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CABINET

03/03/2025 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor Shah (in the Chair)
Councillors M Ali, Brownridge, Dean, F Hussain, Jabbar,
Mushtaq and Taylor

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Goodwin.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions for this meeting of the Cabinet to consider.

5 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17th February 2025, be approved as a correct record.

6 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2025**

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which advised Members that on 12th December 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister had written to all local authority leaders and Metro Mayors across England to introduce the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposed planning reforms, and to request all councils to review and update their timetables for getting an up-to-date development plan in place within the next 12 weeks – thus by 6th March 2025.

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), was adopted on 21st March 2024, formed part of Oldham's Development Plan. However, as a high-level strategic plan it did not cover everything that a Development Plan needs to address, and it was always intended for each borough to adopt their own "Part 2" Local Plan to sit alongside PfE.

As such, there remains a need to progress the Oldham Local Plan to provide locally specific and up-to-date policies, particularly in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and achieving the right housing mix to meet our needs and address the housing crisis across the borough. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is effectively a project plan and timetable for preparing development plan documents. Oldham's LDS was last updated on 22nd December 2023 and the timetable for the Part 2 Local Plan had slipped since this time. As a result, the current

LDS was not up-to-date and there was a need to prepare a new LDS that covers the Part 2 Local Plan in order to meet the requirements set out in the letter from the MHCLG and to ensure that the Council has an up-to-date local planning policy framework in place for the Borough.



On 12th February 2025, a Motion was agreed at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to write to the Deputy Prime Minister to ask her to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough. At the time of writing this report, the Deputy Prime Minister has not replied to that letter, and so PfE is still a part of the Development Plan for Oldham. Subject to the response received from the Deputy Prime Minister there are two options regarding how to progress the Local Plan and LDS – which are set out below:

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 - To approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025 Update. The advantages were that it would ensure that an up-to-date timetable for the Oldham Local Plan was available by 6th March 2024, as per the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister dated 12th December 2024. There were no reported disadvantages to updating the LDS.

Option 2 – Not to approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025. There were no advantages in not updating the LDS. The reported disadvantages, were that failing to update and publish the LDS by 6th March 2025, would not meet the requirements set out in the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister, dated 12th December 2024. It was clear that the MHCLG were prepared to use their interventionary powers, if necessary, to ensure that updated timetables were prepared and that suitably ambitious plans were progressed and ensure sound plans be adopted.

Preferred Option – Option One.

The Cabinet was advised that the report was time limited, insofar that the government had requested that all local authorities must publish details of their Local Development Scheme, three days after this Cabinet meeting, on 6th March 2025. This deadline would be impossible for Oldham Borough Council to reach if this particular decision was subject to the normal call-in process, which would likely not expire until 11th March 2025, at the earliest. Therefore, the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Board (Place, Economic Growth and Environment), had, under Rule 14 of the Council's Constitution exempted this decision from the call-in process.

Resolved:

1. That, if, the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is rejected, the Local Plan would continue to be progressed as a Part 2 Local Plan alongside PfE, in line with programme set out in the LDS 2025 Update and this report and, if this were the case Cabinet would approve the update and publication of the Council's Local Development Scheme 2025 Update.

Or;

2. Were the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is accepted, PfE would no longer be part of the Development Plan for Oldham and a new LDS would need to be prepared setting out a programme for preparing a brand new single Local Plan document for Oldham, and the deadline set by the Deputy Prime Minister for publishing a new LDS would not be met. Officers would prepare a new LDS as soon as possible and bring it to the first scheduled Cabinet meeting of the 2025/26 municipal year, on 16th June 2025 for consideration. If this were the case Cabinet would note that the deadline for publishing a new Local Development Scheme by 6th March 2025 will not be met by Oldham Council but that a revised LDS, for the preparation of a brand new, single Local Plan for Oldham borough will be brought to Cabinet on 16th June 2025 for consideration.
3. That the actions of the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, in exempting this decision from the call-in process, be noted.

