

Present: The Mayor – Councillor Garry In the Chair)

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, Ali, Alyas, Arnott, M Bashforth, S Bashforth, Brownridge, Byrne, Chadderton, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Dean, C. Gloster, Goodwin, Hamblett, Harrison, Hindle, Hobin, Hulme, A Hussain, F Hussain, Ibrahim, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Lancaster, Marland, McLaren, McManus, Moores, Munroe, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, C. Phythian, K Phythian, Quigg, Rea, Salamat, Sharp, Sheldon, Surjan, Sykes, Taylor, Wilkinson, Williamson, Williams and Woodvine.

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Birch, Hazel Gloster, Iqbal and Shuttleworth.

2 **ITEM OF CONDOLENCE - THE LATE, HER MAJESTY, QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

As this was the first meeting of Council, since the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who died on 8th September 2022, the Mayor permitted Members of the Council to pay their individual condolences and tributes to her late Majesty. Accordingly, Councillors Chadderton, Jabbar, Lancaster, Arnott, Hobin, Sykes and Hamblett addressed Council.

3 **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 7TH SEPTEMBER 2022 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held 7th September 2022 be approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to minute 12 (Notice of Administration Business – Motion 2 Fireworks), page 30 ‘3rd Amendment’ the word ‘Motion’ be replaced by ‘Amendment’.

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

Members of the Council declared interest as follows:

- a. Councillor Surjan a pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 (Youth Council).
- b. Councillor Murphy declared a disclosable interest by virtue of his employment with Greater Manchester Police, insofar as it affected the agenda item 12 (Notice of Opposition Business – Motion 1, entitled: ‘No Confidence in Andy Burnham’s management of Greater Manchester Police). Councillor Murphy withdrew from the meeting during the consideration and determination of this Motion.

- c. Councillor Williamson declared an interest by virtue of her partner's employment with Greater Manchester Police.
- d. Councillor Wilkinson declared a non-registerable interest by virtue of his receipt of an occupational pension from Greater Manchester Police

Although the individual Members declared their interests above, following advice previously given by the Director of Legal Services and at the meeting their interests were neither non-registerable nor pecuniary and therefore did not need to have been declared.

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

There was no urgent business for this meeting of Council to consider.

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

The Mayor referred to the recent death of Councillor Jean Stretton, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and a former Leader of the Council and she permitted Members of the Council to pay their individual condolences and tributes. Accordingly, Councillors Chadderton, Williams, Sheldon, Hobin and Sykes addressed Council.

The Mayor also referred to the recent death of former Councillor David Joynes. Accordingly, Councillors Sykes and Ahmad addressed Council paying their individual condolences and tributes.

Council held a minute's silence in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Councillor Stretton and former Councillor Joynes.

The Mayor permitted Councillor Barnes to address the meeting, who offered a full apology for his behaviour and comments made at the meetings of the Council held on 27th June 2022 and on 13th July 2022.

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

There were no petitions received to be noted.

8 **LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Amanda Chadderton, delivered her first Annual Statement.

The Leader reminded the Council of her priorities, as set out in May 2022, when she assumed office and highlighted work that had been done and was being done to improve Oldham.

- a. Regeneration of Oldham town centre: including a 50% rent reduction for market traders and the restoration of buildings that were of cultural and historic significance

that had fallen into disrepair – a prime example of this being the Old Library on Union Street. Generally steering the town’s economic recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – supporting local businesses, creating jobs and attracting investment and funding.

- b. Similarly extensive regeneration schemes were underway in Chadderton, Royton and Failsworth, with many other future schemes in the pipeline.
- c. Investing in cleaning up streets, taking action on littering and fly-tipping and restoring a sense of pride in neighbourhoods.
- d. Children and Young People – a key priority was to give all of the Borough’s children a good start in life. This meant the provision of good quality housing, schools and parks. The Leader reminded Council that the Council’s Children’s Social Care Services were aware of approximately 3,000 children in the Borough that required assistance and/or intervention.
- e. Improvements to the Council’s communications networks. This was to enable the Council to get its messages across to as many people in the Borough as possible and to make it easier for residents to contact key officers/services within the Council. This was part of a general plan to reconnect with local people, to acknowledge that many residents felt distant from the decisions made about their area and from how their local services were run, and to do something to put that right.
- f. The Leader highlighted that there was still much to do to tackle the inequalities and injustices that continued to shame society. She was determined to use her time as leader to make a difference for those who experienced discrimination and unfairness on a daily basis, building on the work of the previous Leader, Councillor Shah. A programme with local businesses to create jobs for people who have been in the criminal justice system or are at risk of becoming involved in crime had been launched.
- g. Cost of Living Crisis. A number of initiatives were being undertaken to ease the burden of the Borough’s most vulnerable residents at these most difficult of times. Initiatives included using libraries as ‘warm banks’, offering additional help to those on low incomes, working with the Borough’s food banks, assisting people with their Council Tax payments, assisting people with utility bills

The Leader pledged to continue to support the most vulnerable and to drive out inequality and unfairness wherever it existed. The scale of the challenges that Oldham and its people faced and the role of elected members in addressing those challenges was acknowledged.

RESOLVED – that the Leader’s Annual Statement be noted.

YOUTH COUNCIL

The Youth Council **PROPOSED** the following **MOTION**:

Holiday Activities and Food Sessions

Holiday Activities and Food sessions provide the 13,000 young people in Oldham who access free school meals a warm meal and fun activities during the school holidays. However, the cost-of-living crisis is a national problem for all households in the UK. Obviously, this crisis is impacting those who can claim free school meals but many others earning less than the National median of £31,000 will begin to struggle with the rise in cost of energy, fuel, and food. Indeed, research carried out by Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty coalition, showed 39.3% of children in Oldham were living below the poverty line in 2020/21. This figure would show that many more than those identified as eligible for free school meals require help during holiday times.

Celebrities such as Marcus Rashford and Jamie Oliver are also supporting campaigns that would like to see an increase in the numbers of young people eligible for free school meals by a further 800,000. This increase is to support all young people living in households that claim universal credit not just those who household income is less than £7,400.

A major barrier to accessing the HAF sessions is stigma. If sessions are only accessed by those on free school meals, it identifies those young people as some of the poorest families in the town.

Holiday sessions also help with young people's mental health. Worries about jobs, the cost-of-living crisis and COVID recovery, more than ever all young people need support with their mental health. The HAF sessions tick all boxes for the 5 ways to wellbeing; sessions allow young people to connect with others, allow them to be physically active, allow them to learn new skills, to participate in social and community life and to help to them take notice, savouring 'the moment'. In allowing all young people to access the HAF sessions we feel the value for money not only comes in feeding those who need it but also tackles mental health issues as well as providing young people with access to informal learning opportunities that help them develop skills for life.

In summary, while we applaud the HAF programmes aims and its ambition to support children and young people who need it most, we feel that given the current crisis around cost of living the programme doesn't go far enough. Opening the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people will reach more vulnerable families, people who need support but perhaps not quite eligible. It will be an effective and quick way for the government to support more families with the cost-of-living crisis.

We propose that Oldham Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP; The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, Secretary of State for Education; The Rt Hon Bridget Philipson MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, and to our Oldham Members of Parliament; the Rt Hon Jim McMahon MP, the Rt Hon Debbie Abrahams MP and the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP to ask them to lobby parliament to extend the offer of the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people not just those on free

school meals to support all those impacted by the current cost of living crisis.

Councillor Munroe spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Hamblett spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Williams spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Moores spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Barnes spoke in support of the Motion



Councillor Munroe MOVED and Councillor Hamblett
SECONDED the MOTION as presented by the Youth Council.

RESOLVED that:

Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP; The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, Secretary of State for Education; The Rt Hon Bridget Philipson MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, and the three Members of Parliament representing the Oldham Borough; Jim McMahan MP, Debbie Abrahams MP and Angela Rayner MP to ask them to lobby parliament to extend the offer of the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people not just those on free school meals to support all those impacted by the current cost of living crisis.

10

QUESTIONS TIME

11

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Question submitted by Jeffrey Smith

These old council street litter bins I've asked council coordinators councillors etc to get one for my community to help reduce litter as it's a spot where fly tipping and litter is rife, so I was wondering if I could acquire one for my area Royton Hall Walk Royton as the area would benefit a litter bin, most are going to be scrapped anyway, I also run Oldham Wombles community litter picking group so please consider me for a single bin. if I ever acquired one would be kept clean and not over-flowing so no complaints.

Councillor Chadderton Leader of the Council replied, thank you for your question, Mr Smith - I understand you have been in direct discussion with officers on this matter, who have confirmed that we are unable to provide a Council branded bin directly to you as there is liability involved for which you are not covered.

I am aware that the location for the bin is owned by the Guinness Housing Association and we're keen to work in partnership with them to support the work you are doing in the area.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you personally for all the work that you do to assist us in keeping our streets and open spaces clear of litter. Hope more of the community can get involved when Don't Trash Oldham comes to your area again.

2. Question submitted by Hannah Roberts

The former Dog and Partridge pub on Middleton Road in Royton has been under development for some time. I know that the

developer has had to reapply for planning permission to change the scheme because the building was in such a poor structural state which caused some delay. I also know that the Council has previously taken action to ensure that the site is cleaned up and the building is made secure. I can see though that the site is again covered in rubbish and the building is no longer sealed up. Work also seems to have stopped. Can the Council take any action to make the owner keep the site clear and to ensure that it is secured against trespassers? And does the Council have any information about the timetable for the building work?

Councillor Chadderton Leader of the Council replied thank you for your question – I am aware that we have written to the landowner advising them to secure the site and recommended that they resume construction to resolve the challenges with maintaining the site.

If no positive actions are taken by the landowner, then the Council will investigate whether enforcement action would be appropriate under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Council does not have a current position from the landowner on the timetable for the building work – however we will continue to chase updates.

