

Minutes

MEETING: Oldham Town Centre Board AGM

DATE: 8 March 2024

VENUE: Oldham Council Offices, Spindles Shopping Centre, Oldham

TIME: 13:00

PRESENT	Abrahams, MP Debbie	Oldham East and Saddleworth Constituency
	Ashraf, Kashif	President of Oldham Chamber of Commerce, Greater Manchester Chamber / Co-Founder and Co-Chair, Asian Business Leaders
	Bennett, Katie	Manager, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre
	Bloor, Jon	Assistant Director for Economic Growth, Oldham Council
	Clifford, Paul	Director of Economy, Oldham Council
	Cross, Leanne	Marketing and Events Manager, Oldham Council
	Da Silva, Anna	Chief Executive Officer, Northern Roots
	Dad, Nasir	Director of Environment, Oldham Council
	Garrick, Jesse	Greater Manchester Area Lead, Cities and Local Growth Unit
	Hughes, Margaret	Owner, Zutti Fashion (Vice-Chair)
	Kipling, Shelley	Assistant Chief Executive, Oldham Council
	Lees-Jones, William	Managing Director, J.W. Lees & Co. (Chair)
	Lewis, Christopher	Strategic Lead for Creating a Better Place, Oldham Council
	Lockwood, Stuart	Chief Executive, Oldham Community Leisure
	McMahon, MP Jim	Oldham West and Royton Constituency
	Popplewell, Grace	Greater Manchester Deputy Area Lead, Cities and Local Growth Unit
	Rogers, Stuart	Project Director, Muse
	Rothwell, Frank	Managing Director, Manchester Cabins / Chairman and Owner, Oldham Athletic F.C.
	Shah, Councillor Arooj	Leader, Oldham Council
	Sykes, Julie	Project Support Officer, Oldham Council
	Wood, Rachel	Creative Programmes and Event Manager, Oldham Council
APOLOGIES	Ali, Councillor Mohon	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Oldham Council
	Aspinall, Gail	Capital Programme and Special Projects Manager, Oldham Council
	Barton, Emma	Executive Director for Place and Economic Growth, Oldham Council
	Beckett, Jessica	Communications Manager, Oldham Council
	Bentham, Max	Development Director, Muse
	Brown, Richard	Relationship Manager, Arts Council England
	Catherall, Harry	Chief Executive, Oldham Council
	Cotton, Maria	Head of Place Making, Oldham Council
	Craig, Dr. Alistair	Chief Officer, Northern Care Alliance
	Fletcher, Rebecca	Director of Public Health, Oldham Council

	Fraser, Nigel	Regeneration Team Leader (Capital Projects), Oldham Council
	Henshaw, Luke	Representative, Oldham Youth Council
	Hussain, Councillor Fida	Cabinet Member for Business, Employment and Enterprise, Oldham Council
	Jordan, Simon	Principal, Oldham College
	Knowles, Aaron	Greater Manchester Area Coordinator, Cities and Local Growth Unit
	Lewis, Chris	Senior Youth Work Manager, Oldham Council
	Lightfoot, Andrew	Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
	Nicholson, Leo	Representative, Oldham Youth Council
	Patterson, John	Chief Clinical Officer, NHS Oldham CCG
	Penn, Jennifer	Regeneration Officer, Oldham Council
	Rahim, Fazal	Project Coordinator, Oldham Interfaith Forum
	Rayner, MP Angela	Ashton-under-Lyne Constituency
	Riley, Michelle	Owner, Cob and Coal Tap / Fox and Pine
	Roberts, Paul	Spindles Programme Director, Hive Projects
	Robinson, Joanne	Regeneration Officer (Technical), Oldham Council
	Wharton, Jake	Communications Officer, Oldham Council
	Windsor-Welsh, Liz	Chief Executive, Action Together
	Yousaf, Adnan	Real Estate Manager, The Cross Group, Chambers Business Centre

1. Introductions and apologies for absence (William Lees-Jones)

Introductions were made and apologies were noted.

2. Welcome (William Lees-Jones)

Housekeeping items were covered and new and returning members were welcomed.

3. Governance (Paul Clifford)

- **Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair**

William Lees-Jones (Chair) and Maggie Hughes (Vice-Chair) were thanked for their excellent work to date. They were proposed and seconded, and so accepted the roles for the next twelve months.

4. Notice of any urgent business to be accepted onto the agenda and reasons for that urgency (William Lees-Jones)

None.

5. Declarations of Interest (William Lees-Jones)

There were no new declarations to add to the existing list below:

Anna Da Silva: Chief Executive Officer, Northern Roots
 William Lees-Jones: Managing Director, J.W.Lees & Co. (owners of Tommyfield Inn)
 Stuart Lockwood: Board of Directors, Northern Roots
 Fazal Rahim: stall owner, Tommyfield Market

6. Minutes of the previous meeting (William Lees-Jones)

The minutes dated 4 December 2023 were agreed as a true record and approved for publication online at oldham.gov.uk.

7. Review of actions from the previous meeting (William Lees-Jones)

Oldham Council to submit the Towns Fund monitoring return for Q1-2 of 2023/24 on behalf of the Board, carrying the signatures of the Chair of the Board and the Section 151 Officer (Oldham Council's new Director of Finance, Sarah Johnston): *completed*.

Paul Clifford to provide an update on Chadderton at the next meeting: *agenda item nine*.

Rachel Wood to contact Kashif Ashraf to discuss events and promotions: *a meeting has been arranged*.

