

Amendment to Conservative Motion – Submitted by Cllr Abdul Wahid & Seconded by Cllr Kamran Ghafoor

IN BOLD

This Council notes that:

1. The employment by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council of the ringleader of the Rochdale rape gang which was stated in the 2022 Assurance review quote: “Offender A worked for Oldham Council between 1988 and 2006. He was employed as a welfare rights officer in the welfare rights unit of the council seconded to the Oldham Pakistani Community Centre. In May 2012 he was found guilty of two rapes, aiding and abetting rape, sexual assault and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and sentenced to 19 years’ imprisonment. In June 2012 he was found guilty of a further 30 rape charges and was jailed for an additional 22 years. Offender A lived in Oldham and was a member of the Oldham Labour Party. We believe there were serious failings in how both the council and Greater Manchester Police investigated concerns in respect of Offender A.”
2. That this Council voted down multiple requests from 2020 to 2024 for inquiries of different kinds until it agreed to hold a non-statutory local inquiry in July 2024 following the Council falling into no overall control.
3. That no Council officers who worked or currently work at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council have been disciplined or lost their job for professional failures in protecting children from rape gangs and child sexual exploitation to date.
4. That at the reconvened Council meeting on the 20th January 2025 that the Chairman of the Council meeting sanctioned a Conservative Councillor and asked her to withdraw her remarks for using the term “Pakistani heritage rape gangs” when asking if the Council Leader would support a national inquiry.
5. Notes the comments made by the Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Yvette Cooper MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “Ten years ago, two reports by Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in Rotherham found that 1,400 children had been sexually exploited, raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked across other towns, abducted, beaten and threatened with guns. Children had even been doused in petrol. Girls as young as 11 had been raped. Those reports a decade ago identified a failure to confront Pakistani heritage gangs and a “widespread perception” that they should “downplay’ the ethnic dimensions” for fear of being seen to be racist. When those reports came out, those failings in Rotherham were condemned across the board by both Government and Opposition in this House. As I said at the time: “It is never an excuse to use race and ethnicity or community relations as an excuse not to investigate and punish sex offenders.”—[\[Official Report, 2 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 169.\]](#)”
6. Notes the comments made by the Shadow Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon, Chris Philp MP, which is noted in Hansard quote; “The whole country is shocked by the rape gang scandal. Over years or decades, thousands or maybe tens of thousands of vulnerable young girls were systematically raped by organised gangs of men, predominantly of Pakistani heritage. Instead of those victims being protected and the perpetrators prosecuted, those girls were systematically failed. Many cases were covered up because of absurd concerns about so-called community relations. Often, the police did not investigate. Local councils covered things up. The Crown Prosecution Service frequently failed victims. Those raising concerns were frequently accused of racism. Never again can people be silenced in that way. I pay tribute to people who have raised these cases over

the years, starting with former Labour MP Ann Cryer, who first raised these problems nearly two decades ago and bravely persevered despite accusations of racism and worse, including from her own colleagues. In that vein, let me say a word on the Prime Minister's comments this morning: it is not far-right to stand up for victims of mass rape."

7. That for too long governments of all colours have rejected this much needed national inquiry. It is time to hear from the survivors and victims who have been affected, and to expose those organisations, individuals and institutions that either covered it up, colluded in this scandal or stood by and did nothing.

8. That following repeated calls for a local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham, the Council voted in July 2024 to establish a non-statutory local inquiry. This decision came after years of resistance, despite multiple reports highlighting institutional failures. However, concerns remain that without statutory powers, this inquiry will lack the ability to compel key witnesses, access crucial documents, or hold individuals and organisations fully accountable.

9. That survivors, campaigners, and members of this Council have consistently argued that only a statutory inquiry can deliver full transparency and justice. A statutory inquiry would ensure

that all survivors and individuals who have given testimony are legally compelled to provide evidence, while also creating a safe and supportive process for new witnesses and survivors to come forward.

10. That the credibility and effectiveness of the local inquiry depend on an independent panel determining the terms of reference, ensuring that the investigation is free from political influence and fully focused on uncovering the truth.

This Council **FURTHER** resolves to:

1. Write to the Home Office to demand that His Majesty's Government initiate without any further delay a national public inquiry into the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in Oldham, Greater

Manchester and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2. Write to the Home Office to request that His Majesty's Government grants statutory powers to the local inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Oldham. This would ensure the inquiry has the authority to compel witnesses, demand full disclosure of evidence, and hold those responsible to account.

2. Request that an independent panel is appointed to set the terms of reference for the inquiry, ensuring that it is survivor-led, transparent, and robust.

3. Seek confirmation from the inquiry leadership on the actions that will be taken to ensure that all survivors and individuals who have previously given testimony are compelled to provide evidence, while also establishing a process

to invite new witnesses and survivors to come forward.

4. Engage with survivor support organisations, legal experts, and national agencies to guarantee that all testimony is collected safely, ethically, and with appropriate safeguarding in place.

5. Call upon the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to publicly support granting statutory powers to the local inquiry, reinforcing the need for full transparency and accountability.