3. Question submitted by Mick Harwood

Can I have an update on the work on Royton Town Hall and Library, is there space for the local community to use and is work on schedule and has the opening date been confirmed?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied, thank you for your question Mr. Harwood. The Victorian styled Royton Town Hall and Library buildings are planned to undergo major alterations and refurbishment works to ensure these buildings of local heritage importance are retained and improved.

The project includes various improvements for the benefit of the local community including a refurbished library and bring the Town Hall Meeting Room back in to use for the Community, Voluntary and Faith sectors.

We have already completed some work on the Town Hall building including demolition of the rear extension and the necessary repairs to the clock tower, clock faces and mechanisms.

We are currently within the procurement phase of a contractor for further works and will be able to advise on completion of all the works in due course.

4. Question submitted by Shazia Aktar

It is good to see that the Get Oldham Working Jobs Fair is being held again this September. Please can we have an update at the next council meeting of how many employers, job seekers and students attended? It would also be good to know how many people find a job, an apprenticeship or new career as a result.

Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Employment and Enterprise, replied thank you for your question. I can confirm

that attendance comprised - 61 employers and 1,143 members of the public. The opportunities available at the event included - 678 Jobs, 152 apprenticeships and 120 Work experience / Volunteering positions.

Officers are currently tracking the outcomes of the Jobs Fair with employers, but at this time, we know that 60 attendees have found employment, and there are many interviews scheduled for the coming week/s now half term has passed.

Case Study - NHS Professionals feedback:

We spoke to over 100 candidates on the day and have applications from over 60 prospective candidates for our bank and flexible positions across Care, Estates and Facilities, Domestic and Clerical to work within our client Northern Care Alliance.

A great success story from the day was meeting Catherine, an experienced Catering Assistant. Catherine sent us her CV whilst chatting with our Consultant Alex, Alex sent her CV immediately to the Catering Manager at Royal Oldham Hospital and an interview was confirmed within the hour. After a second interview today, Monday, Catherine has now been offered a full-time position within the department to start on Monday 3rd October. This offers Catherine flexibility, a long-term contract and has provided the NHS with a fantastic member of staff within a very short-staffed team. – She started yesterday.

5. Question submitted by Andrew Holt

Given the looming energy crisis and the broader issue of climate change, what plans do the Council have for sustainability across the borough?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon replied, thank you for your question Mr Holt. The Oldham Green New Deal Strategy was adopted in March 2020 and is available on the Council's website. This plan sets out the Council's approach to energy for the borough which aims to secure large-scale inward investment in low carbon infrastructure for the borough to cut carbon emissions and stabilise energy bills.

A key initiative to achieve this is our ongoing work to develop an Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership, building on key Greater Manchester level initiatives such as the GM Local Energy Market project.

We also aim to make sure that Oldham's local Green Technology and Services supply chain companies are involved as much as possible in delivering low carbon infrastructure in the borough, bringing new opportunities for jobs and training opportunities in this growing sector.

6. Question submitted by Larry Patrick

I am really pleased that Oldham's Labour Council has worked with the CCG to find a way to build a long-awaited new Health Centre in Shaw which will deliver modern health services for local residents and improve part of Shaw centre. Does the Council know what the timetable is for delivering the new Health Centre and when it will be open to patients?

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care replied. thank you for your question, we are delighted that the residents of Shaw and Crompton are on track to have access to a modern and fit-for-purpose local healthcare facility. Subject to planning approval and the completion of site purchase, preparatory work will begin early in January, with contractors on-site the following month. Handover of the building is scheduled for March 2024, with the new SHAW CROMPTON MEDICAL CENTRE opening to patients as soon as possible after that. The Council is working closely with the NHS to support and facilitate this much needed project, which is currently on plan with no delays envisaged.

7. Question submitted by Dawn Stewart

It has been well publicised in the press that a vote by Conservative MPs has allowed vast quantities of raw sewage to be pumped into Britain's rivers and onto Britain's beaches. Has the council itself incurred any costs of clean up and if so, will it be seeking to reclaim these costs from the profiteering privatised water companies?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied thank you for your question regarding sewage contamination of the Country's rivers and beaches. I can confirm that Oldham Council has not incurred any costs relating to actions required within the borough. The Environment Agency will take action and ensure compliance for any matters relating to contamination of rivers and seas.

8. Question submitted by Syed Maruf Ali

What is the NEET figure for Oldham? Which Wards have the highest and lowest number of NEETS? What help and support are available to help young people get into education, employment or training? How many young people from Werneth Ward between 16 to 25 are NEET? Can you please break this down by age, gender and ethnicity?

Councillor Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills replied that the current NEET rate for Oldham (September 2022) is 2.12%. This covers Year 12 and Year 13 and as per our statutory duty to report to the DfE.

The most recent comparator data available by ward is June 2022. At that point, Hollinwood had the highest number of young people who were NEET, and Saddleworth West and Lees had the lowest.

The council commissions a trusted and skilled partner, Positive Steps, to work with our young people to provide support, advice and career guidance during their participation age (Year 12 and 13). They offer appointments to Year 12 and 13 NEET young people in person, over the phone or online.

Positive Steps also hold drop-in sessions every week, working with various other providers and Connect to Your Future mentors to ensure those young people have access to more intensive mentoring support where necessary.

In addition, 'Connect to your Future' provides engagement, mentoring and transition support, utilising Positive Steps to

deliver support for 15 – 18-year-olds and Ingeous for the 19+ age group.

Northern Roots continues empowering young people and connects them with growth opportunities in the green sector. Get Oldham Working (GOW) Youth continues to develop, initially supporting Care Leavers to become EET via the Youth Hub model.

GOW Working Wardrobe supports young people to access interview clothing to alleviate some of the barriers to employment.

Oldham Council has committed to 20 apprenticeships across council services to support young people to achieve qualifications, work experience and establish careers.

We have introduced a NEET survey, directed at young people to understand better the barriers to engagement.

We have also introduced a padlet (an online platform that houses posts from multiple sources all in one place) showing opportunities for engagement, education and training for young people.

Events have been targeted at School leavers over the summer with education, training and engagement providers to support with understanding the range of options available to them.

There are also a variety of pre-employment and engagement programmes available through providers such as Groundworks and the Princes Trust.

The most recent comparator data available by ward is June 2022. The Oldham NEET rate was 3.9% (16–18-year-olds). Of the 3.9%, twenty-one young people who were NEET resided in the Werneth ward. This equates to 4.2% of the June NEET population.

Of the 9.1% Oldham Youth Unemployment (18 – 24-year-olds) population, 12% resided in the Werneth Ward.

We are unable to report any further in relation to age, gender and ethnicity.

9. Question submitted by the Sholver Travel Futures Group

We are a group of residents who are concerned about safe, more direct pedestrian and cycle access down Bullcote Lane, particularly for pupils of Royton and Crompton School. Will the Council put forward a scheme which separates walkers and cyclists from cars in the next round of Mayor's Challenge Fund bidding?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied thank you for submitting this question - we are currently using the Greater Manchester Mayor's Challenge 'Capability' Funding to identify gaps in our walking and cycling network to inform a delivery pipeline to improve access for walking, cycling and wheeling in Oldham.

We have applied for additional funding to review Active Travel and Road Safety requirements around our schools. The outcomes of these studies, plus requests like yours are used to prioritise locations and develop schemes that we put forward in the next round of funding bids.

10. Question submitted by Norma Taylor

The Tories cost of living crisis is having a terrible effect on many Oldham households and businesses. It's not just the cost of petrol, gas and electricity, but also food and many other goods. Inflation must be affecting our Council's budget too. Could the Cabinet member for Finance explain what is happening and how the Council is dealing with it?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Cabinet, replied. thank you for your question, we know how tough things are for many of our residents right now, and sadly it looks as if things could get even harder this winter, especially as the cost of many household essentials continues to rise.

To help those who need it most, we have invested more than £3 million to provide funding for energy, food and childcare, as well as extending the range of existing support available such as the Citizens' Advice service and community engagement teams, who go door-to-door checking on people's welfare and helping them access the support they are entitled to.

We are opening 'warm banks' in every District, open to anyone who needs a warm, inviting space through the colder months. We are working with local partners to identify local spaces that can provide warm spaces free of charge for residents. These includes our libraries and local community centres.

We are also providing an additional £1.95m of food vouchers to households in receipt of free school meals during the October, Christmas, February and Easter holidays, easing the financial burden that many parents are facing.

When it comes to the Council's budget, it's clearly a very challenging time. We have faced over a decade of austerity, responded to a pandemic and are now doing everything we can to help during the cost-of-living crisis. However, we are responding to this challenge proactively, delivering a wide-ranging transformation plan to improve our residents experience of council services, reduce demand and drive long-term efficiencies.

11. Question submitted by Pete Grubb

In view of increasing fuel costs, and the need to improve health by encouraging exercise could the leader of the council indicate what plans are in place to provide safe and contiguous cycle routes and secure cycle storage at schools, shopping areas, council workplaces and public transport interchanges?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied, thank you for your question. We are currently finalising a new Transport Strategy, which sets out actions to increase access to key destinations across the borough and promote Active Travel (walking, cycling and the use of public transport).

This will significantly help contribute to improving the health of our residents and communities.

To date, we have successfully bid for funding via Transport for Greater Manchester to connect the gaps in our walking and cycling routes. We are also working with developers to contribute to highways improvements.

As we develop our new Local Plan we are also including parking guidance to ensure all developments and transport interchanges include safe and secure cycle parking for residents, business use and visitors.



12. Question submitted by Ceridwen Short

I understand that the reason the Council could not go ahead with the Wrigley Head Solar Farm was because the income generated by the sale of electricity was too low to make it cost effective. Given the extraordinary hike in unit cost of electricity since this decision was made, is it being looked at again as the cost-benefit ratio must now be more favourable?

Using solar panels to produce electricity must also be better than carbon-based options like fracking or extracting more gas from the North Sea.

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon, replied, thank you for your question. The Wrigley Head Solar Farm project is currently under review following the rises in energy prices – and with fossil fuels becoming more difficult, risky and costly to produce as the easy-to-access reserves become depleted.