7

UNITED UTILITIES GREEN RECOVERY FUND - ADDITIONAL FUNDING - GRANT ACCEPTANCE

The Cabinet received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that was seeking approval to accept an additional £600,000 United Utilities Green Recovery Fund (UUGRF) grant allocation, following confirmation of award from United Utilities Plc in February 2025.

Oldham Council's Highways and Engineering Team had submitted applications seeking financial support with increasing the National Capital Value (NCV) of Oldham. The previous successful submissions were:-

West Street	£441,000
Rock Street	£700,000
Market Street	£600,000
Curzon Street	£250,000
Sub Total	<u>£1,991,000</u>
Snipe Gardens	<u>£600,000</u>
Total	<u><u>£2,591,000</u></u>

All initiatives were to be delivered by the end of March 2025 and were works supplemented and match funded by the Greater Manchester Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: To do nothing. Failure to accept the grant allocation of United Utilities Green Recovery Fund would reflect negatively on the perception of the town and its ambitions. It would have significant implications for delivery on the project budgets and, therefore, the achievement of regeneration ambitions and objectives.

Option 2: To formally accept the additional UUGRF award allocation for £600,000 and enter the FCA as set out in this report.

Preferred Option - Option 2 is the preferred option to help ensure delivery of the projects in the agreed timescales and

budgets and, therefore, achieve the regeneration ambitions and objectives.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves the acceptance of the £600,000 UUGRF grant against the increased National Capital Value criteria specified by Ofwat in collaboration with United Utilities Plc.
2. That the Cabinet approves the Snipe Gardens – allocation £600,000 – Increase sustainable urban drainage capacity and reduce surface water volume entering the combined sewerage system, increase amenity space i.e. dwell space, pedestrian/cycle provisions and increase soft landscaping infrastructure.
3. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) or their nominated representative to agree the terms of the Legal Agreement in respect of the grant award in consultation with the Interim Borough Solicitor and approve appointments of professional teams and contract award in respect of the agreed budgets.
4. That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Interim Borough Solicitor, or their nominated representative, to finalise and enter into the Legal Agreement issued by United Utilities Plc in respect of the grant award subject to the completion of any necessary due diligence on subsidy control compliance and authority to agree and complete any project change requests under the Agreement.
5. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Director of Environment, or their nominated representative, to agree monitoring and evaluation of defined outputs and negotiations thereupon as required over the grant delivery period of 2024/2025.
6. That the Cabinet notes that as accountable body for UUGRF, United Utilities Plc has issued a Legal Agreement in respect of the grant, along with supporting documentation, which is currently under review by the Council's Legal Services Team.
7. That the Cabinet note and endorse that the internal governance and administration for the UUGRF grant will be performed via the Creating a Better Place Programme Board (CAPB) structures alongside a dedicated Delivery Group for which Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Director of Environment or their nominated representative.

CONTINUATION OF THE HAF PROGRAMME

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Communities that sought acceptance of a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme grant award from the Department for Education (DfE). Also, the report sought to approve the implementation of the HAF programme in Oldham for 2025/26, including the proposed onward payment of the grant to providers and the extension of the dedicated internal delivery team via fixed term secondments, covering the 1 year confirmed extension to the programme for 2025/26 (with an option to extend the

programme further for up to three years should the DfE confirm additional funding).



The Department for Education (DfE) had made funds available to every local authority in England under the HAF programme to coordinate free holiday club/activity provision, including healthy food and enriching activities, for children receiving benefits-related free school meals for the Easter, Summer, and Christmas holidays from April 2021 to the end of March 2025.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Acceptance of the HAF Grant:

Option 1: Accept the HAF Grant from the DfE, enter into a grant agreement with the DfE subject to a legal review of the agreement by Legal Services, and allocate the grant by awarding and entering into grant agreement with successful local providers, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the HAF grant and any additional terms and conditions approved by Legal Services.

Option 2: Do not accept the HAF Grant. This is not recommended because the Council would lose the funding, which it has established benefits the community.

Payment terms for delivery providers:

Option 1: To pay all providers in advance of delivering their holiday activities and food provision. This would allow adequate funding for activities to be delivered by small providers with limited reserves. This option presents a level of risk to the council and there is potential for needing to claw money back if they fail to deliver in full.

