

Labour Group Amendment - Lib Dem Motion

Moved by: Cllr Arooj Shah

Seconded by: Cllr Aftab Hussain

Add

Delete

The Council notes that:

- With the closure of custody suites at both Oldham and Chadderton, Oldham Borough currently has no dedicated facilities open to process detainees.
- Additional services lost include the Magistrates Court, County Court, and police stations in Failsworth, Chadderton and Royton, with other facilities having no face-to-face service, and access to other sites removed, such as in Shaw.
- Current processes mean that officers are required to process detainees at Tameside, which means additional travel time of over an hour for each arrest.
- The current police station in Oldham has been beyond its service life for a number of years, with the current chief constable in 2021 describing the comparing the building to those in the old East Germany.
- The Chief Constable also noted that: “custody facilities being tethered to the right operating base is really important”.

The Council further notes the most recent report of His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on custody provision in Manchester, including that:

- Leadership for custody provision isn’t strong enough to make sure the service is provided well and achieves appropriate outcomes for detainees. There is limited prioritisation of custody by senior officers or engagement in how custody is provided. There hasn’t been enough improvement since our previous inspection. Significant concerns remain.
- The position is exacerbated by a large increase in the number of detainees entering custody. This makes it difficult for staff to fulfil all their duties and meet detainees’ needs.
- The force should deal with detainees promptly and minimise the time they spend in custody by - booking detainees into custody promptly and prioritising them appropriately, especially children and those who are vulnerable; ...

And finally, the Council notes that:

- Oldham Council has been in discussions with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Police for a number of years over a new site for a police station, with no location having currently been identified.
- During these conversations the Council has been clear that any new police station should have custody provision for the Borough and the north-east of Greater Manchester conurbation.
- These conversations have been well received by Greater Manchester Police’s estates team.
- Police and Crime Commissioner Kate Green has acknowledged in a written response to enquiries from the Liberal Democrats that: “there is no immediate intention to locate a custody suite in Oldham, but it may be sensible to future-proof the design of the site to enable this in future if needed”.
- The Council and Oldham’s MPs have called for this too, with Jim McMahon OBE MP recently raising this issue with the Mayor of Greater Manchester directly.

Therefore, the Council resolves:

1. To formally note its position that a new Police Station in Oldham should include appropriate custody provision.
2. Set a target to agree a location for a new police station in Oldham within the next six months. If a location is not agreed within that timescale, to provide a report to the appropriate scrutiny committee detailing:

- a. The requirements for any location for a new police station.
- b. Any sites which have been discussed and the reasons why they have not been deemed suitable.
- c. How the Council proposes to identify and bring forward future sites that meet the requirements for a police station in Oldham.

Amended motion to read:

The Council notes that:

- With the closure of custody suites at both Oldham and Chadderton, Oldham Borough currently has no dedicated facilities open to process detainees.
- Additional services lost include the Magistrates Court, County Court, and police stations in Failsworth, Chadderton and Royton, with other facilities having no face-to-face service, and access to other sites removed, such as in Shaw.
- Current processes mean that officers are required to process detainees at Tameside, which means additional travel time of over an hour for each arrest.
- The current police station in Oldham has been beyond its service life for a number of years, with the current chief constable in 2021 describing the comparing the building to those in the old East Germany.
- The Chief Constable also noted that: “custody facilities being tethered to the right operating base is really important”.

The Council further notes the most recent report of His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on custody provision in Manchester, including that:

- Leadership for custody provision isn’t strong enough to make sure the service is provided well and achieves appropriate outcomes for detainees. There is limited prioritisation of custody by senior officers or engagement in how custody is provided. There hasn’t been enough improvement since our previous inspection. Significant concerns remain.
- The position is exacerbated by a large increase in the number of detainees entering custody. This makes it difficult for staff to fulfil all their duties and meet detainees’ needs.
- The force should deal with detainees promptly and minimise the time they spend in custody by - booking detainees into custody promptly and prioritising them appropriately, especially children and those who are vulnerable; ...

And finally, the Council notes that:

- Oldham Council has been in discussions with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Police for a number of years over a new site for a police station, with no location having currently been identified.
- During these conversations the Council has been clear that any new police station should have custody provision for the Borough and the north-east of Greater Manchester conurbation.
- These conversations have been well received by Greater Manchester Police’s estates team.
- Police and Crime Commissioner Kate Green has acknowledged in a written response to enquiries from the Liberal Democrats that: “there is no immediate intention to locate a custody suite in Oldham, but it may be sensible to future-proof the design of the site to enable this in future if needed”.
- The Council and Oldham’s MPs have called for this too, with Jim McMahon OBE MP recently raising this issue with the Mayor of Greater Manchester directly.

Therefore, the Council resolves:

3. To formally note its position that a new Police Station in Oldham should include appropriate custody provision.
4. Set a target to agree a location for a new police station in Oldham within the next six months. If a location is not agreed within that timescale, to provide a report to the appropriate scrutiny committee detailing:
 - a. The requirements for any location for a new police station.
 - b. Any sites which have been discussed and the reasons why they have not been deemed suitable.
 - c. How the Council proposes to identify and bring forward future sites that meet the requirements for a police station in Oldham.