

COUNCIL
12/07/2023 at 6.00 pm



Present: The Mayor – Councillor Chauhan (in the Chair)

Councillors Adams, Akhtar, Al-Hamdani, Ali, Arnott, M. Bashforth, S. Bashforth, Birch, Bishop, Brownridge, Byrne, Charters, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Fryer, Ghafoor, H. Gloster, Hamblett, H. Harrison, J. Harrison, Hince, Hindle, Hobin, Hurley, A Hussain, F Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Irfan, Islam, Jabbar, Kenyon, Lancaster, Malik, Marland, McLaren, Moores, Murphy, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Quigg, Rea, Salamat, Shah, Sharp, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Surjan, Sykes, Taylor, Wahid, Williamson and Woodvine

1 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ball, Goodwin and Harkness.

2 **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 24TH MAY 2023 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24th May 2023, be approved as a correct record.

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

Councillor Sykes declared a other registrable interest in agenda item 8c (Questions on Cabinet Minutes) insofar as it related to Oldham Community Leisure (minutes 14, 15, 21 and 22 of the Cabinet meeting held 20th March 2023 refers).

Councillor Hobin declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 12 (The Bee Network – Improving Greater Manchester’s Transport Governance), as he was an employee of a local public transport company.

Councillor Davis declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 (Motion1 – Request for Land to build a Muslim Cemetery), as he was an employee of Co-op Funeral Care.

Councillor Dean declared a other registrable interest in agenda item 8c (Questions on Cabinet Minutes) insofar as it related to Oldham Community Leisure (minutes 14, 15, 21 and 22 of the Cabinet meeting held 20th March 2023 refers).

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

There were no matters of urgent business for this meeting of the Council to consider.

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

The Mayor asked Council to note and acknowledge the 75th anniversary of the founding of the National Health Service.

The Mayor asked Council to note and acknowledge Carers Week that had recently been held, in honour of the important role that Carers play in society.

The Mayor informed Council that a former Member Lynne Greenwood had sadly passed away. Lynne served as an Oldham Metropolitan Borough Councillor, for Chadderton North from 1991 - 1995. Council observed a minute's silence in her memory.

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

There were no petitions for this meeting of the Council to consider.

7 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Youth Council PROPOSED the following MOTION:
Disposable Vapes

This Council notes that the UK governments are planning steps to reduce vaping among under-18s.

These are likely to include tighter rules on how vaping products are marketed and promoted as well as higher taxes on disposable e-cigarettes. This is in recognition that while the use of cigarettes has reduced with young people, vaping use has doubled in over a year and young people are starting with e-cigarettes rather than using them to stop smoking. In May, the Prime Minister has also announced that the loophole allowing shops to give free vape samples to under 18's is set to be closed.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Oldham Youth Council have made health a priority issue and have undertaken much work in this area to improve the health experiences of Oldham's young people. This includes:

- Working with Council officers and Mental Health services including CAMHS, TOG Mind and Kooth.com to raise awareness of the issues facing children and young people especially after the pandemic.
- 2018 motion to Council asking that the Chief Executive writes to the minister of Health requesting that advertising around vaping be banned, e-cigarettes be in plain packaging and point of sale restrictions, like that for tobacco products, be applied.
- 2022 motion to Council asking that the Chief Executive writes to Government to extend the offer of the Holiday Activities and Food programme to all young people not just those on free school meals.

Council notes:

- That according to a YouGov survey for Action on Smoking and Health (Ash) there has been a rise in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping - from 7.7% in 2022 up to 11.6% in 2023.

- A 2023 trading standards survey of 14 to 17-year-olds in Oldham, 15% had vaped and 12% used them regularly, twice as high as the previous survey in 2020.
- The same 2023 survey showed that, of those that had regularly vaping, 52% of respondents had used vapes but not cigarettes and Almost 1 in 3 young people in Oldham claim to have first tried vaping aged 12 or less.
- When asked 66% of young people said they used disposable (non-rechargeable and non-refillable) e-cigarettes.
- Scottish Government is considering a complete ban on disposable vapes.
- That hospitalisation of young people, due to vaping, has quadrupled in 2 years.
- That young people are using disposable vapes incorrectly, dropping oil into the top of the device causing 'overdose' or nicotine that cause hospitalisation.
- The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health have called for a complete ban on disposable e-cigarettes. They warn that e-cigarettes are not risk free as may damage young people's lungs and can be as addictive as cigarettes.
- That use of unregulated vapes and oils are being used by Oldham's young people. As unregulated these products can have higher than advised levels of nicotine and/or illicit substances such as THC.

Council recognises:

The Children's Act 1989, section 17, states that it shall be the general duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need

- Oldham Council takes its role seriously and that health and improving the health and wellbeing of Oldham citizens is a high priority for Oldham.
- The use of e-cigarettes and oils, especially unregulated, pose a significant risk to young people's health and wellbeing.

We propose that Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of Health asking that, in the review of regulations related to vaping, that the sale of all disposable e-cigarettes be banned.

Councillor Mushtaq spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Charters spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Arnott spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Hamblett spoke in support of the Motion
Councillor Moores spoke in favour of the Motion and in doing so proposed an additional resolution requesting that 'the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board convene a Workshop to consider issues relating to vaping.'

Councillor Mushtaq MOVED and Councillor Charters SECONDED the MOTION as presented by the Youth Council and including Councillor Moores' addendum to the resolution (above).

RESOLVED:

1. The Chief Executive, be requested, to write to the Secretary of Health asking that, in the review of regulations related to vaping, that the sale of all disposable e-cigarettes be banned.
2. The Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board convene a Workshop to consider issues relating to vaping.

8 a

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Question submitted by Syed Maruf Ali

Eating a healthy, nutritious meal supports pupils with their learning and has been shown to improve behaviour and academic achievements.

Oldham Council must act now to introduce universal free school meals for all primary and secondary school children regardless of their parent incomes. This would help build a better Oldham for everyone, saving families hundreds of pounds a year, ensuring all primary and secondary pupils are eating a healthy, nutritious meal at school.

All children should have an equal chance to thrive and be healthy, no matter where they live or how much their parents earn. By making school meals free for all children the Oldham Council can deliver on its levelling up promise and help children achieve their true potential – especially children living in the most deprived parts of Oldham.

Ensuring children receive a hot, nutritious meal at lunchtime will be a lifeline for many Oldhamers facing extreme cost-of-living pressures – many of whom are having to spend less on both cooking and eating at home to make ends meet.

Oldham Council should immediately prioritise the introduction of free school meals for the thousands of children who are living in poverty, but who don't currently qualify, as a first step towards rolling out free school meals to all children in primary and secondary schools in September.

I hope the Cllrs in this chamber will support this recommendation and discuss this further in their next individual political party meeting and cabinet meetings, so that every child in primary and Secondary School receives free school meal?"

Councillor Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills replied, "thank you for your question. The Council provide free school meals to all pupils who are eligible via the means tested criteria, in addition we receive funding for universal infant free school meals (Years 1 and 2). We work proactively to encourage all those eligible to apply for free school meals and are keen to reach as many families as possible who may be eligible. The provision of school food is an opportunity to ensure that children and young people have healthy nutritious food. To ensure this, food served in all maintained schools and academies in England must meet school food standards. These standards help schools to provide children with healthy, balanced diets.

In addition, we also have the following initiatives to support families who maybe struggling financially:

- The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme
- Poverty Proofing the School Day Audits



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- Breakfast Clubs

More information on these are available on our website.”

2.Question from Karl Bardsley

Frontline Police officers are there to keep our communities safe. They are comprised of our neighbours, friends and relatives. They face the daily dangers of patrolling our streets to keep us safe. Sadly, some Police officers do not make it home and are killed in the line of duty.

It is why many were shocked to read in the Mail on Sunday that Oldham politicians, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council in particular have been openly photographed celebrating with a convicted criminal who was a getaway driver for the infamous 'Cop Killer' Dale Creegan.

Could the relevant Cabinet member please clarify whether such associations are appropriate and whether they agree that such public associations only damage what little trust the public have for those running the Council?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied, “thank you to Mr Bardsley, the unsuccessful Conservative Candidate for Chadderton North in the recent local elections, for his question. I will refer the questioner to the answer to this question that I gave at the Full Council meeting in December 2019.”

2. Question from Julie Heywood

In the lead up to this May's Council elections, the Labour Party complained of hate speech and homophobia following a councillor's literature opposing LGBTQ+ education in schools. More recently, ZAHID CHAUHAN the new Mayor recently stated, Great Britain is called Great Britain because it has great people...who co-exist together. People from different backgrounds, people from different faiths, from different religions - they all come together.' In a town historically divided, the Labour Party's position should be applauded and hopefully the Council leader and her Cabinet will back up their words with actions. Therefore:

1. Will AROOJ SHAH in her capacity as leader of Oldham Council join Oldham's Pride march and support Oldham's LGBTQ+ community?