Option 2: To have a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider.

- 50% of total grant paid in advance.
- Up to 50% of remain grant total paid based on paying only for placed filled and taken up.

This option allows us to balance the need of small providers with the risk presented to the council. It also ensures that the grant is being spent on direct delivery and reduces the risk of paying for unattended places. It should also be noted that many of these providers are known to the council.

Option 3: To pay all providers on completion of delivering their Holiday Activities and Food provision. This option provides maximum security to the council but will exclude many providers from taking up the HAF grant and will ultimately limit the provision we are able to make available for our children and young people.

Dedicated HAF programme team:

Option 1: To not have a dedicated team for the management and delivery of the HAF programme and to bring the current secondment to an end. This option would mean we are not in compliance with the DfE guidance for the programme and would not have sufficient staffing resource for the onward delivery of the programme in Oldham. Option 2: To continue the secondment arrangements in place for one HAF manager and 1 HAF coordinator to lead delivery of the programme for the

duration of the programme. This option allows us to ensure the effective management and delivery of the programme.

Preferred Options:

Acceptance of the HAF Grant:

Option 1: To accept the HAF Grant from the DfE and to enter into grant agreements with successful providers delivering the HAF programme from time to time.

Payment Terms for Delivery Partners

Option 2: To have a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider.

- 50% of total grant paid in advance.
- Up to 50% of remain grant total paid based on paying only for placed filled and taken up.

Dedicated HAF programme team:

Option 2: – To continue the secondment arrangements in place for 1 HAF manager and 1 HAF coordinator to lead delivery of the programme for the duration of the programme. This option allows us to ensure the effective management and delivery of the programme.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves acceptance of the DfE grant funding for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2025/2026 and for up to a further 3 years if the DfE confirm a longer continuation of the national HAF programme and for the Council to enter into a grant agreement with the DfE subject to a legal review of the grant agreement.
2. That the Cabinet approves the award of grants by the Council and for a grant agreement to be entered into on terms approved by Legal Services with those providers who successfully apply to the Council for funding to deliver the HAF programme locally and approval for an alteration to the onward allocation of the grant to local providers, specifically a change to create a tiered payment process based on the value of the grant being awarded to the provider with 50% of total grant made in advance and up to 50% paid based on places filled and taken up.
3. That the Cabinet approves the extension to the secondment arrangements in place for the HAF programme manager for 2025/6 and for up to 3 years if DfE confirm a longer continuation of the national HAF programme.

FAMILY HUBS AND START FOR LIFE PROGRAMME

The Cabinet considered a report of the director of Education, Skills and Early Years that was seeking approval to receive associated funding from the Department for Education (DfE) and Department of Health and Social Care (DH&SC) to deliver Year 4 of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme.

Approval was also sought to delegate authority to agree all spending decisions related to the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and noting the role of the Family Hub Board.



On 20th December 2024, Oldham Council had received notification of its provisional funding allocation of £1,381.400 for the 2025/26 fiscal year to continue delivery of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme. Payment of the 2025/6 funding allocations was subject to: firstly, meeting the current programme expectations up to March 2025; and secondly to signing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise the Council's agreement to the programme's expectations for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Options/alternatives considered:

Option 1: To approve the recommendations set out in the report; to approve the receipt of Family Hubs and Start for Life funding for the 2025/26 financial year. This would enable the continued delivery of the programme which provides more integrated and accessible services to parents and carers. This is crucial to the delivery of Oldham's early intervention and prevention offer, ultimately contributing to a reduction in inequalities in health and education outcomes for babies, children and families. This Option facilitates the approval that authority to make all spending decisions relating to Family Hubs and the Start for Life Programme (including key decisions) be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years and the Director of Public Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. This Option enables authority to be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Early Years and the Director of Public Health to award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process and that authority be delegated to the Interim Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities. The services are fully funded through the Department for Education grant. This option poses no financial risk to Oldham Borough Council.

Option 2: To do nothing. This would result in the loss of the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme funding. This would pose a significant reputational risk to Oldham Council as it will no longer be able to deliver its Family Hub and Start for Life programme to families. Without funding, these crucial and highly valued early family support services to families will end on the 31st March 2025. This could potentially lead to an escalation of need in families and referrals to specialist and more costly services.