Low carbon energy generation options such as solar panels are not only a relatively cleaner way of generating the energy we need, they provide secure, local supplies and are also one of the cheapest ways of generating energy.

13. Question submitted by Hayley Wood

We write to you as Oldham Foster Carer's Working Group, we are a group of foster carers who's aim it is to be bring improvements to the lives of Oldham local authority foster carers and their children & young people.

Sadly, the group are finding themselves having to follow this route to get our elected leaders to listen to our plight and to take seriously our concerns with regards to the Cost of Living & Energy Crisis and the ongoing pressure and effects it is having on carers and the children in their care.

Carers cannot continue to care for the children and young people to statutory requirements without adequate resources that are needed to meet them. Whilst the 4% uplift which was applied to the child's allowance earlier this year & the £250 one off payment was welcome it does not meet the extra cost to what is needed to carry out our roles and to give the young people in our care the experiences they should be having. It is a sad fact that carers are now having to make decisions resulting in children missing out on activities, day trips etc as carers simply do not have the funds to allow them to do them, carers are also now using their savings to enable them to live and to subsidise the shortfall they are experiencing due to the inadequate funds they are being given to them to carry out their roles.

We feel we need to remind the Council that you are the Corporate Parent and it is your duty to ensure that we are given enough to care for the children you are responsible for, no foster carer should be out of pocket in the fostering role yet all foster

carers are out of pocket and no concern or regard is being shown by either the Council or the Fostering Service. Mention should also be given to the foster-carers skills payments review which is currently taking place, it is very disappointing that this review has not been completed as yet and carer's are being fobbed off with non sensical answers which only serve to insult our intelligence.

The local authority needs to start looking after existing carers or their recruitment programme is a waste of time as we are unwilling to recommend anyone to foster for Oldham under the present conditions plus carers are tired of not being listened to and leave.

Oldham Foster Carer Working Group with respect ask that the Council act now to ensure that the children and young people and their carers have what they need to meet the national minimum standards set out by the DfE.

We need extra finances to meet our obligations and we need it is a matter of urgency.

Councillor Moores, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People replied, thank you for your question. For information, please note that payments to carers are divided into 2 categories as follows

Fostering allowances: These are paid to cover the daily costs of caring for a child or Young Person and other payments made to cover costs they incur.

Skills based payments: These are fee payments, paid to carers recognising their skills, experiences in caring for children and young people based on their assessment.

Fostering allowances (weekly rates) in light of the cost of living crisis were agreed and paid to Foster Carers 1st April 2022 above National minimum standards by the Government as set out below:

We reviewed our financial support to foster carers due to this increased financial pressure and enable our Looked After Children and Young People to have their basic needs met and have continued opportunities to experience activities within the community.

Supplementary payments were also raised to the same rates as above from 1st April 2022

Birthday allowances – equivalent of one weeks fostering allowance at new rate

Festival allowances -equivalent of one weeks fostering allowance at new rate

Holiday allowance -equivalent of 2 weeks fostering allowance at new rate.

In addition, mileage was increased to 45p per mile from 1st April 2022.

We also provided a £250 payment for each fostering household to support with an increase in energy costs, we agreed to review again in October 22 but due to the financial support offered by the Government to households we have agreed to review a further energy payment early next year when we have further details from the Government on support packages.

We worked with identified foster carers by the forum in increasing the basic allowance package for furniture starter kit-

includes, beds, cots, prams, baby monitors etc dependant on the needs. We agreed the increases suggested by the foster carers and implemented early this year.

There is discretionary arrangements for educational field trips, spectacles, passports and school photographs

In addition to we continue to support allowances with an initial clothing payment at the discretion of the Team Manager and HOS of **up to** the following amounts within the first 6 months of a child Looked After and up to £175 to assist towards the purchase of a school uniform.

Skills Payment: We at OMBC are committed to reviewing the skills payment which we said would be reviewed in the Autumn, we have agreed at the forum that we would present our initial ideas in a special meeting on 30th November for consultation with those who would want to attend.

It is likely that a finalised version of the plans will not be submitted to DMT until early next year so there will be some delay.

The issue for foster carers are that they require an uplift on skills payments, as a Local Authority we would want to link training and skills with rewards/incentives for carers who are able to provide stability for complex, harder to place children and young people.

In addition to the fostering allowances skills paid per child
Group 1 – (carers with no relevant skills and experience and less than 6 months fostering/relevant experience do not get a skills payment

Group 2 – basic allowance plus £79.38 per week skills payment per child (more than 6 months experience and agreed to attend core training)

Group 3 – basic allowance plus £158.76 per week skills payment per child

Group 4 - basic allowance plus £237.23 per week skills payment per child

Group 5 - basic allowance plus £340.76 per week skills payment per child (e.g meet criteria for group 4 and able to support most complex children and young people)

If you, for example, are a carer with one child aged 10 and one aged 4 as a group 3 carer - weekly income is £626.40.

14. Question submitted by Simon Wynn

Does Oldham Council have any financial involvement in the recent purchase of boundary park by the new owners of Oldham Athletic? and by financial involvement I mean have you provided a loan? Or become joint owners of Boundary Park?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon, replied, that the Council had no financial involvement in the recent purchase of Boundary Park by the new owners of Oldham Athletic. The Council is not a joint owner of Boundary Park, nor does it have an outstanding loan with Oldham Athletic.

15. Question submitted by Jason Pape-Jones

I recently spent nearly two hours waiting on hold to get through to the Council Tax team, and it's taken weeks to make progress

with my issue. Can the council not do something to make it easier when residents have an issue with services?



Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon, replied, thank you for your question. I am sorry that you had to wait such a long period to get through to the Council Tax team. However, Council Tax is an area of understandably high demand. The average call length for Council Tax is 10 minutes, and the average wait time is 22 minutes. At peak periods, unfortunately, this waiting time can increase.

Residents are able to manage their Council Tax account using "My Account" and are able to sign up using the links on the website. The Council is expanding digital self-serve options so that residents can access and request services at a time that suits them without having to wait in call queues. Information about this is on our website.

The Council is looking to improve its performance in this area and I will work with the Director responsible for the Contact Centre in this regard.

16. Question submitted by Anita Lowe

During my attendance at one of the 'Big Conversation' events held by Oldham Council at East Methodist Church, with the Chief Executive, Harry Catherall and the previous Council Leader, Arooj Shah, leading the event.

Ms Shah made a statement after questions were raised and I quote -: "we have a nice surprise for something happening at Mumps Princess Gate and have decided to divulge the news this evening, to confirm the agreement of a new build of a hotel and supermarket on the site at Mumps"

The Chief Executive agreed and said it was great news for the area. Please can the Chief Executive confirm any further news regarding this information that was spoken at this meeting regarding the hotel and supermarket plans. As these plans go back to November 2018 when 60 million pounds was allocated for The Princess Gate Masterplan as stated in The Oldham Times by a local democracy reporter and by another previous council leader.

Of course, we observe the housing - development taking place nearby on the Oldham - by - pass - which in effect will no longer be a by-pass with traffic light restrictions for access to the development.

But my question for you is when is the Hotel and Supermarket ever going to appear? Or are these all-fake statements and false promises?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied, thank you for your question Anita. The development plans at Mumps are not fake statements - the Council entered into a legal agreement in 2019, which would see a new supermarket and hotel built by the purchaser.

During the covid pandemic - the original planning and development timescales were delayed by the developer. However, the lack of progress is noted by the Council and is frustrating given the legal contract in place. However, the local

economy is seeing unprecedented situations with the combination of effects from Brexit, the pandemic and the ongoing crisis in the Ukraine.

We can understand why our local communities are frustrated - we share that frustration and the Council are in continued dialogue with the developer to chase progress.

17. Question submitted by Mark Birchall

With the spectre of HMOs springing up at great pace in Oldham and some actually being two bedrooms small terraced being converted into 4-bedroom bedsits with no living accommodation. Residents are in fear of one turning up on their doorstep devaluing their property overnight and bringing the well documented issues along with them. Many families are in B&B awaiting a home how can this be allowed to happen in this borough, we are creating a looming problem with this rise. Interestingly you have been talking! about this for over a year as a council alongside our local MP Jim McMahon. Are these just platitudes you want residents to hear or are they actual discussions to implement something. It surprises me that Liverpool council in their wisdom only took two months from discussion to implementation to stop this problem, yourselves as the council along with our MP have been doing this for over a year. When will you actually do something is the answer, we are all waiting for?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied, thank you for your question Mr Birchall. The Council do monitor HMOs, however there is no evidence that would justify the removal of permitted development rights for the conversion of a home to a 3-6 bed HMO through an Article 4 Direction.

There has to be a cumulative impact which is proven to harm the local area – but this does not apply in any community in Oldham, and there is no evidence of an increase in upheld complaints against HMO properties or their occupiers as causing harm through their presence / actions to other residents. All other HMO proposals already require planning permission. The comparison to Liverpool is not appropriate, as the challenge with HMOs in parts of Liverpool is far greater due to the high demand for student HMOs coupled with non-student HMOs in certain areas of the city creating significant clusters of HMOs in those areas. The number of HMOs being created in Oldham is far smaller and is not clustered in any particular area(s).

Several questions, submitted by members of the public, remained unanswered at the end of the allotted 30 minutes period for this matter. The Mayor advised that the unanswered questions would be published to the Council's website, with written answers, in due course.

12

QUESTIONS TO LEADER AND CABINET

Councillor Sheldon, Leader of the Conservative Group

Question 1: Street Cleaning and Gulley Cleaning Services

Data from the Council's Highways Service was no longer available for Members of the Council to view, including data for

street cleaning and gulley cleaning services. Therefore clarification was sought regarding whether the Council's cleaning teams were having difficulty attending parts of the Borough and because information was not being provided to Members they were unable to determine if the annual cleaning rotas were still being undertaken?

The Leader of the Council replied stating that she would investigate the issues raised by Councillor Sheldon and forward him a written answer thereon at the earliest opportunity.