2. Will Dr Chauhan, in his capacity as Mayor of Oldham, join Oldham's Pride march and support Oldham's LGBTQ+ community?

3. Will Mohon Ali, in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Education & Skills join Oldham's Pride march and support Oldham's LGBTQ+ community?

4. Will Arooj Shah's Oldham Council confirm that every member of her Cabinet is committed to the rights of Oldham's LGBT+ community?

As the Mayor Dr Chauhan rightly referenced, 'Oldham is a town in Great Britain'. Great Britain is an inclusive society where we do not discriminate against people because of their sexuality. Will our town's leaders join Oldham Pride in the fight against homophobia?

Councillor Mushtaq, Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People replied, "I challenge the premise, the origins, the ideology and the genesis of this question. It names only Muslim councillors in a pathetic and failed attempt to divide. Let's be clear this question does not stand up for the LGBTQ+ community, it does not stand up for Oldham Pride but most importantly it does not stand up for the values of a liberal democracy.

Mr Mayor, you speak of Great Britain of Britain being great and that is exactly what this question is directly attacking, the greatness of this great nation! Why are we referred to as the Western world, as a nation seen as a leader of the Free World and a leader in the free world? It is because questions like this can be asked, it is because people that look like me can stand up in chambers like this and speak freely without fear of torture or death. One of the things that makes Britain Great Mr Mayor is that we live in a society where everyone one of us is innocent until proven guilty. This question Mr Mayor is a direct attack on that fundamental premise upon which our free society is built. Mr Mayor this question is effectively accusing you and others of being guilty insinuating that because of your faith, culture, appearance and way of life you are homophobic and asking you, no demanding that you prove your innocence! It's a direct attack on the very foundations upon which our society is built.

They know Mr Mayor that when you treat your patients in your capacity as a GP you do not treat them on the grounds of their race, gender or sexuality you treat them all equally based on their need. They know that Councillor Arooj Shah leads a borough that is proudly diverse and represents all communities within the borough. This is what they don't like, this is what they don't want to accept.

The intolerance and hate is what they think makes their Britain great, in actual fact Mr Mayor it is our differences, our diversity and our acceptance, not tolerance, our acceptance of these differences that scares these people and leads to the creation of questions like this targeting people like you, like councillor Shah and councillor Mohon Ali

I reject the premise of the question and I reject the question"

3. Question from Denise Leach

The previous Council leader confirmed that an individual can self-identify their gender and that a woman can have a penis. With this in mind, and the Labour leader Kier Starmer also of a similar mind, will the Council leader, please confirm if the Councils position is that an individual can self-identify gender whereby not only can a woman have a penis, but a male can also breastfeed babies?

Furthermore, Will the relevant Cabinet member for Education please confirm whether Oldham schools will be promoting transgender education to primary school children, including providing sexual instruction? And if so, will this Council allow parents to withdraw their children from lessons where this takes place?



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Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied, “thank you Mr Mayor and thank you to Ms Leach for her most recent contribution to public questions.

I have to say I was surprised at some of the statements made in this question as I can find no evidence of them being true. For example, I can’t find any reference or recording that shows any previous council leader confirming that women could have a penis. I find it interesting that the statement has been made with such confidence and can only imagine I must have missed something and that the evidence for this will be provided by those who are spreading this latest culture war narrative online. As to the main body of the question, as the questioner well knows there is a difference between someone’s sex and someone’s gender identity. Our policies here in Oldham are that we comply with the Equality Act in offering the required protections for both the characteristic of sex and separately of gender reassignment.

On the issue of transgender education I will ask my colleague and Cabinet Member for Education Cllr Ali to answer. “

Councillor Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills replied, “that to be absolutely clear primary schools in Oldham do not ‘promote transgender education’ as is stated by the questioner. Children at primary school are taught about a range of issues to help them understand the diversity of British society in the spirit of respect and tolerance.

The Government’s guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education is freely available online for any parents who are concerned about what children are being taught. It makes clear that individual primary schools can opt out of the sex education element of that curriculum. In addition, parents can also withdraw their children from the sex education element should their primary school choose to teach it. I must be absolutely clear that there is no school in Oldham providing sexual instruction to either primary school pupils or secondary school pupils. I do not know where this misinformation has come from but it is both incorrect and very damaging.

Schools in this borough work really hard to build relationships with parents around sensitive issues such as these and it is disappointing that we have people willing to damage that work for their own divisive reasons. “

4. Question from Lynne Kovacs

I have heard personally from many Oldhamers who read with shock and also a sense of shame, the story in the recent Mail on Sunday where Oldham Council leader Arooj Shah was reportedly celebrating her victory with the convicted heroin dealing getaway driver of the Oldham cop killer Dale Cregan. This career criminal has posted multiple photographs of himself on social media alongside Arooj Shah whilst abusing members of the public.

Contrary to being rehabilitated, I heard that this gangster’s most recent conviction was on the very morning of the voting count, 5th April, and who was actually at the count in the civic chambers.

Arooj Shah has previously described Mohammed Imran Ali, or Irish Immy as he likes to call himself, as a childhood friend and then later changed her reply to knowing him as a family friend. The people of Oldham deserve an explanation. This is in the public interest. Just what exactly is Arooj Shah's relationship with the one-time viagra and steroid salesman so there is no confusion in the future.

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied, "thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you to conservative campaigner and former conservative candidate Ms Kovacs for her latest public question. Again, I would refer this questioner to the response I gave to Full Council in December 2019. "

5. Question from Gary Tarbuck

During the 'COVID crisis', barricades were erected around the Public Gallery in the Council Chamber. However, once all COVID restrictions had been lifted by the Government, the Council, decided they wanted to leave the barricades in place. The Council then introduced draconian entrance requirements into public meetings. So draconian, that a councillor previously challenged as, "More stringent than prisons that they had visited." Not satisfied with these two measures the Council also used Greater Manchester Police's logo on letters issued to members of the public to try and silence dissent to the Council's failings to protect the town's children from the Grooming Gangs. The very toxicity that this Council wants to tackle was instigated by the actions of this very Council.

Will the new Council leader, if not apologise, at least acknowledge the completely unacceptable actions of her Council? And will she also acknowledge that waving and pointing a finger, or simply looking at someone, are completely unacceptable reasons to ban a member of the public from meetings?

Surely, if this town is to heal, then the Council must also accept its role in what it did wrong and its attempt to stifle democracy? Three leaders have already paid the price. What more needs to happen before this Council takes a look at itself and takes action against its own politicians and officers?

How is it that this Council thinks it's right that their elected leader, Arooj Shah, is seen celebrating during an election count, inside the Council building, with someone who has been convicted as a heroin dealer, a murderers getaway driver, and who also, was yet again, convicted hours earlier that very day? Yet think it's fine denying law-abiding citizens access to the Council chamber?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied, "thank you to Mr Tarbuck, the recently unsuccessful Independent Candidate for Saddleworth South and one time Proud of Oldham and Saddleworth candidate for this council, for his question. Mr Tarbuck provides an interesting although not quite accurate description of the security and health protection measures that we have had in place to protect our staff, elected members and the public over the last few years.

He is correct in saying that plastic screens, which he refers to as barricades, were erected in this chamber, and in many other council buildings, during the covid 19 pandemic, in keeping with national public health guidance at the time to support ongoing infection control, especially for vulnerable members of the community. The council, at the same time implemented a number of other health protection measures including distancing and the installation of hand sanitiser dispensers across our buildings.

During this time entrance requirements and sign in procedures were also strengthened as part of enabling track and trace procedures should a further outbreak be recorded. This process also supported the health and safety risk assessment undertaken as part of installing the screens as their installation meant the introduction of different emergency evacuation procedures.

Aside from our actions to protect people during the pandemic it is incredibly unfortunate that the behaviour of a small number of people at council meetings last year have led the council to have to take firm action against those who choose to shout obscene and abusive things at elected members and staff, against those who damage public property and against those who assault council staff.

While Mr Tarbuck can make inaccurate statements about the reasons for us having to ban people from this chamber for the safety of others attending meetings, I can confirm that those who received bans have been clearly informed why they were being given, were given time to appeal against them and were told that those bans would be reconsidered at an appropriate time.

I can confirm that those decisions were made in the interest of safety. It is categorically not acceptable that people who come here to take part in the democratic process, whether as elected members, council employees or members of the public be subjected to abuse, to foul language, to threats, to acts of vandalism and to violence. Those sorts of actions will not be tolerated and we will continue to take firm action against anyone behaving in that manner.

That sort of behaviour is not democracy, we do not 'stifle democracy' but we do protect people from abuse and from violence."

