

Moved by Cllr Brian Hobin
Seconded by Cllr Marc Hince

Draft amendment:

~~We humbly request that this Council call upon His Majesty's Government to initiate a national public inquiry that investigates the scourge of child sexual exploitation by rape gangs both historic and current in the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham but also across the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.~~

~~We request that a full national public inquiry is held urgently, as villages, towns and cities up and down the spine of the country have been affected by child sexual exploitation which was carried out by evil rape gangs on an unprecedented scale.~~

This Council notes that:

- In July 2024, the Council unanimously supported a motion to write to the Home Secretary requesting a Home Office led Public Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in the borough of Oldham and should the Home Office not grant this request – as they had previously indicated it was for Local Authorities to commission such a review – that we work with survivors to prepare a framework and to commission an independent inquiry.
- In January 2025, the Home Secretary announced that the Home Office would provide support to Oldham Council to work with Tom Crowther KC – the Chair of the Telford Inquiry – to develop a framework for victim-centred local inquiries, and that Baroness Louise Casey would conduct a rapid audit of the scale and nature of gang-based exploitation across the country, which will include thorough examination of the demographics of perpetrators and victims, as well as cultural and societal drivers for this type of offending including amongst different ethnic groups.
- The Home Secretary also announced work is underway to introduce the duty of candour as part of the Hillsborough Law – something this chamber has called for numerous times, to ensure that public servants who fail victims and survivors are held to account.
- The voices and experiences of victims and survivors is the most important thing here, it is with regret that the survivors' requests appear to have been ignored by some in this chamber causing greater trauma.
- It is important that this council recognises that girls and boys of all demographics are victims and survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation, just as perpetrators also come from a variety of groups. Focusing only on one demographic type does an injustice to victims and survivors across the board.

~~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.~~

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Home Office to ~~ask~~ **demand** that His Majesty's Government ~~initiate without any further delay a~~ **ensure that review led by survivors and Tom Crowther feeds into an independent national public inquiry with statutory powers to compel witnesses** 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.

Amended motion to read:

This Council notes that:

- In July 2024, the Council unanimously supported a motion to write to the Home Secretary requesting a Home Office led Public Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in the borough of Oldham and should the Home Office not grant this request – as they had previously indicated it was for Local Authorities to commission such a review – that we work with survivors to prepare a framework and to commission an independent inquiry.
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