional barriers to development arising from the cost of Brownfield land remediation and the need for sustainable subsidy to make sites viable.
4. The importance of a robust, transparent planning process, with democratic control at its heart to safeguard local communities and promote local priorities.
5. The need for quality, affordable homes in Oldham, and the risk that the new proposals would fail to deliver. Replacing section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions, which the National Housing Federation noted were the single biggest contributor to new affordable homes in the country with a much smaller

- Infrastructure Levy, would massively reduce the targets for contributions, rather than trying to find ways to reach the current targets, which were so badly needed.
6. That affordability varied across the country and that the proposals in the White paper offered nothing for those needing housing at a social rent.
  7. The outcomes agreed through the cross-party consultation.

**NOTE:** Councillor S. Bashforth joined the meeting during this Item.

11

## **NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

### Motion 1: Not Every Disability is Visible

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

“This Council notes that:

- The charity Crohn’s and Colitis UK is encouraging venues providing accessible public toilets to install new signage. This is to help stop stigma and discrimination towards people with ‘invisible illnesses’ such as Crohn’s Disease or ulcerative colitis.
- There have been instances nationally where such individual using an accessible toilet have been accused by staff members of being ineligible to use them.
- These signs have two standing figures and a wheelchair user with the words Accessible Toilet and the logo ‘Not every disability is visible’.
- The Government has decided recently that large accessible toilets for severely disabled people – known as Changing Places – will be made compulsory for large new buildings, such as shopping centres, supermarkets, sports and arts venues, in England from 2021.

Council resolves to:

- Ensure that accessible toilets on Council premises bear these signs.
- Ask town and district centre retailers and leisure outlets to do likewise with their accessible public toilets.
- Seek advice from the charity Crohn’s and Colitis UK on the information and training we should provide to Council staff members. This is so they understand these illnesses and to prevent potential embarrassment for those who suffer with them.
- Ensure that any Changing Places toilets in our buildings are property signposted for visitors.
- Ensure that the requirement to provide new Changing Place toilets is included within the Council’s future plans for new public buildings in the borough.”

Councillor Hobin spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Al-Hamdani spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Roberts MOVED and Councillor Jabbar SECONDED that under Council Procedure Rule 14.9h) the Motion be referred to Overview and Scrutiny.



Councillor Hamblett exercised his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED** that under Council Procedure Rule 14.9h), the motion be referred to Overview and Scrutiny.

Motion 2: Let's All Do Our Bit to Tackle Litter

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

“Council is committed to tackling litter in our Borough and to working for cleaner streets and public spaces across our communities.

Council notes that:

- The Keep Britain Tidy Campaign offers local authorities the opportunity to become a member of a Network, which provides access to specialist advice and support.
- Keep Britain Tidy is hosting the Great British September Clean-Up from 11 – 27 September.
- The campaign is also promoting a Love Parks campaign and a Charity Bin sponsorship scheme whereby the monies raised from recycling cans deposited in designated local authority bins is contributed to local charities.
- Several national supermarket chains are now operating trials of reverse vending machines, where customers are rewarded for returning used cans and bottles for recycling.
- The Government department DEFRA has also previously published a voluntary code for local businesses and local business partnerships to sign up to and reduce the litter that results from fast food businesses.

Council recognises that:

- Whilst we are committed to tackling litter in our Borough, and to working for cleaner streets and public places across our communities, we cannot do this alone.
- In the battle for cleaner streets and public spaces, we must involve the public and our business partners in a co-operative effort.
- There are community champions and organisations commendably ‘doing their bit’.
- The Keep Britain Tidy and DEFRA initiatives provide extra opportunities and an extra incentive for members of the public and business partners to become actively engaged and empowered in tackling the litter which blights our streets.
- In doing their bit, residents and business will help the Council to make the streets, district centres, parks and



public amenities of our Borough cleaner and more inviting to residents and visitors.