6. Question from David Else

Don't Trash Oldham is rightly one of the Council leader's flagship projects. One of the key concerns of Oldhamers is fly tipping and the appalling state of some of our streets. Can the leader of the Council therefore explain why she is being photographed celebrating her election victory at the home of a man who was fined for trashing Oldham? Does she accept how this looks to those of us who care deeply about this issue and will she apologise to the people of our town for her indiscretion?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied," thank you Mr Mayor and thank you to Mr Else for his question.

I have no idea who or what this question is referring to but would like to say that surely even I cannot be expected to know and

memorise the names of every person who has ever been fined or prosecuted by the council?

However, I can say that without exception I fully support the prosecution of anyone who fly-tips, litters or commits other environmental crimes in our borough – that’s why we’ve recently established our new environmental crime team so that we can take action against as many offenders as possible. My commitment to our Don’t Trash Oldham approach is absolute – we will work to clean up and transform neighbourhoods and we will work to take action against anyone who blights our great borough.”

7. Question from Hannah Roberts

Data from the Rivers Trust shows that in 2022 raw sewage was discharged from 17 locations in 537 separate spills for a total of 4,703 hours across Oldham East and Saddleworth.

In Saddleworth, discharges were reported along the River Tame at Clifton Holme, Delph New Road/Station Approach, Dobcross New Road, Greenfield and Woodbrook Road.

The Conservative Government has not only allowed this to happen – it voted down Labour’s attempts to make the privatised water companies clean up our streams and rivers. United Utilities is responsible for keeping our rivers clean but despite paying out £300m to shareholders plan to add the cost onto all our water bills.

Does the Leader of the Council agree that it is unacceptable for United Utilities to continue to discharge raw sewage in our waterways and will she raise residents’ concerns with United Utilities and ask for an urgent plan to stop this happening and to pay for the clean-up out of their profits rather than asking residents to pay more?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing, replied, “thank you to Ms Roberts for this question.

It is an absolute national disgrace that raw, untreated sewage is being allowed to enter our beautiful waterways, damaging wildlife and ruining our rivers, lakes and seas. I’m appalled that here in Oldham we are being used as a free dumping ground for the waste of private companies who, while they are destroying our waterways with sewage, continue to make exorbitant profits and pay outrageous amounts to their shareholders. And the biggest disgrace is that the Government in Westminster is seemingly going to do nothing about it.

I know that those concerns are shared and have been raised by all local MPs – including Jim McMahon – both in his local constituency role and also as Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This council will absolutely do all we can to make the Government and the companies involved aware that they cannot and morally should not be destroying our environment for profit. “

8. Question from Chris McManus

The council has invested in Oldham Town Centre with events such as the Reindeer Parade, Christmas Lights Switch On,

Brass Monkey's Festival, and Festival Oldham over the last few years.

Oldham Council spent £136,530 on these events last year with a further £128,910 budgeted for this year.

These events are funded by the Councils Economy Service in the Place and Economic Growth directorate.

However, outlying areas in the borough have had difficulty funding their traditional events, such as the Whit Walks, these being funded solely by the residents and local businesses of Saddleworth, and the Whit Friday Band Contest, this being funded by the residents, local businesses and contributions from local Councillors from their councillors' allowances.

Despite the popularity of these events, and in the case of the Band Contest, International popularity, funding has become a major concern, putting these cultural traditions at risk and unless resolved, I fear for the future of the Whit Friday walks and the Band Contest.

With that in mind can the following be answered:

Is the Council committed to supporting events that benefit the wider community, not just the Town centre?

Will the council commit to allocate funds for events, outside of the sphere of the Town Centre block Labour vote, and into the surrounding areas, ensuring that the historic events, such as Whit Friday can continue far into the future

If not willing to allocate funds to ensure the Whit Friday events can continue, can you confirm that the council will be happy to see the events ended and be replaced with Festival Oldham, which so happened to take place the following day this year?

Councillor Dean, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, replied, " thank you for your question, I can confirm that the Council is committed to events across the borough on an annual basis, however as with every local authority across the country, there is support for events in the town centre to boost footfall to support traders and local businesses.

The economic importance of local events is welcomed across the borough, and that is why the Council actively supports various events which cover different areas of the borough including the Tour of Britain, Half Marathon, and the Saddleworth and Oldham Band Contest.

Each year there are essential elements funded by the council to ensure that the Whit Friday Walks and Band Contests in the various villages can go ahead safely -

- Road closures, traffic management and stewards
- Toilet provision
- First Aid provision

In addition, there has been a regular contribution towards the central prize fund. For several years, local ward members have also chosen to make contributions from their individual councillor budgets.

The Council meets with the Band Contest organisers to support their various requirements and to support plans in development across the year. This year's contribution equated to £15k on top of contributions from ward members."

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 given with written answers, in due course.

b

QUESTIONS TO LEADER AND CABINET

Councillor Sheldon, Leader of the Conservative Group

Question 1: Oldham Elections

Councillor Sheldon referred to the election performance of the Oldham Labour Party whereby they had lost a total of 14 seats in the last three municipal elections, asking if he felt this trend would continue?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, expressed her confidence that Labour would retain its current seats and make gains in forthcoming municipal elections.

Question 2: Carjackings

Councillor Sheldon referred to a spate of carjackings that had been occurring across the Borough of Oldham in recent weeks and months. There were instances of men, armed with weapons, threatening motorists until they surrendered their vehicles. Councillor Sheldon referred to such carjacking incidents that had taken in Saddleworth, Failsworth and Shaw, including one particular incident where a female motorist was threatened by men, one armed with a machete, near a local beauty spot in Diggle. He asked what local councillors could do to combat this growing and dangerous threat?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied sharing Councillor Sheldon's concerns at such blatant criminal activity. Councillor Shah suggested that the Leaders of the Council's political groups could jointly meet with the Council's Community Safety team and with Greater Manchester Police to look at ways of combatting this growing problem. Councillor Shah also suggested that the Council could engage in a public campaign to raise public awareness.

Councillor Sykes, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

This Council currently has a host of vacancies to fill at the senior and management level. Over the last few years there has been an alarming level of turnover in the senior positions. There has also been several key people leave or in the process of leaving as they approach retirement.

This puts Oldham Council and Oldham in a precarious position.

This crisis of senior leadership retention is bad for continuity at the top it also effects the delivery of frontline services and the performance of staff at every level, and across every department. It also creates a disconnect or no connect, between senior officers and elected members of this Council.

At the induction event held for new members after the local elections, none of the senior executive team were present as promised. Not one. And no alternative has been put in place or even suggested to my knowledge.

The relationship starts off on the wrong foot... and then it gets worse. Because the turnover in the top jobs creates unstable working practices. There are meetings which change times and dates with no rhyme or reason given. Staff do not know who their line managers are and are not being developed, supported, and managed as they should be.

We talk about staff being our biggest asset the reality is very, very different.

This is a cultural problem that we must get to grips with, it is residents who suffer from a Council which is constantly at odds with itself and fails to function to its best ability.

So, my question is this what is the Administration going to do about retention and recruitment for senior officers and in fact all staff? And will they also commit to collaborating with elected members right across this chamber to ensure that we foster the right relationship between officers and elected members, for the benefit of the people we are here to serve?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied that there was already a cross-party approach to the recruitment of senior staff, with members from a cross section of the Council's political groups on selection panels. Recruitment to vacant senior positions within Oldham Council was underway and had attracted a good response, thus far, with a high calibre of candidates. The levels of vacancies was not necessarily indicative of a culture problem at Oldham Council, as some of the vacancies are due to retirement and others to natural churn and turnover.

Question from Councillor S. Bashforth:

Following on from residents' concerns across the Borough and indeed across the Northwest regarding the activities and business practices of IX Telecom. Can the leader please update me on the outcome of talks held between IX and leaders of GM councils?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied, thank you for your question and thank you for the lobbying you have done on behalf of your residents.

As Leader, I have met with IX Wireless, together with Jim McMahon MP and our Chief Executive, to contribute to the ongoing discussions that council officers are also having regarding their proposals across the borough. We know that people take pride in their areas and don't want any views to be blighted by these masts. There does need to be a balance and compromise of providing a service but locations need to be sensitively handled.

During our meeting with IX Wireless, we secured a commitment from them to hold resident forums where they will act and take on board feedback. If people are troubled or have concerns where they are if they can write to us we will share their concerns directly with IX Wireless.

I do think that it's important to state that IX Wireless are one of many new operators across the country rolling out new broadband infrastructure, enabled by national legislation designed to increase the future capacity of broadband

infrastructure and introduce more competition, and cheaper broadband prices, into the market. To enable this, much of the new communications infrastructure (such as the telegraph poles) can be installed by operators under national permitted development rights, and so the Council has very limited, or no, control over that infrastructure delivery.

I cannot speak for other GM Leaders, as to what contact they have had with IX Wireless, but I do know that the GM Authorities are working towards having a joined-up and consistent approach to communications operators, and these conversations continue to happen amongst relevant officers.