Question 2: Town Square Redevelopment

Recent survey work of Oldham's Town Square area had discovered the existence of a disused mine shaft, why was this not picked up during earlier surveyance work? What will be the cost to the Council to rectify the issues raised consequently? Who carried out the survey work? Who signed off the contract?

The Leader of the Council replied stating that she would investigate the issues raised by Councillor Sheldon and forward him a written answer thereon at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Question 1: Mumps Princess Gate

What impact has inflation had on the regeneration and other works being carried out at Mumps Princess Gate. It appears that no work is currently happening at this location, why is this the case? What will the impact of a 10% inflation rate on Oldham Council's regeneration plans?

The Leader of the Council replied that the Council was dependent upon private contractors to help deliver regeneration projects. From time-to-time external factors have an affect over which the Council has no control, for instance a change of the business model by Marks and Spencer led to the closure of their Food Hall in the town. The Leader assured the meeting that the Council was in constant dialogue with developers and prospective developers.

Question 2: Schools

Schools across the Borough were facing severe challenges because of the Cost-of-Living crisis. Some schools were warning that they are close to running out of money. Therefore, what cost of living support will the Council be able to offer the Borough's schools?

The Leader of the Council replied that she shared Councillor Sykes' concerns in this regard. The Council was in constant dialogue with the Borough's school's but the funding issues were largely outside of the Council's control.

Councillor Hobin, Leader of the Failsworth Independent Party

In terms of the Cost-of-Living how many enquiries had been received by specialist helplines? Will the Council agree to a freeze on Council Tax for the next two years?



The Leader of the Council replied that the Council would be unable to offer a freeze on Council Tax unless the government increased funding to local authorities. The Leader of the Council stated that the Council was working on a dashboard that would assist in determining the numbers of enquiries received.

Question from Councillor C. Phythian

Park house on Sandy Lane in Royton was due to be redeveloped into flats. Due to the developers going into liquidation this plan has not come into fruition. Subsequently the building has fallen into more disrepair and youths are constantly breaking in and causing problems for residents. Can the relevant cabinet member find out if the council can step in and compulsory purchase this fantastic historical building?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council replied, thank you for your question. It is recognised how much impact buildings of this nature can have within local communities. The priority of the Council in the first instance is around facilitating a commercial development of the site coming forward and CPO action must be a last resort. We will therefore work flexibly with any interested party in order to facilitate the original plans coming to fruition.

In the meantime, we are taking a number of actions in respect of the poor condition of the building. This included: Officers within Environment Health working to ensure that the building is secure and safe. Legal Officers have formally written to the landowner clarifying their responsibility in respect of the property and formally requesting that they take all relevant action to ensure that the building remains secure and safe.

Question from Councillor Alyas

With hoardings going up across the town centre and residents starting to notice that work is underway on Creating a Better Place, can the relevant Cabinet Member provide an update on the Labour administration's ambitious plans for the regeneration of Oldham Town Centre?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council replied, that it is great news that our residents recognise the progress in delivering our plans for a thriving town centre with various schemes moving from design into delivery, this is evidenced by the hoardings now visible at the Spindles as progress continues, but also the cranes and scaffolding at locations across the borough.

Regeneration plans are not just about investment in new and existing buildings, but it is about creating real and meaningful change for our residents and business within Oldham. Our ambitious plans for a thriving Town Centre will unlock millions of pounds worth of investment to create more than 2,000 new homes in Oldham town centre, 1,000 new jobs and 100 apprenticeship opportunities. The Programme has already

successfully secured millions of pounds of external funding including the Towns Fund, Future High Street Fund and we continue to seek out and apply for further funding opportunities to complement and reduce the demand on public funds. There are too many projects in flight to provide you with a complete update this evening, but we are committed to delivery as there has been years of discussions and approvals, and our communities deserve to see the plans delivered and operational as soon as reasonably possible to ensure they have a thriving town centre, new homes to live and new opportunities for work. We are equally conscious of ensuring our residents, local businesses and local communities benefit from the regeneration plans, and we are monitoring progress closely, ensuring value for money and social value is embedded in every project, with an annual progress report being discussed recently at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Question from Councillor Harrison:

I congratulate Oldham students who worked really hard in difficult circumstances to achieve their GCSE, BTEC, A and T Level results. However, does the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agree with Labour's Shadow Education Minister that twelve years of Conservative Government have left a legacy of unequal outcomes that are holding back our kids and communities?

Councillor Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills replied, first of all I want to say a massive well done for all the efforts made by young people undertaking GCSE, BTEC, A and T Level this year in Oldham.

The past few years have been incredibly tough on young people. Having to learn and take exams throughout the Covid pandemic made an already difficult time just that bit harder. I hope that all achieved what they needed to continue studies or take-up work-related opportunities.

This year 5000 Oldhamers took the first set of exams since the pandemic and then collected their GCSE, BTEC, A and T Level results from schools and colleges. GCSE and A-level grade rates improved across the board compared with the last exams in 2019. Results for Oldham's children looked after, including those in foster and care homes, were positive, with many getting what they need to get to progress to college and university or begin apprenticeships and employment.

I'm incredibly proud of what our young people achieved in Oldham, especially under sometimes difficult circumstances.

Question from Councillor Murphy:

Ambulances queued outside, beds filling the corridors of A&E, staff running around and parking carnage - likened to a scene from a disaster film, but this is Oldham Royal Hospital A&E on a daily basis.

I find it mind blowing that there are beds and privacy curtains in corridors; and staff waiting to walk past while nurses and doctors treat patients who have no privacy. Yet this has become the norm.



Oldham
Council

This is not a criticism of the staff who work extremely hard in very challenging circumstances. It is easy to see why we love our NHS.

This is a criticism of the situation they find themselves in. Why are outside contractors being used to prop up the ambulance service by providing staff and ambulances? Repairing the failure of primary care services must be the answer to relieving the pressures of A&E and the ambulance service. Will the Leader and relevant Cabinet member commit to making services at Oldham Royal Hospital one of their top priorities, so things like curtains can remain on walls not on A&E corridors?

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet member for Health and Social Care replied, that first and foremost, as Cabinet Member I am delighted that with our officers I have managed to secure an additional £1.9m investment to help improve our capacity during what is likely to be a very difficult winter for all parts of the health and care system. That funding is about to go into helping tackle some of the issues in our system to help keep patients flowing through our system. That will include some new service initiatives both in the A&E department and also within the care community outside of the hospital to help prevent people from needing to use A&E.

All that said, I think we all need to accept that this Government has shown its true colours when it comes to the NHS – they clap when it suits their PR image but in reality they are starving the service of the resources it needs. Not one single new GP out of the 6,000 promised by this Government has arrived in Oldham, as just one example of what I am talking about. Make no mistake this winter is going to be tough and challenging. It is busy now and it is not yet even cold. On top of a winter fuel crisis we have a health and care crisis of the Government's own making. I want to thank now all those doctors and nurses for all their hard work now and in the future. And of course, this administration in Oldham will always fight for the NHS as long as the NHS needs us to fight for it. So yes, we will always see health and care as a priority – it's just a shame that the Government cannot do the same.

Question from Councillor Sharp:

Following a recent consultation with residents in Westwood and Chadderton, it would appear development proposals have been withdrawn. It is my understanding that contracts are about to be signed for major development on sites in Derker, however, there has been no consultation, despite this being promised with residents in the wider community. Could the Leader please explain why there are consultations in some areas and not all – or is this once again an example of St James being neglected?

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council replied, thank you for your question – consultation requirements come down to what is required by legislation or funding requirements as to whether a public consultation is necessary for any given proposal. However, in the case of the proposals to develop housing on brownfield sites in Derker, even though it is not required to have such consultation, the developer partner will be

holding community engagement sessions on the proposals. It is not a case of the Council neglecting a ward when confirming arrangements to undertake public consultation events.

Question from Councillor Dean:

After two very challenging years young people received their exam results earlier this year, this is a particularly challenging time for our looked after children who will be considering their options including further education and employment. Could the Cabinet Member for children and young people please tell us what support and guidance is available to young people who are making decisions that will impact on their future lives?

Councillor Moores, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People replied, that statutory careers advice for all Children and Young People (CYP) is provided by schools and colleges. In addition, a wider partnership approach across education, CSC and wider agencies provides an enhanced offer for our CLA. Our Virtual School (VS) coordinates extra support and targeted activities for the young people in our care to assist them and those directly supporting them to make decisions that will impact on the rest of their lives. This is provided through dedicated Education Officers within the VS across the different education phases, including Post 16.

The VS deliver a range of and programmes to raise aspirations and participation, utilising information / data in Personal Education Plans (PEPs) with the young person's voice, wishes and aspirations at the centre.

As our children and young people move from one phase of education to another, the programmes offered include visits to colleges, universities, work-based placements and wider engagement programmes, including through the Success 4 Life programme.

Virtual School and Post 16 Service provides education and careers updates and support with raising aspirations to all those working with children looked after and engages fully with colleagues from GMCA to coordinate the offer across the city region.

The council also commissions a dedicated Careers Advisor to work with our CLA to provide support, advice and career guidance during Years 12 and 13 and to support them if they become NEET, working closely with the virtual school and social workers.

In summary, we recognise that care experienced young people experience multiple disadvantages and therefore ensure that there are a variety of education, training, and personal development support options available from a wide range of agencies.

QUESTIONS ON CABINET MINUTES

The Council was requested to note the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on the undermentioned dates, to receive questions on any items within the minutes from members of the Council that are not members of the Cabinet and to receive appropriate responses from Cabinet members. The minutes of

the Cabinet meetings held on 22nd August 2022 and 21st September 2022 were submitted.



Oldham
Council

Members asked the following questions: -

a. Question from Councillor Kenyon:

With reference to page 51, Cabinet Minutes of 21st September 2022, Item 6 on Oldham's response to the cost of living - Would the Cabinet Member explain why the Council's cost-of-living response consistently mentions a budget of £3 million, happily inviting hard working families across the borough to believe that they will be receiving £3 million worth of help this year when in fact, the budget is less than half that, at £1.2 million.