Council resolves to:

- Promote participation in the Great British September Clean-up to members of the public, community, faith and youth groups, and businesses through our usual social media, website and existing email-outs to partners.
- Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Board to examine the merits of becoming a local authority member of the Keep Britain Tidy Network, and identify which of the campaign's initiatives, including Love Parks and Charity Bins, could be introduced in the Borough.
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to national supermarket chains with stores in this borough asking them to consider Oldham as the location for a future trial of a reverse vending machine.
- Promote take up of the DEFRA voluntary code amongst our fast food businesses and local business partnerships and seek their sponsorship for the introduction of a Charity Bin scheme and for public education programmes.”

#### AMENDMENT

The Chief Executive had been notified that Councillor Leach was unable to attend the meeting and unable to Move the Amendment and notice had been given that Councillor Hulme would Move the Amendment in her absence which was AGREED.

Councillor Hulme MOVED and Councillor Mushtaq SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

“At end of bullet point 2 under Council recognises add:  
'While recognising the limitations in community and group activity imposed by the current Coronavirus restrictions.'  
Delete bullet point 1 under Council resolves.”

Revised motion to read:

“Council is committed to tackling litter in our Borough and to working for cleaner streets and public spaces across our communities.

Council notes that:

- The Keep Britain Tidy Campaign offers local authorities the opportunity to become a member of a Network, which provides access to specialist advice and support.
- Keep Britain Tidy is hosting the Great British September Clean-Up from 11 – 27 September.
- The campaign is also promoting a Love Parks campaign and a Charity Bin sponsorship scheme whereby the monies raised from recycling cans deposited in designated local authority bins is contributed to local charities.
- Several national supermarket chains are now operating trials of reverse vending machines, where customers are

rewarded for returning used cans and bottles for recycling.

- The Government department DEFRA has also previously published a voluntary code for local businesses and local business partnerships to sign up to and reduce the litter that results from fast food businesses.

Council recognises that:

- Whilst we are committed to tackling litter in our Borough, and to working for cleaner streets and public spaces across our communities, we cannot do this alone.
- In the battle for cleaner streets and public spaces, we must involve the public and our business partners in a co-operative effort while recognising the limitations in community and group activity imposed by the current Coronavirus restrictions.
- There are community champions and organisations commendably 'doing their bit'.
- The Keep Britain Tidy and DEFRA initiatives provide extra opportunities and an extra incentive for members of the public and business partners to become actively engaged and empowered in tackling the litter which blights our streets.
- In doing their bit, residents and business will help the Council to make the streets, district centres, parks and public amenities of our Borough cleaner and more inviting to residents and visitors.

Council resolves to:

- Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Board to examine the merits of becoming a local authority member of the Keep Britain Tidy Network, and identify which of the campaign's initiatives, including Love Parks and Charity Bins could be introduced in the Borough.
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to national supermarket chains with stores in this borough asking them to consider Oldham as the location for a future trial of a reverse vending machine.
- Promote take up of the DEFRA voluntary code amongst our fast food businesses and local business partnerships and seek their sponsorship for the introduction of a Charity Bin scheme and for public education programmes."

Councillor Sheldon spoke in support of the Amendment.

Councillor Williamson exercised her right of reply.

Councillor Hulme did not exercise his right of reply.

A vote was then taken on the AMENDMENT.

On being put to the vote, 45 votes were cast in FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT and 0 votes were cast AGAINST with 9 ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore CARRIED.

Councillor Williamson did not exercise her right of reply.



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



**Oldham**  
Council

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Board be asked to examine the merits of becoming a local authority member of the Keep Britain Tidy Network, and identify which of the campaign's initiatives, including Love Parks and Charity Bins could be introduced in the Borough.
2. The Chief Executive be asked to write to national supermarket chains with stores in this borough asking them to consider Oldham as the location of a reverse vending machine.
3. The take up of the DEFRA voluntary code amongst the borough's fast food businesses and local business partnerships be promoted and their sponsorship for the introduction of a Charity Bin scheme and for public education programmes be sought.