Question from Councillor Charters:

We have seen a number of Road Traffic Accidents on Vulcan Street in my ward of St James, where recently a young boy was hospitalised after being struck by a car, and there has also been significant damage to properties on this road through collisions. Residents across Derker have been asking for traffic calming measures and a reduction in speed limits, and this still hasn't happened. Can the relevant Cabinet Member tell me what progress is being made to address speeding in Derker and what support residents can give to the council to protect pedestrians?

Councillor Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Housing and Licensing replied, Thank you for your question. The current speed limit on Vulcan Street is 30mph and the traffic counts undertaken previously show that: in 2015 – average speed was 22.5 mph; and in 2021 – the average speed was 23.0 mph. Therefore, from the evidence collected, while driving behaviours might feel different on the road, the actual speeds being recorded for the majority of vehicles are within suitable limits.

However, as we have recently received increased numbers of complaints about speeding, and given the last evidence collected was in 2021, we have requested new speed surveys be undertaken (Automatic Traffic Counts) on Vulcan Street to establish if the situation has changed.

Due to the relatively low number of injury collisions and overall general compliance with the speed limit, Vulcan Street is not considered a high priority route for highway safety measures. The available budget for such measures is very limited and is used to target sites and routes with proven high collision rates and vehicle speeds.

Within the last year, the Traffic Team have supported new "SLOW" road markings being implemented on the carriageway adjacent to the existing School warning signs associated with Willow Park Primary School, to help raise awareness for drivers and to encourage them to slow down at specific locations.

The redevelopment of previously demolished housing stock sites on Vulcan Street and throughout Derker will involve the implementation of possible new highway measures from developer contributions. These funds will be used for targeted local highway improvements including appropriate road safety measures if this is confirmed as necessary.

Question from Councillor Holly Harrison:

During the election, I was approached by two residents; a mother and a daughter, who raised their concerns regarding their sense of safety, for the daughter, while leaving the tram at Coalshaw Green Park.

Sarah Everard was simply walking home when she was kidnapped and attacked by Wayne Couzens. Prior to this, women already had an inherent sense of vulnerability when walking alone – post this, this has only heightened.

There are lit routes for this resident to walk home but why should women & girls have to curtail their freedoms due to a fear of being attacked.

Whilst I am not saying our parks are unsafe, women – across the country - do feel unsafe when they are walking alone in a park or open space after dark. Indeed, according to the Office for National Statistics (2021), for every 5 women, 4 women felt unsafe while for every 5 men, 2 felt unsafe.

Tracy Brabin, the West Yorkshire Mayor, recently commissioned a report, entitled, 'Making Parks Safe for Women and Girls'. This report found that better lighting, less dense shrubbery, visible security, help points, and more staff presence would assist in their fears.

Whilst it is acknowledged that a change in societal behaviours would help with this issue & I know funding may be an issue, I would like the Leader of the Council or relevant cabinet member to inform me, the residents of Chadderton South & the wider borough of Oldham, what they intend to do to help women and girls feel safer when using our public parks, & in particular, Coalshaw Green Park.

Councillor Taylor replied Thank you for your question.

Oldham Council and its partners are committed to safety on the public transport network. In 2021, through the Home Office Safer Streets (Violence Against Women and Girls) fund, we worked in partnership with GMCA and secured over £500,000 to support our work in this area.

The funds allowed the Council to run a number of initiatives, including: Running a Trusted People schemes (Street Angels and Youth Service. Training of 570 staff to identify and respond to concerning behaviours. A reporting campaign to promote GMP's livechat function. A poster campaign, theatre production and college festival , led by Oldham College , focussing on changing attitudes and behaviours to women and girls. Integrated CCTV in key hotspots. 51 new cameras installed and purchase of Drones as 'eye in the sky' to be used by TfGM and GMP Safer Transport Unit

The Safer Streets Project was recognised formally winning an award for innovation in practice. The work undertaken resulted in

a significant drop in reported incidents with an average 25% month on month reduction of incidents reported by females. The partnership activity continues and incidents on public transport are monitored constantly, with sharing of information with TfGM and GMP regularly. We will not hesitate to support action against any person who is identified as involved in these types of behaviours.

Councillor Hobin, Leader of the Failsworth Independent Party

Councillor Hobin felt that a number of questions that were asked earlier in the meeting, during the time set aside for Public Questions, were either unanswered by the Leader or Cabinet Members or were only partially answered.

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied that she and her Cabinet members were always prepared to answer questions, including difficult ones. The Council encouraged the submission of public questions and made sure that they were all answered. Unasked questions were given written answers after the meeting.

Councillor Hince, Leader of the Independent Group

Councillor Hince asked if the Leader of the Council, the Mayor and Councillor Mushtaq would be attending the Oldham Pride Event in 2023?

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council replied confirming that the Mayor would be attending the event.

Question from Councillor Jenny Harrison:

I understand that some changes have been made to the way in which private hire taxi companies now display their taxi logos. Can the Cabinet Member for Licensing please explain the rationale for these changes and provide reassurance that this will lead to a safer and more robust system for users and drivers?

Councillor Taylor Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing replied, thank you for your question. Following consultation in Spring 2023, the Licensing Committee implemented a number of changes to our taxi policy last month (in June this year).

Some of the changes support local residents feedback about wanting to see more taxi's licenced in their home authority and not elsewhere in the country. Other changes are following trade feedback, supported by government guidance, which includes the removal of the front licence plate and door operator signs, instead being replaced with smaller council issued door signage and a window disc.

This will make drivers feel less like targets in their vehicles from anti-social behaviour aimed at them and in turn will ensure passengers are less likely to suffer injury or distress from such

actions. Initial feedback has been very positive on this policy change which will bring a welcome boost to the local economy.



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Question from Councillor Birch:

Could the relevant Cabinet Member please provide an update on the status for the recruitment of the Director of Finance given that this is a statutory role?

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources, replied that it is with sadness that I answer this question as it is only necessary due to the impending retirement of our current Director of Finance, Anne Ryans after 17 years' service to Oldham Council. Recruitment to the position of Director of Finance is currently underway with the advert due to close this week. We are hoping to be in a position where we make an offer to a successful candidate by the end of this month – this will allow time for a reasonable handover to take place.

Question from Councillor Lancaster:

I understand that the Council has previously declined to seek Community Safe Scheme Accreditation for its staff, but will the Administration now revisit that decision, with a view to pursuing this Accreditation?

It would not be a silver bullet and further powers may still be wanted outside those awarded under this Accreditation. However, it would be a step in the right direction with more weapons in the arsenal, so to say, such as the ability for Enforcement Officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering. In their campaign to combat fly-tipping, the National Farmers' Union are strongly encouraging all local authorities to pursue Community Safe Scheme Accreditation, and Oldham should meet that ask.

Furthermore, apart from this Accreditation, can I invite the Administration to pursue all other actions to strengthen the powers available to its staff responsible for community safety? This is an important statutory duty of the Council, and no stone should be left unturned in improving delivery of that duty.

Councillor Taylor Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Licensing replied, thank you for your question. The accreditation scheme has been considered previously; however, it was determined that the accreditation would not be pursued, and this remains the Councils view at this time as the Council already has a significant number of powers which are used effectively.

Officers in the Environmental Health team are already delegated to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping or littering offences where the investigations carried out warrant that action.

Key to the decision is the fact that without the additional power to demand names and addresses, the delegation of more police related enforcement powers which the accreditation would bring, would not bring any added value. There is also the lack of the power to detain a person who fails to provide their name and address, so an individual can simply refuse or run off. Council colleagues are not equipped to detain persons, so even if these

powers were introduced through accreditation, in reality they would not be actionable.

We need to manage the expectations of residents and it would not be fair to our residents if they thought that the Council could respond to a presenting situation instead of the police, when in reality we would not have the full powers and resources that we would need to do this.

The ongoing changes to the policing model to reduce the number of PCSOs and increase the number of PCs is indicative of the recognition that Police Officers need to be the immediate front-line response to most community safety/crime and disorder related matters in their capacity as fully warranted and specially trained Officers. We will of course always support police colleagues where we are able to do so with follow on action, using the tools and powers that we have at our disposal.

c

QUESTIONS ON CABINET MINUTES

The Council was requested to note the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 27th February 2023 and 20th March 2023. The Council was asked to receive questions on these minutes, from members of the Council who are not members of the Cabinet and to receive appropriate responses from Cabinet members.

Members asked the following questions: -

a. Question from Councillor Gloster

The Council have stated that Northern Roots is being funded by outside funding and grants, and not by the council. However, this means that significant bids have been made to fund Northern Roots that could have funded alternative projects across Oldham borough.

How many grant applications for capital funding have been made related to Northern Roots over the last five years? Given that very few capital funding applications have been put in for projects in other wards, such as Shaw and Crompton over the same period of time, does this mean that most wards have missed out on capital bids that could have been made if the Council were not focusing their attention on grant funding for this major project in Alexandra and Medlock Vale?

