

Report to Health Scrutiny Committee

Subject: Council Motion: Amendment to the United Nations – Sustainable Development Goals Report to Council

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to permit the Health Scrutiny Committee to consider further the Amendment proposed by Liberal Democrat Councillors at the meeting of the Council held on 9th September 2020 to the report submitted by this Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Board in response to 'Making a Commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals' Motion.

Recommendations

The Health Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the inclusion of the information as submitted in the Amendment in the report submitted to Council in September 2020.

1 Background

- 1.1 Members will recall that consideration was given by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 3rd March 2020 and by the Health Scrutiny Committee on 7th July 2020 to a report prepared in response to a Motion submitted to the Council. The Council had that requested the two Committees identify the work that was already being done by the Council and its partners, what more could be done, and to present a report to the Council with its findings and recommendations.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 Both the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Health Scrutiny Committee commended a report which detailed work being done in support at a local level to the meeting of the Council held on 9th September 2020. At that meeting, an Amendment was proposed which included information which had not been provided to either the Overview and Scrutiny Board or the Health Scrutiny Committee. At the meeting, the Council agreed the original report as submitted, but referred the Amendment to Overview and Scrutiny for consideration.

- 2.2 The Amendment to be considered is as follows:

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 in 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 organization to appoint a Pledge to Peace Mayor, former Councillor Derek Heffernan.
- The Oldham Pledge to Peace Forum 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 Parish 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 peace events in the UK, Italy, Germany and Australia, as well as visiting the European Parliament.
- This has included making presentations on 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 years, 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 (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.”

2.3 At the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on 13th October it was noted that the amendment had been introduced by the Liberal Democrat Group and it might be the case that other political groups might wish to add to the list of bodies referenced in the amendment. It was subsequently resolved that the amendment be circulated to the other political groups on the Council, and to other groups as might be appropriate, to consider any additions to the organisations listed within the amendment. The resolution of the Health Scrutiny Committee and the amendment have been forwarded to both the Labour and Conservative Groups on the Council for comment.

2.4 At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 20th October 2020 it was resolved that the inclusion of the Amendment to the report be not agreed or commended to Council.

3 **Key Questions for Overview and Scrutiny to Consider**

3.1 The Health Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider whether it would agree to the inclusion of the Amendment to the report and commend that Amendment back to Council?

4. **Links to Corporate Outcomes**

4.1 N/A

5 **Additional Supporting Information**

5.1 N/A

6 **Consultation**

6.1 N/A

7 **Appendices**

7.1 None