Would the Cabinet Member also like to explain why the council's plan for warm banks (a liberal democrat amendment) involves keeping warm spaces like libraries, open for not one minute longer than their standard opening hours? The library in my own ward of Lees, remains open for the exact same number of hours in November, when it has been a so-called warm bank, as it did in September.

Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied that, we have committed over three million pounds of new funding to help Oldhamers through the cost-of-living crisis. We know that this crisis isn't going away anytime soon, so we have designed a package of support that will be there for residents over the next two years. This investment will help our communities to navigate a really challenging winter but will also provide longer-term help. We want to ensure that our most vulnerable residents don't fall into crisis and are accessing all the support they are entitled to. To do this we need to build support that helps people now and, in the future, not just over the next few months.

With regard to warm banks, it's laughable to suggest that that the Council only did this because of an opposition amendment. We have been planning for this since I called for a cost-of-living summit, which we held in July. Warm banks have always been at the heart of our response, providing a safe space that residents can visit in order to stay warm, without having to turn their heating on at home. In addition to this, residents will be able to get a warm drink, and a wrap-around offer is being put in place to ensure residents can either access information and advice directly or be sign-posted to where this is available. We are providing a comprehensive training offer to all staff, supporting them to talk to users to really understand their needs, so we can continue to shape the offer around our residents. The initial offer is based around the Council's Libraries and is up and running now. We are working with community groups and partners to develop a wider programme of spaces, including community centres, churches, Social Housing facilities and more, with an ambition to ensure there is a minimum of three locations available in every District. Our current offer provides good coverage both geographically and in terms of opening hours, though the offer will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with our staff actively monitoring usage, so we will know if we need to offer longer opening hours in the future.

b. Question from Councillor Al-Hamdani

On item 9, page 48: Community Health and Adult Management was reporting an "adverse variance" or overspend on budget of £7.582m; and Children's Social Care was recording £4.137m.

Oldham has some of the worst levels of poverty and its associated problems in Greater Manchester. This is a demand-led service, and levels of demand have continued at a high rate since the pandemic, showing no sign of slowing.

Third party providers out of borough for specialist care services are very expensive and provide a service in what is essentially a seller's market. Which of these was a surprise to the administration, and when will it commit to a more accurate forecasting that accounts for these factors?

Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon, replied, that the adverse variances for both Community Health and Adult Social Care and Children's Services to which the question refers, relate to pressures associated with the legacy costs of COVID. Across the two services, this adverse variance is £11.989m. Although direct funding from Central Government to support the impact of COVID has not been extended into 2022/23, the pressures it has created have continued.

When the Council set its budget for 2022/23, an assessment was made of the likely on-going impact of COVID, based on the experience of 2021/22. A sum of £12m was held centrally, funded from the Council's own resources to offset any COVID legacy costs. This funding was not directly allocated to services as there was no certainty where the pressures would fall. Therefore, the adverse variance of £11.989m is completely offset by the £12m corporate resource and shows accuracy of forecasting.

It is true that Adult Social Care and Children's Services are demand led and financial pressures are being experienced, especially regarding external placements for children. This is the same for every Local Authority with such responsibilities. Every effort is made to set budgets accurately and manage the resources across the Council although there will inevitably be some variances especially at a time where there is so much volatility in the economy and demand in the system, much of which could not have been anticipated when the initial budget was set.

c. Question from Councillor Woodvine:

With reference to page 51, Cabinet Minutes of 21st September 2022, Item 6 on Oldham's response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis - Would the Leader of the Council be able to explain how much the booklet, referred to therein had cost to produce out of the £3million additional investment received from the government and given that the Council was forecast to record a £6million overspend, would the Leader agree that this money could have been better utilised elsewhere?

Councillor Chadderton, supported the allocation of funding and added that the cost of living crisis was so serious that it demanded even more additional funding to be made available to

alleviate some of the acute problems that the Borough was likely to face during the 2022/23 winter months.

d. Question from Councillor Hobin
Further to the Leader's answer to question C above, could she explain how she has the support of the borough?



Councillor Chadderton, Leader of the Council, replied that this had been determined as a result of direct feedback she and Cabinet members, had received as a result of conversations with people and groups and organisations across the Borough.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 22nd August 2022 and 21st September 2022 be noted.
2. The questions and responses provided thereon be noted.

14

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Motion 1 – Housing Policy

Councillor Kyle Phythian MOVED and Councillor Chadderton SECONDED the following Motion: Housing Policy

This Council notes the complete confusion that now surrounds housing and planning policy following the collapse of the mini budget, sacking of Kwasi Kwarteng as Chancellor and resignation of Prime Minister Liz Truss and subsequent Leadership election.

The status of proposals in the Levelling Up White Paper is in question and rumours about 'supply side reforms' abound.

This Council further notes the impact of Conservative Government policies on Oldham including:

1. The rise in households in housing need in Oldham - up a quarter in the past year – there are now over 7,000 households on the Housing Register waiting for a social home
2. Government refusal to fund general needs social homes in Oldham
3. Affordability issues in private developments meaning the target of 10% affordable homes on developments over 10 homes are often not met
4. Policy uncertainty leading to reluctance of developers to commit to new schemes
5. A hike in mortgage interest payments threatening many residents' ability to pay and keep their home, making it harder for first time buyers and raising private tenants' rents
6. Continued insecurity for private renters as no date is set for the abolition of Section 21 evictions despite a 2019 manifesto commitment

This Council believes that the best solution to Oldham's Housing crisis is a Labour Government committed to: a reformed Private Rented Sector that works for renters and good landlords; helping Councils build good quality social homes at rents people can afford to pay; and help for first time buyers and home owners including abolishing leasehold as a tenure.

This Council resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ask for urgent clarification of the Government's Housing and Planning policies and seeking assurance that

1. Section 21 evictions will be abolished in this session of Parliament
2. Any reforms of the Planning system will ensure local democratic control of the planning process and fund Councils to provide an efficient and effective service
3. Homes England will be directed to support all Councils to build homes for social rent
4. Requirements on developers to provide Affordable Homes will not be further watered down
5. Action will be taken to end land banking by developers
6. Help will be put in place to support mortgage payers who are threatened with losing their home because of Tory mismanagement of the economy.



1st AMENDMENT

Councillor Woodvine MOVED and Councillor Lancaster SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

This Council welcomes the Prime Minister-elect, Rishi Sunak, who has set out clear and concise but bold policies for Planning in this country with an emphasis placed on protecting our precious, green, open spaces – particularly the Green Belt. The 'Levelling Up' White Paper passing through Parliament and the grant funding received from the Conservative Government in its name has resulted in millions of extra pounds for this Metropolitan Borough Council.

This Council notes the impact of its own failing Labour Administration of the past decade, which has resulted in two of their consecutive Group Leaders losing their seats, has had on the Borough of Oldham, including:

1. Supporting and adopting into policy Mr. Burnham's 'Places for Everyone'

strategic plan for Greater Manchester which will destroy hundreds of hectares of Green Belt across the Borough of Oldham.

2. Supporting Mr. Burnham as he has led Greater Manchester Police into special measures with spiralling crime rates (including crimes committed in housing settings) resulting in the intervention of the Conservative Government to turn things around.

3. Increasing Council Tax every year, adding greater financial pressure on homeowners who also have other costs, e.g. mortgage repayments, while recklessly spending the people of Oldham's money on vanity projects, with Spindles set to make a loss in turnover totalling hundreds of thousands of pounds.

4. Not balancing the books and going over Budget with at least a projected

£6million overspend in this financial year alone, which adversely affects confidence in the Borough's economy, therefore diminishing the attractiveness to buy a home locally.

5. Approving Planning Applications in Oldham which are detrimental to the quality of life of the people living across our communities and contradict this Council's own Local Plan.

Therefore, this Council believes that the best solution to Oldham's so called 'housing crisis' is the premiership of Rishi Sunak. This Council is ready for Rishi and resolves to write to the Prime Minister and his Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities to:

a. Welcome them into their positions, wish them well and wish them every success as they deliver real change for the country and show real leadership.

b. Thank them for their generosity in investing £105.85 million into Oldham's business, (brownfield) housing, health and education developments – truly 'Levelling Up' our Borough.

c. Support the Ten Point Plan – as set out by Mr. Sunak – which will scrap VAT on energy bills, scrap all EU laws to boost the economy as it bounces back, tackle illegal immigration (which is itself causes unsustainable demand on domestic housing stock), and protect Green Belt.

4. Support the missions of the 'Levelling Up' White Paper including productivity, public investment, pride in place, public transport, and paths to home ownership, which represent the right priorities.

In addition, this Council will use its strategic powers in Planning to resolve to:

1. Promote democratic input into the Planning process, in developing the Local Plan and relevant associated policies, to ensure the confidence of the people of the Borough.
2. End any of its current land banking in the Borough of Oldham.
3. Prioritise housing for veterans and service personnel, to strengthen delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant, which this Council is a signatory of, and as set out in the Localism Act (2011).

4. Prioritise housing for local people, as permitted under the Localism Act, by using a residency test with a requirement of having worked or lived in Oldham's communities for 2+ years.

5. Condemn Mr. Burnham for his actions in causing undue distress to small/medium enterprises with his Clean Air Zone – which has so far wasted £60million of taxpayer's money – and welcome its scaling back.

A vote was taken on the 1st AMENDMENT, which was LOST

2nd AMENDMENT

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

This Council notes the complete confusion that now surrounds housing and planning policy following the collapse of the mini-budget, sacking of Kwasi Kwarteng as Chancellor and resignation of Prime Minister Liz Truss and subsequent Leadership election.