Motion 3: Roads Policing 'Not Optional'

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

"Council notes that:

- In the last ten years, there has been no significant decline in the number of people killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads, after decades of reducing casualties.
- According to Department of Transport figures, there are still on average 5 fatalities and 68 serious injuries in England and Wales every day.
- In early July, the Department of Transport published a public consultation document supporting a Roads Policing Review. The closing date for submissions is October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- In the preamble to that document, the Under Secretary of State for Transport said the review sought to 'build the fairest and most operationally effective enforcement capability in police and other agencies to deliver the best outcome for the safety of all road users'.
- In the same month, the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary published a damning report which predicted an increase in road deaths because:
  - According to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, there has been a 34% cut in funding in real terms for road policing between 2012/3 and 2019/20 leading to a reduction of police officers available for these duties.
  - These officers receive insufficient training and operational support.
  - Road policing is 'seen as less of a priority than it should be' in most local plans and there is an 'unclear national strategy'.



- The HM Inspectorate called for urgent action as ‘roads policing is not optional’.

Council resolves to:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Transport, making clear this Council’s position that funding in real terms for road policing should be restored; that the HM Inspectorate’s recommendation be implemented in full as a priority; and that a new national strategy for road policing and safety should be developed.
- Ask the Chief Executive to send copies of this letter to the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner, the Police and Crime Panel and our three local Members of Parliament to seek their support for the Council’s position
- Ask the Council’s representative on the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel to request the Panel revisit the local policing plan to ensure that roads policing is sufficiently prioritised.
- Ask the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the appropriate Council officers and the relevant Cabinet Member, to make a submission to the Roads Policing Review consultation on behalf of the Council taking this resolution in to account.”

Councillor C. Gloster did not exercise his right of reply.

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

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be asked to write to the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Transport, making clear this Council’s position that funding in real terms for road policing should be restored; that the HM Inspectorate’s recommendation be implemented in full as a priority; and that a new national strategy for road policing and safety should be developed.
2. The Chief Executive be asked to send copies of this letter to the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner, the Police and Crime Panel and our three local Members of Parliament to seek their support for the Council’s position.
3. The Chief Executive, in conjunction with the appropriate Council officers and the relevant Cabinet Member, be asked to make a submission to the Roads Policing Review consultation on behalf of the Council taking this resolution in to account.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Fielding SECONDED a report which h provide an update on how the Council continued to monitor and manage the spread of the coronavirus pandemic locally.

COVID-19 was still circulating across the UK and new cases were still being seen across Oldham every day. The Council had a clear plan in case of an outbreak locally. The report summarised the local restrictions that had been introduced, identified associated activity and highlighted the approach taken by the Council to tackle the increase in numbers.



Oldham had joined forces with Greater Manchester and national agencies such as Public Health England and the Department of Health and Social Care to escalate messaging to the public. In line with the agreed plan, Oldham had increased the number of testing sites in the borough. Testing was taking place at a higher rate than the national average with positivity falling. Locally supported contact tracing had been in place since 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and 80% of cases passed to the local team had been successfully completed.

Question received from Councillor Sykes:

“The Cabinet Member will be aware of the shambles that occurred with the local mobile testing centre in Shaw, and elsewhere in Oldham. In Shaw on the first day that the centre was supposed to operate, it failed to show and on the second day, it arrived several hours late. It also failed to turn with all the kit on another date and left early on its last day. Shaw and Crompton residents who had booked a test online arrive to find there was not centre at which to take a test. I understand that this shambles also occurred at other sites elsewhere in Oldham. This situation has undermined the credibility of these facilities and has caused a great deal of inconvenience and concern to my constituents. I know that these facilities are operated by a private sector company appointed by the government, so the Council is not at fault, but could the Cabinet Member please tell me what this Council is doing to ensure that these testing centres arrive on time and are present at their assigned locations and at their assigned days of operation in future?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response responded that Oldham Council staff and members had escalated concerns about the reliability of the mobile testing unit service to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the problems in Shaw emerged. In recent weeks reliability of the service had improved significantly, with three mobile testing units operating in the borough each day. Additional officer capacity had been identified to ensure that there was a single point of contact in place to rapidly address any problems with future deployments should they occur. Thanks were also given to the Chief Executive in her role at a national level.