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet member for Finance and Corporate Resources, replied, thank you for your follow up questions regarding Northern Roots' funding.

Firstly, the capital funding for this project is from two funding bids that have been made over the last 5 years – the Towns Fund and the Levelling Up Fund, Round 2. These two successful grant awards were both from central government in alignment with the very strict eligibility criteria, and both grants were to support a package of projects not solely Northern Roots. Grant funding applications are extremely limited now, many of the old grant awards have gone and simply don't exist anymore. The latest opportunities have been extremely competitive geographically and thematically, pitching education and skills, against heritage and arts, against transport and accessibility etc. During the Big Conversation a few years ago, significant community consultation, awareness and insight was collated to

help shape and inform potential projects / priorities in readiness for when grant funding applications became available. This included feedback from members, key stakeholders, businesses, and local communities in various different forums, methods and opportunities. The Oldham Big Town Centre Conversation engaged thousands of local residents, businesses and visitors.

We have already committed to supporting the development of District Growth Plans, and therefore this major engagement and consultation process will run once again to understand the issues and opportunities in all our local areas, in readiness for whatever new grant opportunities come along for further projects in Oldham.

b. Question from Councillor Al-Hamdani

With regards to the decision on the new theatre for Oldham, I warmly welcome the Council's decision to ensure a new theatre building for the town, and the decision to make Oldham Coliseum the anchor tenant.

The Arts Council has previously indicated that they are not supportive of producing theatres – one that creates its own shows such as the Oldham Coliseum. It has also been stated by other arts organisations that in order for a producing theatre to be financially viable, it requires a minimum seating capacity of 450 seats, considerably more than the current plans. Having a producing theatre gives people in Oldham an opportunity to build a career in theatre.

Can Oldham Council confirm that the Arts Council is fully supportive of Oldham Coliseum being a producing theatre in the new building, and confirm that the business plan is based on the Coliseum Theatre producing its own shows?

Councillor Dean, Cabinet member for Communities and Culture, replied, thank you, Councillor Al-Hamdani, for your question. There remains a joint determination between the Council and the Coliseum to work together to support a future for a producing theatre in Oldham, with regular discussions taking place between the Council and the new Board of Trustees at Oldham Coliseum Theatre, and with ongoing support of the Arts Council, we will continue to shape the business plans together.

c. Question from Councillor Hamblett

Could the Leader of the Council confirm if the recent works undertaken outside the site of Tommyfield Market in Oldham were subject to Equality Impact Assessments, as there had been a number of people who had suffered falls and tripping injuries in that area.

Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council, replied expressing her concern at the question but undertaking to provide Councillor Hamblett with a full written answer in due course.

Resolved:

1. That the Minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 27th February 2023 and on 20th March 2023, be noted.

2. That the questions, above and responses thereon be noted.



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NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Motion 1 – Oldham Assurance Review – Final Stage

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Mushtaq SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council notes a year on from the publication of the Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, and the subsequent publication of the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, both finding institutional failings and that much more is needed to instil confidence in victims and survivors that adequate support and justice will be secured when complaints are made to officials.

This Council notes that the findings in the Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham found a clear political commitment and a sustained attempt to develop best practice in addressing the threat of child sexual exploitation.

This Council believes that this commitment was shared by many dedicated frontline workers working hard to protect vulnerable young people. It was clear however that there were unacceptable systemic failures to provide support and justice to victims and survivors, and to hold offenders to account for the abuse they carried out.

This Council notes the response from the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police and the promise to review cases as part of Operation Sherwood. This Council believes that the findings of the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse further demonstrated a failure to provide support and justice to victims and survivors across the country, and to hold offenders to account for the abuse they carried out. Moreover, the inquiry identified that significant reform was needed and made 20 recommendations for change.

This Council notes the response from government to the findings of the report, and to the recommendations for reform proposed by the investigation panel.

This Council believes that public confidence is essential in combating child sexual abuse and exploitation, and that public awareness and transparency on the characteristics of abuse and how it presents in various forms, are important to the public identifying indicators and patterns of potential abuse when it takes place, and in reporting it for investigation.

This Council resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the Home Office to request:

1. that they accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.
2. that following the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, and Oldham

Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, the government will support the final stage assurance review announced by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the terms of reference of which will include current operational practice across key agencies.



This Council further resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the borough Members of Parliament to request:

1. That they make representations to the Home Office supporting the Council's request for the government to accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.

This Council further resolves to:

1. Develop and adopt a Victims and Survivors Charter in consultation with victim and survivor groups outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements placed on officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and to secure its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.
2. Support further work to raise public awareness among young people in all relevant settings, and with the general public to support prevention, early identification of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and to promote the greater reporting of safeguarding concerns.
3. To develop and adopt a mandatory duty to report safeguarding concerns, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, enshrined in the Code of Conduct for elected members, and consult on the duty for officials employed by Oldham Council.

This Council resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the Mayor of Greater Manchester in his capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner overseeing Greater Manchester Police to request;

1. Support in the development of a Victims and Survivors Charter, outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements of officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.
2. That an update on Operation Sherwood is provided to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board.

1st AMENDMENT

Councillor Quigg MOVED and Councillor Arnott SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

This Council notes a year on from the publication of the Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, and the subsequent publication of the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, both finding institutional failings and that much more is needed to instil confidence in victims and survivors that adequate support and justice will be secured when complaints are made to officials.

This Council notes and apologises to the survivors of the horrific crime of Child Sexual Exploitation in Oldham. It notes with disappointment that the Assurance Review did not go far enough to make conclusions beyond the narrow terms of reference that it was set, and which can only really be met by a full public inquiry.

For many the failures only scratched the surface. Given the scale of criminality in areas such as Rotherham, Rochdale, and Telford. The Assurance Review only assured the Council and Greater Manchester Police that whilst there were failings in the past, that they are now attempting to right that wrong today. This is not good enough and it only adds to the belief that there is a cover up and an attempt to not address the large-scale negligence and criminality of those involved.

As the Home Secretary Suella Braverman identified political correctness was to often to blame for child sexual abuse signs being overlooked. This saw institutions and state agencies, whether social workers, teachers, the police turn a blind eye, to those signs of abuse out of political correctness, out of fear, of being called racists, out of fear, of being called bigoted. As a result, they failed to bring justice to those victims and survivors. Justice delayed is justice denied. To this day those who worked and held positions of authority within Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and at Greater Manchester Police who were in a duty of care have not been held to account for their failures. No one no matter how high or low in an important public role or organisation should be exempt from the law.

We cannot ignore the negligence of public officials. Their failure to do the right thing ultimately failed survivors and allowed criminals to get away with this horrific crime. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and Greater Manchester Police cannot be allowed to continue to effectively mark their own homework.

This Council notes the response from the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police and the promise to review cases as part of Operation Sherwood. However, Operation Sherwood does not go far enough, nor meet the expectations of the public and survivors as was set out to the full Council back on the 27/06/2022. Greater Manchester Police must deliver justice and they must follow the evidence beyond the 11 cases identified without fear or favour. Political Correctness, political stakeholders and cultural sensitivities must not get in the way of a full and proper pursuit of justice. Victims and survivors must not be failed by public officials again.

This Council believes that the findings of the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse further demonstrated a failure to provide support and justice to victims and survivors across the country, and to hold offenders to account for the abuse they carried out. Moreover, the inquiry identified that significant reform was needed and made 20 recommendations for change.

This Council notes the response from government to the findings of the report, and to the recommendations for reform proposed by the investigation panel.

This Council believes that public confidence is essential in combating child sexual abuse and exploitation, and that public

awareness and transparency on the characteristics of abuse and how it presents in various forms, are important to the public identifying indicators and patterns of potential abuse when it takes place, and in reporting it for investigation.

It is however important to remember that we must seek justice for all the victims of this crime in Oldham and that Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and Greater Manchester Police cannot blame their failures on prevailing cultural attitudes, prejudices, or bureaucracies elsewhere in the Country or the passage of time. It only adds to the belief that there is a cover up and an attempt to deflect from the failures here in Oldham. It is a fact that abusing Children has been a crime since at least the introduction of the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act 1889, and all subsequent acts of Parliament since. No matter how long ago, abusing Children is an evil crime. Oldham should be leading the way in prosecuting all those who failed our Children, not following the failures and lack of action elsewhere.

This Council resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the Home Office to request;

1. that they accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.
2. that following the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, and Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, the government will look to go further and beyond the final stage assurance review announced by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the terms of reference of which will include current operational practice across key agencies, by granting a full public inquiry into the historic allegations of Child Sexual Exploitation within the Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council area.
3. formally request a full public inquiry into the historic allegations of Child Sexual Exploitation within the Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council area.