8. Procedural business and any items accepted as urgent business (William Lees-Jones)

- **Review of Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference circulated before the meeting are online at oldham.gov.uk and were last reviewed at the AGM in January 2023. They must be reviewed annually or, in any event, be submitted to the AGM for reaffirmation.

The Terms of Reference were approved.

9. Town centre update – regeneration (Paul Clifford)

- **General progress (Paul Clifford / Stuart Rogers)**

Phase 1 of Spindles is complete. Staff moves will conclude at the end of March.

Transport for Greater Manchester will move in at the end of March.

Phase 2 of Spindles is on site at Parliament Square and on track.

Phase 2 of the Old Library has started and is on track.

Newly secured funding includes £8.7m from the Green Heat Network Fund.

MP Jim McMahon commented that the town centre is quickly becoming a 'one stop shop' for all. Stuart Rogers explained that a blind tenure approach should help to ensure an appropriate mix of housing to achieve social integration. When questioned by MP Debbie Abrahams, Stuart

Rogers confirmed local contractors' understanding of, and commitment to, social value; if contractors are local, suppliers generally will be, too. The Council and Muse are working together to get residents' input into proposals, something which is welcomed by the Chair.

Councillor Arooj Shah spoke of the opportunities presented by the projects, such as more affordable properties and reduced waiting times for those on the housing register. Positives can be drawn from successful mixed schemes e.g. Fitton Hill (Great Places). The Social Value Strategy has been refreshed and there is strong partnership working to ensure contractors deliver against social value commitments.

MP Jim McMahon commented that there are 500 children living in hotel rooms, which is unsustainable. Oldham must be a place where people choose to live, and where the housing offer is future-proofed to remain fit for purpose decades from now.

- **Oldham High Street Partnership and town centre audit (High Street Accelerator Pilot Programme) (Paul Clifford)**

Following Paul Clifford's presentation, Councillor Arooj Shah confirmed plans for an evening and night-time economy round table on 22 March, hosted by Sacha Lord. Local businesses will be invited, and the High Street Accelerator will be on the agenda.

The Vice-Chair of this Board is now also the independent Chair of the Oldham High Street Partnership delivering the Accelerator. The Vice-Chair owns Zutti Co, a destination shop with a loyal customer base.

The Vice-Chair commented that some HMO managers don't seem to care about anti-social behaviour and crime at their properties, affecting local businesses and shoppers.

MP Jim McMahon commented that councils can opt to use Government funding to buy properties like pubs and shisha bars via trust arrangements, as and when they come onto the market. This can lead to greater control over what happens on premises.

Kashif Ashraf welcomed the introduction of the Oldham Gift Card and suggested cards could feature famous Oldhamers such as Annie Kenney or Frank Rothwell.

- **Chadderton Levelling Up Fund (Long-Term Plan for Towns) (Paul Clifford)**

The Chair expressed a preference for using the current Board rather than introducing a new board, but acknowledged that a new board had been mandated by Government.

MP Jim McMahon called for the people of Chadderton to lead the work and co-produce the investment plan. Ideally the board should focus upon a few projects and be realistic about what can be achieved. There is an existing group working to improve the town, known as Chadderton Together.

Jesse Garrick stated that there is an opportunity to obtain loans against the funding.

Kashif Ashraf called for links between the various boards so that people in different towns and districts know what's happening elsewhere. He offered to be the link between this Board and the new Chadderton board, linking in Chadderton Together.

10. Town centre update – general

- **Communications and events (Leanne Cross / Rachel Wood)**

Following the presentation, the Chair commented that events can help to change people's perceptions of Oldham.

11. Substantive business – Towns Fund

1) Northern Roots including Project Adjustment Request (in-depth focus) (Paul Clifford / Anna da Silva)

MP Jim McMahon and Councillor Arooj Shah commented that the project needs to benefit the diverse communities of Oldham, especially those people without their own gardens in neighbourhoods of terraced housing close to the site. Local people will judge the project on its merits, demanding value for money and tangible benefits, such as the initial impacts of social prescribing upon those with poor mental health and students at risk of exclusion from school. Ideally the project will prompt satellite projects to maximise impacts.

The Chair commented that more work is required to bring people to the site regularly and build on the recent success of Illuminate.

2) Relocating Tommyfield Market (Paul Clifford)

Councillor Arooj Shah confirmed that the Council will manage the new market, building on positive existing relations with traders. The Vice-Chair commented that many traders have mentioned feeling fully engaged with the market move, in response to MP Jim McMahon's observation that traders may be unsettled by the changes proposed.

When asked by MP Jim McMahon, Paul Clifford stated that opportunities for traders to trade online and have a social media presence were being explored.

3) Flexible performance space (Paul Clifford)

After Paul Clifford's presentation, Frank Rothwell asked about the future of the Queen Elizabeth Hall, noting the date of the last event in the current programme is March 2025.

ACTION: Paul Clifford and Frank Rothwell to discuss potential use of the Queen Elizabeth Hall for annual events after March 2025.

4) Flexible workspace (Paul Clifford)

There is lots of interest in The Hive. Council staff and users of The Hive will have access to the atrium (unlike the public).

12. Action review / next steps (William Lees-Jones)

See individual actions within the main body of minutes.

13. Any other business (William Lees-Jones)

None



14. Time and date of next meeting(s) (William Lees-Jones)

TBC

The meeting closed at 14:55 and was followed by a tour of the Spindles workspace.