Question received from Councillor Williamson:

“Oldham Council employs staff who come from across our communities and who speak a wide variety of community languages. Trace and trace will finally now become a service delivered locally; a change for the good which is long overdue, and there will now be an expectation that contact tracers will

begin to knock on doors to speak with members of the public, rather than attempting phone contact. Can the Cabinet Member please tell me whether this Council will be asking staff who live or work in the relevant communities where infection rates are higher and who also speak the relevant community languages to come forward to be seconded to carry out this work? And if not, can I ask her to do so? I feel that this will be contact tracing far more effective and will further demonstrate that this Council is a key front-line service provider that is fully committed to tackling coronavirus head-on and keeping all communities safe.”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response responded that the arrangements for the transfer of contact tracing functions from national to local, and the resources to do this, had not yet been confirmed. The ability for contact tracers to speak relevant community languages was important and was something the Council would aim to build into any local approach to contact tracing when more detail about the functions being transferred and the resources available was received.

Question received from Councillor H. Gloster:

“There have been a significant number of outbreaks of Coronavirus in food factories in Wales, Scotland, the Midlands and North Yorkshire. Oldham has several such factories, but I shall not name them. Can the Cabinet Member please tell me what is being done in these factories in Oldham to prevent outbreaks and to test staff to keep them safe?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response responded that Oldham had one large scale production site which officers from Environmental Health were liaising with as part of the Covid business response work. The Health and Safety Executive had also been involved in advisory visits in the borough to other smaller scale premises factories for which they were responsible. Environmental Health had been dealing with all other business premises, carrying out proactive compliance checks and responding to any reports of cases or staff concerns as the Council were made aware of them. This had involved discussions around the siting of mobile testing stations near the premises as well as advising on process changes to improve compliance.

Question received from Councillor Hamblett:

“On 11 August, Public Health England admitted that almost 10% of the coronavirus deaths is reported were not related to Covid-19. The number of deaths attributed to Covid-19 was then dramatically dropped by 5,377. The error had occurred because former coronavirus patients were being included in mortality figures even if they had recovered and then died of something else. Can the Cabinet Member please tell me what impact this adjustment has had on the figure for deaths from Covid-19 within the borough of Oldham?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response responded that the national adjustment had not had any impact on the overall figure for Covid-19 deaths within Oldham.

Question received from Councillor Al-Hamdani:

“On 13 August, Imperial College published a survey claiming that six percent of the UK population or 3.4 million people had antibodies indicating that they have been exposed to Covid-19. The Office for National Statistics has also published similar figures suggesting that 6.5 per cent of the population has been infected. Can the Cabinet Member tell me if as part of the testing programme whether the presence of antibodies in each patient is recorded? And if that is so, what that percentage has been in patients so far tested in this borough?”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response responded that the tests undertaken at local testing sites and via home testing kits were antigen tests, rather than antibody tests. Antibody testing required a blood sample and the nose and throat swabs used at testing sites could not be used to measure antibodies. Antibody testing was not currently widely available and was only being offered to NHS and care staff and to some hospital patients. The Council did not have local data on the number of residents who had received antibody testing.

Question received from Councillor Shuttleworth:

“Would the relevant Cabinet Member kindly confirm:

- The number of allegations of breaches of the Covid guidelines have been received;
- How many allegations required investigation by officers;
- How many warnings were issued to those who failed to follow the guidelines;
- How many repeat offenders there have been; and
- Finally, how many fines have been incurred by businesses and individuals.”

Councillor Shah, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Covid-19 Response confirmed that the Council had received 460 complaints of potential breaches whilst Greater Manchester Police (GMP) had received 2,461 calls from the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 and all of these were investigated event though some turned out to be unfounded. The Police had developed a policy in line with the National Police Chiefs Council and used the model of 4 E's (Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce) using enforcement as a last resort. From a Council perspective, members were informed that one business had been closed due to non-compliance and another had been served with a Health and Safety Improvement Notice related to inadequate Covid controls.