This Council further resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the borough Members of Parliament to request;

1. That they make representations to the Home Office supporting the Council's request for the government to accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.
2. A full public inquiry into the historic allegations of Child Sexual Exploitation within the Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council area.
3. That they use the opportunity to table a private members bill, an opposition day debate and lobby HM Government to change the law to make it easier to prosecute public officials for failing to protect the most vulnerable in our society.

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

2nd AMENDMENT

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

This Council notes a year on from the publication of the Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, and the subsequent publication of the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, both finding institutional failings and that much more is needed to instil confidence in victims and survivors that adequate support and justice will be secured when complaints are made to officials. This Council notes that the findings in the Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham found a clear political commitment and a sustained attempt to develop best practice in addressing the threat of child sexual exploitation.

This Council believes that this commitment was shared by many dedicated frontline workers working hard to protect vulnerable young people. It was clear however that there were unacceptable systemic failures to provide support and justice to victims and survivors, and to hold offenders to account for the abuse they carried out.

This Council notes the response from the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police and the promise to review cases as part of Operation Sherwood. This Council believes that the findings of the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse further demonstrated a failure to provide support and justice to victims and survivors across the country, and to hold offenders to account for the abuse they carried out. Moreover, the inquiry identified that significant reform was needed and made 20 recommendations for change.

This Council has, in response to a request from the Liberal Democrat group, committed to implementing all recommendations from the IICSA report which were applicable to local councils.

This Council notes the response from government to the findings of the report, and to the recommendations for reform proposed by the investigation panel.

This Council believes that public confidence is essential in combating child sexual abuse and exploitation, and that public awareness and transparency on the characteristics of abuse and how it presents in various forms, are important to the public identifying indicators and patterns of potential abuse when it takes place, and in reporting it for investigation.

This Council resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the Home Office to request:

1. That they accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.
2. That following the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, and Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, the government will support the final stage assurance review announced by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the

terms of reference of which will include current operational practice across key agencies.



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This Council further resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the borough Members of Parliament to request:

1. That they make representations to the Home Office supporting the Council's request for the government to accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.

This Council further resolves to:

1. Develop and adopt a Victims and Survivors Charter in consultation with victim and survivor groups outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements placed on officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and to secure its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.
2. Support further work to raise public awareness among young people in all relevant settings, and with the general public to support prevention, early identification of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and to promote the greater reporting of safeguarding concerns.
3. To develop and adopt a mandatory duty to report safeguarding concerns, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, enshrined in the Code of Conduct for elected members, and consult on the duty for officials employed by Oldham Council.
4. Oldham Council will fully support any further investigations that are brought forward into pre-existing cases of child sexual exploitation.

This Council resolves that the Chief Executive writes to the Mayor of Greater Manchester in his capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner overseeing Greater Manchester Police to request:

1. Support in the development of a Victims and Survivors Charter, outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements of officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.
2. That an update on Operation Sherwood is provided to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board.

On being put to the vote the AMENDMENT was CARRIED

On being out to the vote the MOTION as AMENDED was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Chief Executive writes to the Home Office to request:
 - a. That they accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse, and that

a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.

b. That following the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (CSE) led by Professor Alexis Jay, and Oldham Assurance review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, the government will support the final stage assurance review announced by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, the terms of reference of which will include current operational practice across key agencies.

2. That the Chief Executive writes to the borough Members of Parliament to request:

a. That they make representations to the Home Office supporting the Council's request for the government to accept each of the 20 recommendations made by the national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and that a plan for implementing each of the recommendations in the current parliament is secured.

4. That the Council develop and adopt a Victims and Survivors Charter in consultation with victim and survivor groups outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements placed on officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and to secure its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.

5. That the Council support further work to raise public awareness among young people in all relevant settings, and with the general public to support prevention, early identification of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and to promote the greater reporting of safeguarding concerns.

6. That the Council develop and adopt a mandatory duty to report safeguarding concerns, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, to be enshrined in the Code of Conduct for elected members, and consult on the duty for officials employed by Oldham Council.

7. That Oldham Council will fully support any further investigations that are brought forward into pre-existing cases of child sexual exploitation.

8. That the Chief Executive be requested to write to the Mayor of Greater Manchester in his capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner overseeing Greater Manchester Police to request:

a. Support in the development of a Victims and Survivors Charter, outlining the rights and support which will be provided to those affected by child sexual abuse and exploitation, and the requirements of officials in administering and investigating reports of abuse, and its adoption by all relevant statutory authorities.

9. That an update on Operation Sherwood be provided to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board.

Motion 2 – Block Lane, GP Surgery

Councillor Brownridge MOVED and Councillor Fida Hussain SECONDED the following Motion

In late May 2023 Councillors in Chadderton and Werneth became aware that the GP partners at Block Lane Surgery had informed the Integrated Care Partnership that they intended to terminate their contract to run General Practice out of the Block Lane surgery.

For patients in Chadderton and Werneth this has led to an understandable amount of concern and confusion, as local Councillors we are equally frustrated by this process and feel powerless to help our residents when they turn to us at this time. Despite a close and very productive working relationship between Oldham Council and partners at the old CCG and new Integrated Care Partnership, as local Councillors we have no formal decision-making powers over GPs and NHS functions more broadly.

Therefore:

- The Council regrets the decision taken by partners at Block Lane practice to relinquish their contract by mid-July.
- This Council notes that this is the second surgery the partners at Block Lane have closed in Oldham within the last twelve months and regrets that this decision has had a detrimental impact on our residents.
- This Council thanks the local NHS for its hard work to try and keep Block Lane practice open, operating and serving residents in Werneth and Chadderton.
- This Council pledges to support the local NHS in anyway it can, to ensure patients smoothly transition to nearby practices.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Bishop MOVED and Councillor Gloster SECONDED the following AMENDMENT:

In late May 2023 Councillors in Chadderton and Werneth became aware that the GP partners at Block Lane Surgery had informed the Integrated Care Partnership that they intended to terminate their contract to run General Practice out of the Block Lane surgery.

For patients in Chadderton and Werneth this has led to an understandable amount of concern and confusion, as local Councillors we are equally frustrated by this process and feel powerless to help our residents when they turn to us at this time. This Council notes the commitment to funding towards a new health centre in Chadderton and Saddleworth that was in the 2020/21 Council Budget, but which was removed in the 2021/22 budget.

Despite a close and very productive working relationship between Oldham Council and partners at the old CCG and new Integrated Care Partnership, as local Councillors we have no formal decision-making powers over GPs and NHS functions more broadly.

Therefore:

- The Council regrets the decision taken by partners at Block Lane practice to relinquish their contract by mid-July.
- This Council notes that this is the second surgery the partners at Block Lane have closed in Oldham within the last twelve months and regrets that this decision has had a detrimental impact on our residents.
- This Council thanks the local NHS for its hard work to try and keep Block Lane practice open, operating and serving residents in Werneth and Chadderton.
- This Council pledges to support the local NHS in anyway it can, to ensure patients smoothly transition to nearby practices.
- This Council commits to ensuring that scrutiny of the Northern Care Alliance is restored, and a new joint scrutiny panel is created to ensure that elected members can deliver direct messages on their residents' concerns about the delivery of NHS services.

On being put to the vote the AMENDMENT was declared LOST.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council regrets the decision taken by partners at Block Lane practice to relinquish their contract by mid-July.
2. That this Council notes that this is the second surgery the partners at Block Lane have closed in Oldham within the last twelve months and regrets that this decision has had a detrimental impact on our residents.
3. That this Council thanks the local NHS for its hard work to try and keep Block Lane practice open, operating and serving residents in Werneth and Chadderton.
4. That this Council pledges to support the local NHS in anyway it can, to ensure patients smoothly transition to nearby practices.

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NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS

MOTION 1 - Request for Land to build a Muslim Cemetery
Councillor Ghafoor MOVED and Councillor Byrne SECONDED
the following Motion:

This council notes that:

Oldham is a multi-faith, diverse borough and that is something we can all be proud of. The Muslim population in this borough has grown significantly in the last decade, both in terms of the raw number of people and as a percentage of the total population of Oldham, from 17.7% in 2011 to 24.4% in 2021. There are 7 cemeteries across Oldham, but regarding cemeteries with existing separate burial sections for Muslims, there is only one, Chadderton. Other faiths have their own cemeteries with the borough, for example the Jewish Cemetery in Failsworth, whereas Muslims only have a section of a cemetery.

Within Islamic teaching, cremation is forbidden. For Muslims, that only leaves burial as an available funeral ceremony option. As our Muslim population in the borough increases, there will only be more need for space for burials as time goes on. Chadderton cemetery, as it is currently, has around 5 years remaining before it reaches capacity, and so the need to start planning for the future is essential.

This is a national problem, with discussions in the national press about a capacity crisis both across all types of cemetery and also specifically within Muslim cemeteries, a problem that was in the pipeline prior to, but exacerbated by, the Covid-19 pandemic. Any crisis in cemetery capacity will have an oversized impact on the Muslim community because, as seen above, burials are the only option for Muslims.