The status of proposals in the Levelling Up White Paper is in question and rumours about 'supply side reforms' abound. This Council further notes the impact of Conservative Government policies on Oldham including:

1. The rise in households in housing need in Oldham - up a quarter in the past year – there are now over 7,000 households on the Housing Register waiting for a social home
2. Government refusal to fund general needs social homes in Oldham
3. Affordability issues in private developments meaning the target of 10% affordable homes on developments over 10 homes are often not met
4. Policy uncertainty leading to reluctance of developers to commit to new schemes
5. A hike in mortgage interest payments threatening many residents' ability to pay and keep their home, making it harder for first time buyers and raising private tenants' rents
6. Continued insecurity for private renters as no date is set for the abolition of Section 21 evictions despite a 2019 manifesto commitment
7. This Council believes and fund Councils to provide an efficient and effective service
8. Homes England will be directed to support all Councils to build homes for social rent
9. Requirements on developers to provide Affordable Homes will not be further watered down", or will be strengthened, including financial or legislative support to increase the proportion of affordable homes provided in areas of greater need
10. Action will be taken to end land banking by developers
11. Help will be put in place to support mortgage payers who are threatened with losing their home because of Tory mismanagement of the economy that the best solution to Oldham's Housing crisis is a Government committed to: a reformed Private Rented Sector that works for renters and good landlords; helping Councils build good quality social homes at rents people can afford to pay; and help for first time buyers and home owners including abolishing leasehold as a tenure.

This Council resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ask for urgent clarification of the Government's Housing and Planning policies and seeking assurance that:

1. Section 21 evictions will be abolished in this session of Parliament.
2. Any reforms of the Planning system will ensure local democratic control of the planning process.

On being put to the Vote the AMENDMENT was CARRIED.

On being put to the Vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves to request that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ask for urgent clarification of the Government's Housing and Planning policies and seeking assurance that:

1. Section 21 evictions will be abolished in this session of Parliament.
2. Any reforms of the Planning system will ensure local democratic control of the planning process.

Motion 2 – Cost of Living Pension Credits

Councillor Jabber MOVED and Councillor Brownridge SECONDED the following Motion: Cost of Living Pension Credits

Older people in Oldham face a harsh winter this year, with the cost-of-living crisis affecting older people disproportionately. The government's support schemes haven't gone far enough to support vulnerable older people, and the new chancellor's announcements have done little to give people confidence or stability in the coming months.

Over three million households in the UK are eligible to claim pension credits, however over 800,000 of these households don't claim it. In Greater Manchester this means that £70m in benefits went unclaimed last year, with over £6m in Oldham alone.

The Labour administration has pledged to ensure that residents in the town will have access to all support that they are entitled to, as people cannot rely on the government to support them when they are unable to support their own policies.

With energy bills, food, fuel and household essential prices rising, many older people in Oldham are forced to choose between staying warm or eating. Whilst government policy is ever changing, the Prime Minister cannot be trusted to help our older people, Oldham Council has taken action to support those who are most vulnerable during this cost-of-living crisis with our £3m We Can Help Campaign.

This Council notes:

- That during the Tory cost of living crisis, £6m in pension credits went unclaimed in Oldham last year, preventing those who are eligible to receive them using this money to support themselves during these difficult times.
- Last year Oldham's Welfare Rights Team supported residents by helping them access over £1.8m worth of social security support.
- The government has failed to provide the necessary support and guidance to eligible pension credit recipients.
- As a local authority we are committed to ensuring that our vulnerable residents can access all the support they are eligible to receive.
- The work that the council are undertaking across all departments to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are supported.

This Council resolves to:

- Ensure that the council continues its joined up approach to supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, working

across all areas to ensure that no resident suffers hardship due to their financial situation.

- Continue to support residents to access all the benefits they are entitled to access, through the Council's Welfare Rights Team.
- Commit to working alongside Age UK to identify how the council can support older people during the cost-of-living crisis, including ensuring that everyone has access to food and heating.

This Council further resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, asking them to make changes to the benefits system to ensure that eligible residents receive benefits automatically, rather than having to claim them; asking them to commit to raising all social security benefits in line with inflation.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor McManus SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

Older people in Oldham face a harsh winter this year, with the cost-of-living crisis affecting older people disproportionately. The government's support schemes haven't gone far enough to support vulnerable older people and the new chancellor's announcement have done little to give people confidence or stability in the coming months.

Over three million households in the UK are eligible to claim pension credits, however over 800,000 of these households don't claim it. In Greater Manchester this means that £70m in benefits went unclaimed last year, with over £6m in Oldham alone.

The Labour administration has pledged to ensure that residents in the town will have access to all support that they are entitled to, as people cannot rely on the government to support them when they are unable to support their own policies.

With energy bills, food, fuel and household essential prices rising, many older people in Oldham are forced to choose between staying warm or eating. Whilst government policy is ever changing, the Prime Minister cannot be trusted to help our older people, Oldham Council has taken action to support those who are most vulnerable during this cost-of-living crisis with our £3m We Can Help Campaign.

This Council notes:

- That during the Tory cost of living crisis, £6m in pension credits went unclaimed in Oldham last year, preventing those who are eligible to receive them using this money to support themselves during these difficult times.
- Last year Oldham's Welfare Rights Team supported residents by helping them access over £1.8m worth of social security support.
- The government has failed to provide the necessary support and guidance to eligible pension credit recipients.
- As a local authority we are committed to ensuring that our vulnerable residents can access all the support they are eligible to receive.



Oldham
Council

- The work that the council are undertaking across all departments to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are supported.

This Council resolves to:

- Ensure that the council continues its joined up approach to supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, working across all areas to ensure that no resident suffers hardship due to their financial situation.
- Continue to support residents to access all the benefits they are entitled to access, through the Council's Welfare Rights Team.
- Commit to working alongside Age UK to identify how the council can support older people during the cost-of-living crisis, including ensuring that everyone has access to food and heating.

This Council further resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, asking them to make changes to the benefits system to ensure that eligible residents receive benefits automatically, rather than having to claim them; asking them to commit to raising all social security benefits in line with inflation.
- Work alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Ageing Hub to identify more avenues of support for older people in the borough.

The government's support schemes to support vulnerable older people in Oldham through this winter include:

- A £400 payment to all homes paid as £66 a month over winter.
- A £650 payment to those on benefits (half's already been paid).
- A £150 payment to those with disabilities.
- £300 cost of living payment to pensioners.
- As well as a removal of green levies on household bills, worth about £150 off bills.

Over three million households in the UK are eligible to claim pension credits, however over 800,000 of these households don't claim it. In Greater Manchester this means that £70m in benefits went unclaimed last year, with over £6m in Oldham alone. However, £60m was wasted by the Labour Mayor of Greater Manchester on the Clean Air Zone Charge in Greater Manchester, which could have been better spent on helping older people in Greater Manchester.

With energy bills, food, fuel, and household essential prices rising, due to rising inflation and the War in the Ukraine, the US Federal Reserve has said that the war (in Ukraine) will reduce global GDP by about 1.5 percent and leading to a rise in global inflation of about 1.3 percentage points. Locally residents of all ages face higher Council tax bills something which this Council can remedy but chooses not to do so.

The Council has pledged to ensure that residents in the town will have access to all support that they are entitled to.

This Council notes:

- That £6m in pension credits went unclaimed in Oldham last year, preventing those who are eligible to receive them

using this money to support themselves during these difficult times.

- Last year Oldham's Welfare Rights Team supported residents by helping them access over £1.8m worth of social security support.
- As a local authority we are committed to ensuring that our vulnerable residents can access all the support they are eligible to receive.
- The work that the council are undertaking across all departments to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are supported.
- The £3m 'We Can Help Campaign' to help local residents who need help.

This Council resolves to:

- Ensure that the council continues its joined up approach to supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, working across all areas to ensure that no resident suffers hardship due to their financial situation.
- Continue to support residents to access all the benefits they are entitled to access, through the Council's Welfare Rights Team.
- Commit to working alongside Age UK to identify how the council can support older people during the cost-of-living crisis, including ensuring that everyone has access to food and heating.
- Stop punishing people with higher Council tax bills and to commit to freezing those bills instead.

This Council further resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, asking them to make changes to the benefits system to ensure that eligible residents receive benefits automatically, rather than having to claim them; asking them to commit to raising all social security benefits in line with inflation.
- Work alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Ageing Hub to identify more avenues of support for older people in the borough.
- Condemn the £60m wasted by the Labour Mayor of Greater Manchester on the Clean Air Zone Charge in Greater Manchester, which could have been better spent on helping older people in Greater Manchester.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT which was LOST.

On being put to the Vote, the MOTION was CARRIED.

RESOLVED

1. Ensure that the council continues its joined up approach to supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, working across all areas to ensure that no resident suffers hardship due to their financial situation.
2. Continue to support residents to access all the benefits they are entitled to access, through the Council's Welfare Rights Team.
3. Commit to working alongside Age UK to identify how the council can support older people during the cost-of-living

crisis, including ensuring that everyone has access to food and heating.

This Council further resolves to:

4. Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, asking them to make changes to the benefits system to ensure that eligible residents receive benefits automatically, rather than having to claim them; asking them to commit to raising all social security benefits in line with inflation.
5. Work alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Ageing Hub to identify more avenues of support for older people in the borough.

15

NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS

Motion 1 – No Confidence in Andy Burnham’s Management of Greater Manchester Police

N.B. Councillor Murphy, having declared an interest at Minute 4, above, left the room during the discussion and determination of this Motion.

Councillor Al-Hamdani MOVED and Councillor Kenyon SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council notes that:

1. There have been no crime figures published for Oldham from July 2019 onwards. Residents are unable to download and compare crime, stop, and search, and outcome statistics in their local areas unlike, for example, in London.
2. Newsam & Ridgway’s review into CSE in Oldham, commissioned by Andy Burnham, notes the following (p40/2.17): the review started in January 2020, yet it took until November 2021 to agree a data processing agreement with GMP (for comparison, a complete data processing agreement with Oldham Council was agreed in April 2020). This data processing agreement with GMP only covered two of the 11 cases investigated – Shabir Ahmed and ‘Sophie’. Newsam and Ridgway further note that the lack of an agreement affected the quality of assurance that they could give about the quality of the conduct of GMP.
3. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICFRS) reported that GMP was failing victims of domestic abuse in 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021. GMP was placed into special measures in December 2020
4. From 2016, all chief officers at GMP have been replaced. The only two senior posts that have remained unchanged throughout this entire period are the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Crime, Criminal Justice, and Fire – Andy Burnham and, his appointee, Baroness Beverley Hughes.
5. GMP’s failings reflect a national trend of defunding of Police by this Conservative government. Police are solving just 7% of recorded crimes.
6. The highest ever number of rape cases in the UK was recorded in 2022 – 70,330, of which just 2,223 cases

resulted in charges being brought. An estimated four out of five rape cases are not reported. Rape investigations currently take an average of 465 days from being reported to someone being charged.