Preferred Option - Option 1 is the preferred option.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted, and that approval is given to accept the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme funding from Government.
2. That the Cabinet approves authority to make all spending decisions relating to Family Hubs and the Start for Life

Programme (including key decisions) be delegated to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

3. That authority be delegated to the Directors of Education, Skills and Early Years and Public Health to award contracts stemming from a compliant procurement process and authority be delegated to the Interim Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities.

10

ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT TO HOUSING NEEDS

The Cabinet received a report of the Director of Adult Social Care/DASS that was looking to extend the contract term of each of the three contracts referenced in the submitted report, in accordance with the terms and conditions of each contract for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 following the transfer.

The report also sought to transfer the budget that currently resided in the Adult Social Care cost centres and the management of the contracts to the Housing Needs Team.

The Cabinet was advised that the Council was party to three separate contracts for the delivery of Accommodation Based Services. The initial term of each contract was due to expire on 31st March 2025, but there was provision within each contract to extend the initial term for up to two years. The proposed one-year extension would enable a wider review of the commissioned services to take place across Housing Needs.

Historically, the services had sat within the Council's Adult Social Care services, however this was no longer considered to be appropriate, as the scope and focus of the commissioned services and the needs of the individuals had altered. It was therefore recommended that the budget and contract management arrangements of the services be transferred to Housing Needs.

Options/Alternatives considered:

The options and alternatives were detailed in the confidential report at Part B (agenda item 13).

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 13.

11

REDUCED PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING INVESTMENT TO THE ALL-AGE EARLY INTERVENTION CONTRACT

The Cabinet considered a jointly compiled report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services and the Director of Public Health, that was seeking approval of the implementation of the revised contract value for the All Age Early Intervention service (AAIE) from 1st April 2025, by means of a deed of variation to the

existing contract. This reduction had previously been approved by Cabinet on 18th November 2024.



The current agreement had an initial contract period of five years from 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2025, with the option to extend for up to two years. The report was also seeking approval to exercise the option to extend, up until 31st December 2027.

Options/Alternatives considered:

Option 1 – to implement the previously approved revised budget from 1st April 2025 for the AAEL service through the issuing of a deed of variation and to exercise the option to extend up until 31st December 2027, as outlined in the original tender and award.

Option 2 – that the decision to implement a revised budget is not implemented; meaning approved savings will not be realised and thereby increasing budgetary pressures on the Council.
Preferred Option - Option 1.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet will consider the confidential recommendations, detailed in the report, at agenda item 14.

12

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting, for the following two items of business, on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

13

ACCOMMODATION BASED SERVICES INCLUDING THE TRANSFER OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT TO HOUSING NEEDS

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 10: 'Accommodation Based Services Including the Transfer of Service Management to Housing Needs.'

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet approves a one-year extension to the initial contract term in respect of those contracts referenced in this report, each of which relates to the delivery of Accommodation Based Services, noting that this is within the delegated authority of the Director of Adult Social Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Adult Health and Social Care Portfolio.
2. That the Cabinet approves the transfer of the budget for the 3 affected contracts and the in-scope services from Adult Social Care to Housing Needs from 1st April 2025.
3. That the Cabinet notes that contract management in respect of the three in scope contracts and oversight of these commissioned services will transfer to Housing Needs from Adult Social Care from 1st April 2025.

**REDUCED PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING INVESTMENT TO
THE ALL-AGE EARLY INTERVENTION CONTRACT**

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to agenda item 11: 'Reduced Public Health Funding Investment to the All-Age Early Intervention Contract.'

**Resolved:**

1. That the Cabinet approves the implementation of the revised contract value of £984,520.43 for AA EI from 1st April 2025 by means of a deed of variation to the existing contract.
2. That the Cabinet approves the implementation of the option to extend up until 31st December 2027, as outlined in the original tender and award.
3. That the Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Interim Borough Solicitor, or their nominated representative, to carry out all necessary legal formalities.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.18pm