Given the looming capacity crisis and the rise in the Muslim population in Oldham, the need for an expansion of graveyard provision for Muslims across Oldham is clear.

What this motion proposes is the creation of a separate Muslim cemetery within the borough to help minimise the risk of a capacity crisis at Chadderton cemetery.

This motion proposes that a piece of council-owned land be identified by the Chief Executive and donated to the community, who will then be responsible for the creation and maintenance of the site, funding it through donations and burial fees, meaning that there will no expense to the council, other than the initial donation of the land.

The Council would also benefit as a new cemetery would ease capacity pressures on the existing cemeteries in the borough, reducing the need for imminent expansion at the sites. This motion could also act as a model for other faiths to make similar requests to the council regarding cemetery space, further easing pressure on the council's cemeteries system.

This is a system that has worked elsewhere. The Gardens of Peace, which operates in London, has a similar model across its sites, costing taxpayers nothing whilst delivering for the community. Similar, privately run cemeteries have also been successful in other parts of the country, for example Keighley and Glasgow, as well as the Woodland Cemetery in Manchester. Indeed, the Jewish cemetery in Failsworth has this model and has operated. It is independent from the council, showing that a privately run religious cemetery can work in the borough.

This Council notes:

- That there is a growing need within the borough for a Muslim Cemetery to serve the community going forward.
- Other than the donation of the land, this council will not incur any expenses for the development of this cemetery or its upkeep.
- That the development of a Muslim graveyard will relieve capacity pressures on the existing Oldham cemeteries infrastructure.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Ask the chief executive to identify a parcel of land for use as a Muslim graveyard

- That this land be consider for donation to the Oldham Muslim Cemetery Committee (OMCC) for use as a Muslim graveyard, acting in accordance with the land and property protocols and report back to council within the next three months.

AMENDMENT

Councillor Hince MOVED and Councillor Hobin SECONDED the following AMENDMENT

This Council notes that:

Oldham is a multi-faith, diverse borough and that is something we can all be proud of. The Muslim population in this borough has grown significantly in the last decade, both in terms of the raw number of people and as a percentage of the total population of Oldham, from 17.7% in 2011 to 24.4% in 2021.

There are 7 cemeteries across Oldham, but regarding cemeteries with existing separate burial sections for Muslims, there is only two, Chadderton and Greenacres.

Within Islamic teaching, cremation is forbidden. For Muslims, that only leaves burial as an available funeral ceremony option. As our Muslim population in the borough increases, there will only be more need for space for burials as time goes on.

What this motion proposes is the creation of extra capacity in our cemeteries for all faiths, including those of the Islamic faith. This Council will cater for all faiths and those of none. There is a duty of care as set out in statue to run efficient and well organised burial grounds. We do not believe it is appropriate or right to gift public land to a private organisation that then excludes the majority of the tax paying public. Nor do we believe that the Council should be allowed to opt out of its responsibility to one section of our community.

Public cemeteries are for all communities. Indeed as we seek to live harmoniously with each other in life, then we should do so in death.

This Council notes:

That all faiths deserve a place to be buried and as we live in a tolerant multi faith society that we accommodate people's needs in a dignified way.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Accommodate needs of Oldham's communities through expanding burial sections in all Oldham Council run cemeteries
- Ask the Chief Executive to identify a plot of public owned land in the Civil Parish area of Saddleworth suitable for a new cemetery which will cater for all.
- Make provision for a Muslim section in all existing Council run cemeteries.

A vote was taken on the AMENDMENT which was LOST.

A recorded vote was requested and taken on the MOTION as follows:

A recorded vote was requested and taken on the Motion, as follows:

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	AGAINST	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	AGAINST	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	ABSTAIN	Ibrahim Nyla	AGAINST
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Arnott Dave	AGAINST	Irfan Muhammed	FOR
Ball Sandra	ABSENT	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Bashforth Steven	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	ABSTAIN
Birch Ros	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	ABSTAIN	Malik Abdul	AGAINST
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	ABSTAIN
Byrne Pam	FOR	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Moore Eddie	AGAINST
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	ABSTAIN
Davis Peter*	ABSENT	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Fryer Paul	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	AGAINST
Ghafoor Kamran	FOR	Rea Lucia	AGAINST
Gloster Hazel	ABSTAIN	Salamat Ali Aqeel	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	ABSENT	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	ABSTAIN	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	ABSENT	Sheldon Graham	FOR
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Harrison Jennifer	AGAINST	Surjan Ruji Sapna	AGAINST
Hince Marc	AGAINST	Sykes Howard	ABSTAIN
Hindle Neil	AGAINST	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	AGAINST	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hurley Maggie	AGAINST	Williamson Diane	ABSTAIN
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	AGAINST

*Councillor Davis having earlier an interest in this agenda item and he left during the room during the consideration of this Motion.

On a recorded VOTE being taken 8 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION with 39 VOTES cast AGAINST and

there were 9 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore LOST.



Motion 2 - Time for Oldham to get the basics right
Councillor Murphy MOVED and Councillor Gloster to
SECONDED the following Motion:

This Council believes that:

Residents across Oldham Borough expect and deserve first class public services. Residents feel that services such as schools, maintenance of roads, planning, park maintenance and drain clearance represent some of the most significant work that the council does because they affect the everyday lives of the people we represent.

When residents say they cannot rely on these services to be of consistent high quality, it undermines the trust that residents place in their council and their readiness to engage with services and that the Council should listen and take action.

Pride in service, strong communication, agility, resourcefulness and good interdepartmental cooperation are all essential values in delivering first class services across the board, and that these values must be set from the top down.

This Council notes that:

There is a growing trend of complacent underperformance that affects much of the council's key service delivery and it needs addressing. This is keenly felt by our residents, who regularly tell us that they feel their council "does not get the basics right." Fly-tipping offences have spiralled out of control in Oldham, with the Borough seeing massive increases in offences when compared to other authorities across the North-West. Littering and dog-fouling offences continue unabated, with the council failing to issue Fixed Penalty Notices with any meaningful consistency or to come up with stronger solutions to tackle this ongoing issue.

Oldham's schools are falling behind, with more than half now deemed as 'needing improvement and it cannot continue.

This Council resolves to:

Move away from vanity projects that do not materialise and refocus its priorities; directing as much effort and attention into supporting basic frontline services as it has done into regeneration projects.

To take this motion to Overview and Scrutiny to see what can be done to improve the situation and provide a report to council on their findings.

On being put to the vote the MOTION was LOST.

Motion 3 - Independent Public Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (Historical & Present) within Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC), including the actions and knowledge of Council Members and Officers.
Councillor Hobin MOVED and Councillor Rea SECONDED the following Motion:

Council notes that:

The Newsam and Ridgway review into historic Child Sexual Exploitation in Oldham was published on Monday 20th June 2022. The review found that some children had been failed by agencies that were meant to protect them and that there were serious failings in the handling of some cases.

The review was discussed at an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on Mon 27 June 2022. The public were invited to submit questions to a panel that included the Council Leader and Greater Manchester Mayor. Councillors from all political parties were also invited to ask questions or make statements. While questions were asked, sadly many were left unanswered, and some wholly ignored. Unfortunately, questions remain. We as a council, and as such members herein, have a duty to protect children and vulnerable people of the borough and beyond. The reality is, until we get to the root of the issue, we cannot move forward as we are unable to ensure that failings highlighted in the review are not continuing.

It is very clear there is significant dissatisfaction from the public and opposition parties with the contents of the report and that this has been further evidenced in the press and on social media. There is a significant groundswell of opinion that a fully independent public inquiry is needed to address the issue of CSE in Oldham, both historically and in the present.

The purpose of the Inquiry should be to fully investigate and establish the facts of child sexual exploitation across the Borough of Oldham, to identify if, and where, public, and other, services had failed and where possible, to establish who was accountable for any failure and to make recommendations for the future.

We acknowledge that Operation Sherwood, which has been set up by GMP, will look into the criminal activity and hopefully bring convictions on the perpetrators of these heinous crimes against children and the vulnerable in our Borough.

The Leader of the Council has previously stated that CSE has and in all probability will continue to occur in the Borough.

This issue is above any party-political leanings. Together we need to eradicate this corruption which lies within our society.

Council resolves that;

- The Chief Executive writes to the Home Secretary and the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on behalf of the council requesting that they instigate a fully independent and broad ranging public inquiry as soon as is practically possible.
- That the Terms of Reference for the inquiry are set independently of the Greater Manchester and OMBC administrations, by Government and that all relevant documentation including those relating to the recent assurance review are made available to the inquiry.
- That a cross-party steering group works alongside the inquiry which will report to the council and the public on a regular basis and will function as a conduit between the inquiry team, council officers and elected representatives.