Councillor Goodwin referred to his question at a previous Council meeting regarding the impact of Covid on Council finances and asked if there was any update on the financial situation since then?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Green responded that the Council's Revenue Account had currently a £17.1m deficit in-year related to incurred expenditure. A response had not been received to the motion as agreed at the previous Council meeting which requested the Government to fully fund the Council on any expenditure. Despite the great work which had been done, no additional support had been received. It would be useful if the Government could give the money as promised to support the residents and businesses in Oldham.

Councillor Alyas asked about the applications for the various business grants schemes which closed on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> August. Councillor Alyas asked if the Cabinet Member for Finance could advise if the funding allocation from the Government had all been spent and, if not, what would happen to the underspend?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Green responded that in April 2020, the Council received £54.783m from Central Government to support the payment of Small Business and Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grants. In May, the Government introduced the Discretionary Grant scheme which allowed the Council to spend £2.501m on Discretionary Business Grants from within the initial £54.873m grant allocation. Whilst no more grant applications could now be received, payments could continue to be made until 30 September for claims received just before the deadline and to allow outstanding payment queries to be resolved. Currently, Small Business and Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grants totalling £47.450m had been paid, together with the full £2.501m on Discretionary Grants. A small number of final payments would be made before 30 September. This left no more than around £4.8m which at this time would need to be repaid to Central Government as this was unspent. A letter had been sent to the Business Secretary to allow flexibility to allow those businesses who had not been able to apply previously, however, no response had yet been received. There had been many issues with businesses being affected. Oldham had more than its share of Covid-19 which was likely to continue in terms of poverty and housing.

Councillor Shah exercised her right of reply.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided be noted.

**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.

Councillor Sheldon referred to the Council Action Update related to the Tackling Speeding motion and asked the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to ask if High Street, Uppermill could be taken into consideration in future years programme. The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to investigate the issue.

**RESOLVED** that the actions regarding motions and issues from previous Council meeting be agreed and the correspondence and updates provided be noted.

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**COUNCIL MOTION: MAKING A COMMITMENT TO THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Councillor McLaren MOVED and Councillor Akhtar SECONDED a report which provided feedback on the Council motion entitled 'Making a Commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals'. The Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Health Scrutiny Committee had been asked to identify the work that was being done by the Council and its partners and what more could be done with its' findings and recommendations.

Councillor Hamblett MOVED and Councillor C. Gloster SECONDED the following AMENDMENT to the report:

"Add at the top of Page 16, a new section 17.2 to read:

'17.2 Oldham is the first borough in the UK to have embraced the Pledge to Peace, an initiative launched at the European Parliament in November 2011 to promote a 'culture of peace across Europe'.

This has attracted significant positive coverage for Oldham, with the borough increasingly seen as a place of peace and an exemplar to others.

- Oldham Council and Shaw and Crompton Parish Council are currently the only two local authorities in the UK to have become signatories of the Pledge.
- Oldham Council was the first organisation to appoint a Pledge to Peace Mayor, former Councillor Derek Heffernan.
- The Oldham Pledge to Peace now has 52 affiliated signatory organisations, making the Forum the biggest organisation of its kind representing the Pledge to Peace. These affiliates include Oldham Council, Shaw and Crompton Council, twenty-six of our borough's schools and colleges and the Oldham Youth Council.
- Delegates from the Oldham Pledge to Peace Forum have represented Oldham – at their own expense – at high-level events in the UK, Italy, Germany and Australia, as well as visiting the European Parliament.
- This has included making presentations at Oldham's work in the UK and Europe to four conferences and at meetings with Ambassadors, Mayors, Members of the

European Parliament and the Ambassador to the Pledge to Peace, Mr Prem Rawat.