7. There is a backlog of nearly 59,000 cases at the crown court, and over 358,000 cases to the magistrate's court. The backlog increased by 23% in the year prior to the COVID pandemic and has increased further since.

This Council believes that:

Victims of crime in the borough of Oldham, and across Greater Manchester, are being failed. Andy Burnham has failed and the Conservative government's approach to policing and criminal justice has failed.

This Council resolves to:

Direct the Chief Executive to write to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to inform them of Council's lack of confidence in their ability to effectively manage GMP.

A vote was taken on the MOTION which was LOST

Motion 2 – Provision of Local Services

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor Arnott SECONDED the following Motion:

Oldham Council like others who provide local services needs to strike the right balance when it comes to spending public money and how they deliver those local services.

Plans made today soon age and become historic in the changing world we live in and as quickly as circumstances around them change the need to change and adapt those plans grows stronger. Housing, transport, and local services are not purely a numbers issue, they are in fact a social, economic, and political issue. Building cohesive communities that last and that have good access to key transport infrastructure in the long term means people will want to live in those communities. That means growth and prosperity.

Sadly, Oldham has poor transport links, not helped by the fact that unlike neighbouring Rochdale which maintained its five train stations, and introduced the Metrolink, Oldham ripped out its rail links for the Metrolink, with Greenfield station officially being Oldham's sole station.

Despite the Borough being the gateway to the Pennines Oldham has failed to capitalise on that unique position leaving us overly dependent on the economic tides of Manchester rather than opening opportunities to West Yorkshire and beyond.

As the Council focuses its regeneration projects on Oldham Town Centre, there is considerable disquiet in the districts where they feel abandoned and neglected. Given many of these districts are net contributors to the Council budget and are the growth areas for people, businesses, and housing it is not unreasonable for people who live there to ask why the Council isn't treating them equally and invest in those districts as well.

Coupled with high levels of immigration into the United Kingdom, there has been a significant strain put on public services and community cohesion due to levels being far too high for far too long. It is why a balance must be struck with those already living

here as well as maintaining a sustainable supply of housing and need. That is why we need to deliver the quality homes we need, the quality services we need whilst being aware of the genuine and legitimate concerns of residents already living in our Borough.

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and its subsequent replacement, the Places for Everyone plan was and is so unpalatable to so many people in the Borough due to its use of Green Belt land. The Office of National Statistics published the 2021 census relating to household growth. Their findings clearly indicate that projected household growth across Greater Manchester has been severely over-estimated over the preceding ten years (actual growth of 50,000 households as opposed to the projection of 101,000).

Oldham's household growth was consistent with the general pattern (actual growth of 3,400 households in contrast to the projected 6,900). The Government's stance is reasonable, and it is the Government's expectation for councils to proceed cautiously, to meet provision within an area.

However, now that we have hard data available to us in the form of the Census, we believe that the severely erroneous projections that underpin the housing targets—and therefore the Green Belt release—would qualify under the provision set by the Government that a deviation from the standard methodology would be justified in “exceptional circumstances”. If the GMCA and the councils are to maintain an evidence-based approach to planning, then the evidence needs to be correct. The evidence needs to change.

This Council resolves that:

- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council use her position on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to adjust the Places for Everyone Plan under the provision set out by the Government that the housing figures meet the request for a deviation from the standard methodology using the “exceptional circumstances” criteria.
- Brownfield sites be prioritised over Green Belt development.
- Shovel ready projects on brownfield sites are not held back by delays, and that they are included in the overall housing figures in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.
- Oldham Council look to rationalise its brownfield site assets where reasonable and practicable.
- Local communities can access neighbourhood plans and referenda in order to sustainably build homes in their area in order to secure local support rather than through top-down targets.
- The Council confirms homeownership as being a fundamental tenant of building stronger communities.
- The Council devolve further competencies both politically and budgetary to the districts.
- That the Council look beyond funding just Oldham Town Centre and apply for funding in any future grant rounds to improve our district town centres.
- Will restrict the number HMO's in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough area and using the Article 4 direction across the Borough, which removes permitted development rights.

- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council will look to create a Pennines Economic Co-operation Board which works with neighbouring authorities on a bilateral basis and looks to maximise the potential economic benefits of maximising the opening of new road and rail links between Oldham and West Yorkshire.

The Council further resolves:

- That the Chief Executive will write to the government to:
 - i. Seek a meeting with the Department of Transport and relevant Oldham Council Cabinet member to seek extra funding for improved transport in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham.
 - ii. Explore the options of reopening existing railway stations such as those at the Middleton Junction in Chadderton, Diggle in Saddleworth or a new Oldham line which connects to Oldham, Manchester and West Yorkshire for both freight and passenger services which can service the Borough more widely.
 - iii. Support the government's plans to control immigration and deter illegal immigration into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Hulme MOVED and Councillor Goodwin SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

Oldham Council like others who provide local services needs to strike the right balance when it comes to spending public money and how they deliver those local services.

Plans made today soon age and become historic in the changing world we live in and as quickly as circumstances around them change the need to change and adapt those plans grows stronger. Housing, transport, and local services are not purely a numbers issue, they are in fact a social, economic, and political issue. Building cohesive communities that last and that have good access to key transport infrastructure in the long term means people will want to live in those communities. That means growth and prosperity.

Sadly, Oldham has poor transport links thanks to funding cuts by successive Conservative Governments.

As the Borough of Oldham is the gateway to the Pennines, we are in a unique position to develop links between Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

As the Council focuses on delivering its ambitious plans for the Oldham Town Centre Regeneration, we continue to explore opportunities to carry regeneration projects in the districts such as the redevelopment of Royton Town Hall, Diggle Clock Tower, Chadderton Town Hall, Northern Roots, Foxdenton & Broadway Green, Hollinwood Junction and our focus on delivering services at a neighbourhood level.

Since the coalition government implemented austerity measures on local government, there has been a significant strain put on public services and community cohesion. It is why a balance must be struck with those already living here as well as maintaining a sustainable supply of housing and need. That is why we need to deliver the quality homes we need, the quality services we need whilst being aware of the genuine and legitimate concerns of residents already living in our Borough.

The original GMSF was unpalatable to so many people in the Borough due to the number of allocations on Green Belt land, thanks to the hard work of the former Cabinet Member for Housing and Officers at Oldham Council, it's replacement Places for Everyone removes swathes of the Green Belt from the plan. Oldham Council continues to monitor Local Housing Need and recognises that Oldhamers want good quality affordable housing in the Borough.

The Conservative led Government cannot be both friends to developers who want to build on our greenbelt and blame local authorities for following their direction.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that in establishing Local Housing Need Local Authorities should use the 2014 based household projections as a starting point. The GMCA has already requested that more up to date figures be used but the Government refused to change the guidance.

This Council resolves that:

- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council continues to use her position on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to monitor the Places for Everyone plan and ensure that Oldham's housing needs are met.
- That insofar as national planning policy allows, brownfield sites will continue to be prioritised over Green Belt development by the administration.
- To continue to ensure shovel ready projects on brownfield sites are not held back by delays, and notes that they are included in the overall housing supply (SHLAA) in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.
- Oldham Council continues to rationalise its brownfield site assets where reasonable and practicable, including the regeneration of the civic centre site after the council moves into the Spindles Shopping centre.
- Local communities can access neighbourhood plans which need to be adopted by referenda in order to sustainably build homes in their area in order to secure local support rather than through top-down targets.
- The Council confirms homeownership as being one of the fundamental tenets of building stronger communities and regrets that due to the recent Conservative Government crashing the economy home-ownership is now unattainable by many Oldhamers.
- The Council continues to deliver its plans for Place Based Integration, as set out in the Oldham and Corporate Plans, to district and neighbourhood level.
- That the Council continues to look for funding beyond Oldham Town Centre and apply for funding in any future grant rounds to improve our district town centres.
- Regrets that the high evidence base for an Article 4 direction relating to HMO permitted development rights is not met.
- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council will look to create a Pennines Economic Co-operation Board which works with the GMCA, WYCA and both Mayors, to maximise the potential economic benefits of maximising the opening of new road and rail links between Oldham



Oldham
Council

and West Yorkshire.

The Council further resolves:

The Chief Executive will write to the government to:

- i. Seek a meeting with the Department of Transport, TfGM, and the relevant Oldham Council Cabinet member to restore public transport funding that has been cut by consecutive Conservative Governments.
- ii. Build on the initial work done by Oldham's Members of Parliaments regarding the option of reopening existing railway stations such as those at the Middleton Junction in Chadderton, Diggle in Saddleworth or a new Oldham line which connects to Oldham, Manchester and West Yorkshire for both freight and passenger services which can service the Borough more widely.
- iii. Request that the government restore brownfield remediation funding to help make brownfield sites more attractive to developers, instead of insisting that Oldham meet its housing targets through developing on Greenbelt land.

On being put to the Vote the AMENDMENT was CARRIED.