A recorded vote was requested and taken on the Motion, as follows:



Oldham
Council

COUNCILLOR		COUNCILLOR	
Adams Christine	FOR	Hussain Junaid	AGAINST
Akhtar Shoab	AGAINST	Hussain Sajed	AGAINST
Al-Hamdani Sam	FOR	Ibrahim Nyla	AGAINST
Ali Mohon	AGAINST	Iqbal Nadeem	AGAINST
Arnott Dave	FOR	Irfan Muhammed	FOR
Ball Sandra	ABSENT	Islam Mohammed Nazrul	AGAINST
Bashforth Marie	AGAINST	Jabbar Abdul	AGAINST
Bashforth Steven	AGAINST	Kenyon Mark	FOR
Birch Ros	AGAINST	Lancaster Luke	FOR
Bishop Helen	FOR	Malik Abdul	AGAINST
Brownridge Barbara	AGAINST	Marland Alicia	FOR
Byrne Pam	FOR	McLaren Colin	AGAINST
Charters Josh	AGAINST	Moore Eddie	AGAINST
Cosgrove Angela	AGAINST	Murphy Dave	FOR
Davis Peter	AGAINST	Mushtaq Shaid	AGAINST
Dean Peter	AGAINST	Nasheen Umar	AGAINST
Fryer Paul	AGAINST	Quigg Lewis	FOR
Ghafoor Kamran	FOR	Rea Lucia	FOR
Gloster Hazel	FOR	Salamat Ali Aqeel	AGAINST
Goodwin Chris	ABSENT	Shah Arooj	AGAINST
Hamblett Louie	FOR	Sharp Beth	FOR
Harkness Garth	ABSENT	Sheldon Graham	FOR
Harrison Holly	AGAINST	Shuttleworth Graham	AGAINST
Harrison Jennifer	AGAINST	Surjan Ruji Sapna	AGAINST
Hince Marc	FOR	Sykes Howard	FOR
Hindle Neil	FOR	Taylor Elaine	AGAINST
Hobin Brian	FOR	Wahid Abdul	FOR
Hurley Maggie	FOR	Williamson Diane	FOR
Hussain Aftab	AGAINST	Woodvine Max	FOR
Hussain Fida	AGAINST	Chauhan Zahid (MAYOR)	AGAINST

On a recorded VOTE being taken 25 VOTES were cast in FAVOUR of the MOTION with 32 VOTES cast AGAINST and there were 0 ABSTENTIONS. The MOTION was therefore LOST.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SECONDED a report which presented Members with details of the actions officers have taken on Motions that were approved at the 15th March 2023 Council meeting and informed on the response position regarding outstanding matters from the 2022/23 Municipal Year.



Council was advised that at the Annual meeting on 24th May 2023, in respect of the appointment to outside bodies in 2023/24 (minute 13 refers), it was resolved that any outstanding appointments be delegated to the Chief Executive to determine, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the two main Opposition Groups and that the non-administration appointments to Positive Steps, Miocare and Oldham Community Leisure be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leaders of the two main opposition groups.

Council is asked to note the following appointments:

- a. Positive Steps – Councillors Mushtaq, Ali, Nasheen and Byrne
- b. Miocare – Councillors S. Bashforth, Brownridge, Ibrahim and Arnott
- c. Oldham Community Leisure – Councillors Taylor and Sykes
- d. Unity Partnership Board – Councillors Fida Hussain, Jabbar and Arnott
- e. Joint Scrutiny Panel for Pennine Care (Mental Health) Trust – Councillors McLaren, Moores and Adams

Resolved:

1. That Council notes the actions taken and notes the correspondence has been received regarding some Motions agreed at previous Council meetings.
2. That Council notes the following appointments:
 - a. Positive Steps – Councillors Mushtaq, Ali, Nasheen and Byrne.
 - b. Miocare – Councillors S. Bashforth, Brownridge, Ibrahim and Arnott.
 - c. Oldham Community Leisure – Councillors Taylor and Sykes.
 - d. Unity Partnership Board – Councillors Fida Hussain, Jabbar and Arnott.
 - e. Joint Scrutiny Panel for Pennine Care (Mental Health) Trust – Councillors McLaren, Moores and Adams.

THE BEE NETWORK - IMPROVING GREATER MANCHESTER'S TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SECONDED a report of the Director of Legal Services which informed Council of proposed new governance arrangements, in respect of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), which were

intended to enable a more coordinated and integrated approach to transport governance with agreement of executive members. The creation of Greater Manchester's (GM's) integrated transport system, the Bee Network, would require a more coordinated and integrated approach to transport governance, that placed accountability to local people at its heart.

Local control of the GM transport network, and bus franchising, would change the type and number of decisions being made. GM therefore needed to change the make-up of its decision-making bodies to ensure GM's new responsibilities were discharged in an effective and transparent way

The proposal from GM was the creation of a new, smaller, and more strategically focused 'Bee Network Committee' (BNC), which would lead transport decision-making at a regional level, taking greater ownership and responsibility for the GM integrated transport network. This was intended to provide a strengthened local engagement by increasing opportunities for local councillors and members of the public to contribute to and influence transport policy and services in their area.

The proposals were intended to allow for formal scrutiny of the Bee Network Committee being part of the work programme of the GMCA's newly strengthened Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Although the new committee itself would have greater delegated powers, no additional constituent council functions were to be transferred or delegated to the GMCA.

The GMCA would delegate additional functions that are already conferred on or delegated to it, to TfGM. Such functions would be of a day-to-day operational nature, for example, local bus information, consultation procedures, transport and road safety studies. This will require corresponding amendments to the GMCA constitution which will be included in the annual review of the constitution.

Resolved:

1. The Council agrees to the establishment of a new joint transport committee (The Bee Network Committee) of the GMCA, the Mayor, and the ten Greater Manchester Constituent Councils.
2. The Council approves the appointment of Members to the Bee Network Committee as set out in Appendix 1, of the submitted report with Councillor Elaine Taylor appointed to the Bee Network Committee.
3. The Council approves the Terms of Reference of the Bee Network Committee, as set out in Appendix 2 of the submitted report.
4. The Council notes the delegations of the functions of the GMCA, as set out in the Terms of Reference of the Bee Network Committee and notes the delegations of Mayoral functions as set out in the Terms of Reference, as detailed at Appendix 2, of the submitted report.
5. The Council agrees the delegation of the functions of the Local Authority Constituent Councils as set out in the Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 2, of the

submitted report (which for the avoidance of doubt were the same delegations given to the former Transport Committee)

6. The Council approves the Rules of Procedure for the Bee Network Committee as set out in Appendix 3 of the submitted report.

15

POLITICAL BALANCE REVIEW

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SECONDED a report of the Director of Legal Services advising that notification had been received that three Independent Members of the Council wish, henceforth, to be known as the Independent Group, further to Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and under Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The three members were Councillors Ball, Hince and Hurley and Councillor Hince has been nominated as their Group Leader.

Considering this, the Council was asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and under Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Resolved:

1. That the composition of the Council's political groups, as shown at paragraph 1.1 of the report of the Director of Legal Services, be noted.
2. That the number of seats on the various Committees for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, as detailed at paragraph 1.5 of the report of the Director of Legal Services, be approved.
3. That Council confirms the allocation of seats to the political groups and makes appointments to fill the seats in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as far as is practicable, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report, including those Committees that are not strictly politically balanced – Scrutiny Boards, Appeals Committee and Standards Sub-Committee.
4. That any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leader of the main opposition group.

16

CONSTITUTION UPDATE

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SECONDED a report of the Director of Legal Services which advised that the Council's Constitution required to be updated regularly to ensure that it was and remained fit for purpose.

The report set out proposed amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules and to its Code of Conduct.

Resolved:

That the Council approve the proposed amendments, detailed in the Director of Legal Services' report in respect of:

- a. the Contract Procedure Rules (detailed at Appendix 1).
- b. the Code of Conduct and Arrangements (detailed at Appendix 2).



17

RECRUITMENT TO THE POST OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

Councillor Shah MOVED and Councillor Sheldon SCONDED a report of the Assistant Director Policy, Performance and Corporate Leadership, which reminded members that at the Annual Council meeting, held 24th May 2023, the Leader Elect advised Council that she had received early notification from the Chief Executive that he was intending to retire at the end of December 2023.

Council was informed that since the Annual Council meeting, the Appointments Committee had met to consider the recruitment approach to be taken and the remuneration for the post. The Assistant Director's report set out various recommendations, from the Appointments Committee, for Council's consideration.

Resolved:

That Council:

1. Authorises an external recruitment exercise to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
2. That, in accordance with the authority's Pay Policy Statement, approves the remuneration for the post be £165 - 180k per annum.
3. Notes that the post incorporates the responsibility for the roles of:
 - a. Returning Officer for Local Elections and for the Combined Authority Mayoral Election.
 - b. Returning Officer for any Parliamentary Elections, for which is subject to a separate payment as determined by central government and the role of Electoral Registration Officer.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 9.48pm