- For five consecutive year, until 2019, the Forum also hosted, with the support of Council officers, a celebratory event at Gallery Oldham / Oldham Library to mark the UN International Day of Peace (21 September).
- Oldham Council is also an affiliate of the international Mayor for Peace initiative, which campaigns for a nuclear weapon free world.
- Consequently, Oldham was one of only three locations in the UK visited by two delegations from Hiroshima – one from the National Peace Memorial Hall for Atomic Bomb Victims, which met with the Oldham Youth Council, and one of Hibakusha (Japanese A-bomb survivors), who at Alexandra Park planted seeds received as a gift from the Mayor of Hiroshima.
- These seeds were sourced from city-centre trees which survived the atomic bombing. Later this year, they will be planted in several parks and at Pledge to Peace schools.
- Oldham is also the only municipality to have hosted a delegation from Neve Shalom – Wahat al-Salam (the Oasis of Peace), a village founded in Israel on the basis of equality and co-operation between its Jewish and Arab inhabitants, to sign an exclusive international agreement to work for peace with this village.
- The Forum is now working to develop links for peace with Australian partners, including Toowoomba, which is working towards UNESCO recognition as an international City of Peace and Harmony, and Saddleworth, which was named by its founder after his former West Yorkshire home town.'

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

Councillor McLaren exercised his right of reply.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The report commended to Council by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Health Scrutiny Committee on the work by Oldham which contributed to the ambitions of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals be approved.
2. The amendment as submitted related to 'Pledge to Peace' be referred to Overview and Scrutiny.

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## **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2020.

The SCI set out how Oldham Council would involve the community in the preparation and the revision of planning policy such as the Local Plan, together with consideration of planning applications.

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

### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2019/20**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Finance which provided details of the Treasury Management Review for 2019/20.

The Council was required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2019/20. This report met the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

During 2019/20 the minimum reporting requirements were that the full Council should receive the following reports:

- An annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (approved 27 February 2019);
- A mid-year (minimum) treasury update report (approved 8 January 2020); and
- An annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).

The regulatory environment placed responsibility on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. The report was therefore important in that respect, as it provided details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlighted compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by Members.

The Council confirmed that it had complied with the requirements under the Code to give prior scrutiny to the treasury strategy and the mid-year update. The Audit Committee was charged with the scrutiny of treasury management activities in Oldham and reviewed the content of this annual report at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and commended the report to Cabinet. The report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and commended the report to Council. Approval of the report by Council would ensure full compliance with the Code for 2019/20.

During 2019/20, the Council had complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The key actual prudential and treasury indicators with detailed the impact of capital expenditure activities during the year with comparators was outlined in the report. The actual capital expenditure was less than the revised budget estimate for 2019/20 presented within the 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy report considered at the Council meeting held on 26 February 2020. The outturn position was significantly less than the £84.332m original capital budget for 2019/20 as approved at Budget Council on 27 February 2019.

The Capital Programme had seen substantial rephasing. A number of major schemes including a number of schools' schemes in the Children's Service Directorate were rephased. The Asset Management (Education) Essential Condition Works provision was realigned into future years to align with other works being undertaken at schools. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) schemes were rephased into 2020/21 to align with the latest HRA Strategy. In addition, the 'Creating a Better Place' Strategy required a number of existing regeneration projects to be reviewed and rephased to align to the long-term vision of the strategy. Also, during the year, the Information Technology (IT) Capital Strategy, the Strategic Roadmap was reviewed. The outcome was a rephasing of resources to ensure that the Council's future IT offer took account of new innovations in IT and created efficiencies that would complement future ways of working.

Borrowing of £20m was undertaken during the year. Member training on treasury management issues was undertaken on 1 October 2019 in order to support Members and senior members of staff in their scrutiny role.

Other prudential and treasury indicators were to found in the main body of the report.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the statutory borrowing limit (the authorised limit) was not breached. The financial year 2019/20 continued the investment environment of previous years, namely low investment returns.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The actual 2019/20 Prudential and Treasury Indicators presented in the report be approved.
2. The Annual Treasury Management Report for 2019/20 be approved.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20**

Consideration was given to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2019/20. The report outlined the purpose of Overview and Scrutiny, the roles and responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee. The report contained a summary of the work undertaken in 2019/20.

In moving the report, Councillor McLaren thanked members and officers for their support during the previous Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2019/20 be approved.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.24 pm.