On being put to the Vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves that:

- The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council continues to use her position on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to monitor the Places for Everyone plan and ensure that Oldham's housing needs are met.
- That insofar as national planning policy allows, brownfield sites will continue to be prioritised over Green Belt development by the administration.
- To continue to ensure shovel ready projects on brownfield sites are not held back by delays, and notes that they are included in the overall housing supply (SHLAA) in the Oldham Metropolitan Borough.
- Oldham Council continues to rationalise its brownfield site assets where reasonable and practicable, including the regeneration of the civic centre site after the council moves into the Spindles Shopping centre.
- Local communities can access neighbourhood plans which need to be adopted by referenda in order to sustainably build homes in their area in order to secure local support rather than through top-down targets.
- The Council confirms homeownership as being one of the fundamental tenets of building stronger communities and regrets that due to the recent Conservative Government crashing the economy home-ownership is now unattainable by many Oldhamers.
- The Council continues to deliver its plans for Place Based Integration, as set out in the Oldham and Corporate

- Plans, to district and neighbourhood level.
- That the Council continues to look for funding beyond Oldham Town Centre and apply for funding in any future grant rounds to improve our district town centres.
 - Regrets that the high evidence base for an Article 4 direction relating to HMO permitted development rights is not met.
 - The Leader of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council will look to create a Pennines Economic Co-operation Board which works with the GMCA, WYCA and both Mayors, to maximise the potential economic benefits of maximising the opening of new road and rail links between Oldham and West Yorkshire.

The Council further resolves:

The Chief Executive will write to the government to:

- iv. Seek a meeting with the Department of Transport, TfGM, and the relevant Oldham Council Cabinet member to restore public transport funding that has been cut by consecutive Conservative Governments.
- v. Build on the initial work done by Oldham's Members of Parliaments regarding the option of reopening existing railway stations such as those at the Middleton Junction in Chadderton, Diggle in Saddleworth or a new Oldham line which connects to Oldham, Manchester and West Yorkshire for both freight and passenger services which can service the Borough more widely.
- vi. Request that the government restore brownfield remediation funding to help make brownfield sites more attractive to developers, instead of insisting that Oldham meet its housing targets through developing on Greenbelt land.

Motion 3 – Regulation of HMO's

Councillor Rea MOVED and Councillor Hindle SECONDED the following Motion:

With an ever growing number of HMO's popping up across the borough, all Councillors must be aware of the increased frustration caused to neighbouring residents and the place they live. We are aware of the extra congestion these properties cause and that good, essential family homes are being removed from the current market. Currently in Failsworth we have an historic area being swamped with such developments and the character and appeal to this historic place is being lost on a rapid scale.

It can only be seen as a positive thing that we have residents who look upon their community favourably and want certain standards to be upheld where they live. They do after all pay a high premium with their council tax for the pleasure of living in this Borough. It's to the detriment of local residents that the adverse impacts of the HMO's saturating areas causing doctors, dentists and other services to be strained. We are not increasing services to cope with the increased number of residents we are allowing to reside, at a fraction of the cost to

those who live in family homes. We want more for the areas we live. We want our residents to remain proud of where they live. Typically, HMO residents aren't taking part in community life, we want to encourage to build on existing communities and see the next generation grow where their parents intended them to.

This Council Notes

- Council tax is per property and does not reflect the number of adults in each HMO property
- HMO's cause the loss of affordable family homes and this council recognises the need to keep decent family homes available to the market for families to purchase
 - HMO's cause the loss of S106 monies on houses that are not being built to meet the demand of areas in the borough

This Council resolves to:

- Gather the evidence to monitor the situation, paying attention to minimise any potential negative impacts HMO's are having on areas. Also, to work with Councillors and residents to protect the interests of the residents, in the future development of HMO's.
 - That automatic development rights are removed for HMO's of up to six occupants and that they are to seek planning permission for a HMO of any size. Enforcing an Article 4 direction
 - Limit the number of HMO's in the Borough and certain areas within it
 - A consultation takes place with neighbouring residents, when development opportunities are sought by landlords to develop HMO's
- Write to the Secretary of State for levelling up, housing & Communities, requesting changes to the current HMO legislation, to enable local authorities to have more control.

1ST AMENDMENT

COUNCILLOR K. Phythian MOVED and Councillor Dean SECONDED the following amendment:

With an ever-growing number of HMO's popping up across the borough, all Councillors must be aware of the increased frustration caused to neighbouring residents and the place they live. We are aware of residents, concerns on the potential impact of HMOs.

It can only be seen as a positive thing that we have residents who look upon their community favourably and want certain standards to be upheld where they live. Residents are rightly proud of where they live, and we all want the best for our neighbourhoods and key public services. We regret that public services have been decimated by austerity and that home ownership remains out of reach for many young Oldhamers. We want more for the areas we live. We want our residents to remain proud of where they live. We want to encourage Oldhamers to stay in the Borough and build their own families here as their parents did.

This Council Notes

- Council tax is per property and does not reflect the number of adults in each HMO property.
- HMO's can cause the loss of affordable family homes and this council recognises the need for decent and affordable homes available to the market for families to purchase.
- The burden of evidence to impose an Article 4 direction is too high, and that because of this more HMO's are created due to the government's decision when implementing the Town and Country Planning Order (General Permitted Development) (2015)

This Council resolves to:

- Continue to gather the evidence to monitor the situation, paying attention to minimise any potential negative impacts HMO's are having on areas. Also, to work with Councillors and residents to protect the interests of the residents, in the future development of HMO's.
- That automatic development rights for HMOs of up to six occupants be removed IF and WHEN the threshold for an Article 4 Direction is met. So developers are required to seek planning permission for a HMO of any size.
- Recognise that when managed by good landlords HMO's meet the housing needs of some Oldhamers, but that residents have concerns around the number of inadequate landlords converting decent homes into HMOs solely for profit in particular neighbourhoods.
- Where HMOs are developed that require Planning Permission, the council will continue to consult with neighbouring residents, when development opportunities are sought by landlords to develop HMO's.
- That the Chief Executive will write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and request that the current planning regulations are reviewed and insist that local planning authorities are able to have more control over developments and changes of use in their boundaries.

On being put to the Vote the AMENDMENT was CARRIED.

2ND AMENDMENT

COUNCILLOR C. Gloster MOVED and Councillor Al-Hamdani SECONDED the following amendment:

- With an ever-growing number of HMOs popping up across the borough, all Councillors must be aware of the increased frustration caused to neighbouring residents and the place they live. We are aware of the extra congestion these properties cause and that good, essential family homes are being removed from the current market. Currently in Failsworth we have an historic area being swamped with such developments and the character and appeal to this historic place is being lost on a rapid scale.
It can only be seen as a positive thing that we have residents who look upon their community favourably and

want certain standards to be upheld where they live. They do after all pay a high premium with their council tax for the pleasure of living in this Borough. It's to the detriment of local residents that the adverse impacts of the HMO's saturating areas causing doctors, dentists and other services to be strained. We are not increasing services to cope with the increased number of residents we are allowing to reside, at a fraction of the cost to those who live in family homes. We want more for the areas we live. We want our residents to remain proud of where they live. Typically, HMO residents aren't taking part in community life, we want to encourage to build on existing communities and see the next generation grow where their parents intended them to.

This Council notes

- That last year, the Liberal Democrat Group recommended the restriction of HMOs in their written submission to Oldham's Local Plan and additionally raised the issue at the full council meeting in November 2021 – outlining the need for action with regards to the proliferation of HMOs across the Borough;
- That there has been insufficient progress since the Liberal Democrat Group's intervention last year and the administration must now act to control HMOs;
- Council tax is per property and does not reflect the number of adults in each HMO property;
- HMOs cause the loss of affordable family homes and this council recognises the need to keep decent family homes available to the market for families to purchase;
 - HMOs can cause the loss of S106 monies on houses that are not being built to meet the demand of areas in the borough.

This Council resolves to:

- gather the evidence to monitor the situation, paying attention to minimise any potential negative impacts HMOs are having on areas. Also, to work with Councillors and residents to protect the interests of the residents, in the future development of HMOs;
 - pursue the removal of automatic development rights from HMOs of up to six occupants, and to require planning permission for an HMO of any size (enforcing an Article 4 direction), and to seek to enforce HMO licensing on properties which are currently excluded as having too few residents;
 - limit the number of HMOs in the Borough, and each area within it;
 - conduct consultations with neighbouring residents when development opportunities are sought by landlords to develop HMOs, and afterwards should there be concerns about ASB introduced with the HMO;
 - write to the Secretary of State for levelling up, housing & Communities, requesting changes to the current HMO legislation, to enable local authorities to have more control.

On Being put to the Vote the 2nd AMENDMENT was LOST.

On being put to the Vote, the MOTION as AMENDED (1st Amendment) was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves to:

- Continue to gather the evidence to monitor the situation, paying attention to minimise any potential negative impacts HMO's are having on areas. Also, to work with Councillors and residents to protect the interests of the residents, in the future development of HMO's.
- That automatic development rights for HMOs of up to six occupants be removed IF and WHEN the threshold for an Article 4 Direction is met. So developers are required to seek planning permission for a HMO of any size.
- Recognise that when managed by good landlords HMO's meet the housing needs of some Oldhamer's, but that residents have concerns around the number of inadequate landlords converting decent homes into HMOs solely for profit in particular neighbourhoods.
- Where HMOs are developed that require Planning Permission, the council will continue to consult with neighbouring residents, when development opportunities are sought by landlords to develop HMO's.
- That the Chief Executive will write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and request that the current planning regulations are reviewed and insist that local planning authorities are able to have more control over developments and changes of use in their boundaries.

16

UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Councillor Chadderton MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED a report of the Director of Legal Services, which informed members of actions taken following the meeting of the Council on 7th September 2022.

In response to a question from Councillor Kenyon, the Mayor permitted the Chief executive to address Council, updating Members on the Motion that the Liberal Democrat Group had presented to Council on 13th July 2022 regarding Children's Services. The Chief Executive reported that he would be writing to all members of the Council on this matter imminently.

Councillor Al-Hamdani requested an update on a Motion that the Council had debated and passed in 2019/20 regarding the White Ribbon Campaign. The Leader of the Council replied to the issues that Councillor Al-Hamdani raised.

RESOLVED - That the actions regarding motions and issues from the meeting of the Council on 7th September 2022 be noted.

17

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

Councillor Chadderton MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SECONDED a report of the head of Democratic Services seeking the appointment of an Independent Chair of the Audit Committee.



Resolved

That Mr Grenville Page be appointed Independent Chair of the Audit Committee for a 4 year term ending at the end of the 206/27 Municipal Year.

The meeting started at 5.30pm and ended at 9.15pm.