

Report to CABINET

Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan Consultation

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

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19 January 2026

Reason for Decision

The purpose of this report is to approve the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan for publication and consultation.

Executive Summary

Following its adoption in March 2024 the Places for Everyone Joint Plan (PfE) now forms part of Oldham's Local Plan. PfE sets the strategic policies for the Borough, but there is still a need for local policies that support the implementation of PfE across Oldham and deliver the Council's regeneration objectives and priorities.

The Government are in the process of reforming the current system for preparing Local Plans. In the meantime, for plans progressing to adoption under the current plan-making legal framework (which includes the review of the Oldham Local Plan) there is a requirement for these to be submitted for examination by 31 December 2026. The Oldham Local Plan is therefore being prepared under The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 ('the Regulations').

There are various stages in the production of a Local Plan and Oldham Council is now at the Regulation 19 (or Publication Plan) stage.

This report seeks approval of Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan for publication and consultation, pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a six-week period for representations to begin no earlier than 28 January 2026.

The 'Publication Plan' stage is a formal 'statutory' consultation that provides an opportunity for organisations, and individuals, to submit their final views on the content of the Plan. Following consultation the Publication Plan, representations received, and other relevant supporting documentation, will be sent to the Secretary of State. This is called the 'Submission stage', pursuant to Regulation 22 and requires approval at Council. A separate report seeking approval to submit the Publication Plan for examination will be brought to Council, prior to submission May / June 2026.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approve the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan, Policies Map and supporting documentation for publication and consultation, pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a six-week period for representations to begin no earlier than 28 January 2026.
2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Director – Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to approve the Statement of Common Ground required pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director Planning, Transport and Housing Delivery to make any minor non-material amendments to the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan, Policies Map and supporting documentation ahead of its publication and consultation. These amendments will be limited to correcting minor errors and formatting text.
4. Note that following consideration by the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board on 12 January 2026 the report is exempt from call-in, under Rule 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan Consultation

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council must prepare a Local Plan to provide an up-to-date and positive planning framework for the area, that will help to meet our housing needs and address the Borough's other economic, environmental and social objectives, as per the National Planning Framework (NPPF).
- 1.2 Following its adoption in March 2024 the Places for Everyone Joint Plan (PfE) now forms part of Oldham's Local Plan. PfE sets the strategic policies for the Borough, but there is still a need for local policies that support the implementation of PfE across Oldham and deliver the Council's regeneration objectives and priorities.
- 1.3 The Government are in the process of reforming the current system for preparing Local Plans, to ensure that going forward plans are faster to prepare and simpler for end users to access and understand. Guidance on how plans are to be prepared under the new plan-making system is still to be published. In the meantime, for plans progressing to adoption under the current plan-making legal framework (which includes the review of the Oldham Local Plan) Government are continuing to require these to be submitted for examination by 31 December 2026.
- 1.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 ('the Regulations') set out the requirements for local authorities producing and consulting on Local Plan's under the current plan-making system. There are various stages in the production of a Local Plan and Oldham Council is at the Regulation 19 (or Publication Plan) stage.
- 1.5 Before this point, to help shape the content of the Plan informal consultation has been carried out, pursuant to Regulation 18, as follows:
 - Issues and Options – Summer 2021
 - Draft Plan – January to February 2024
- 1.6 Details of these earlier stages in the review of Oldham's Local Plan can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review, whilst more information on the outcome of the Draft Plan consultation can be found in paragraph 2.7 and Table 1 below.
- 1.7 The 'Publication Plan' stage is a formal consultation on the draft Oldham Local Plan pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Regulations. It is a statutory stage that provides an opportunity for organisations, and individuals, to submit their final views on the content of the Plan.
- 1.8 Following consultation the Publication Plan, representations made at the Regulation 19 stage, and other relevant supporting documentation will be sent to the Secretary of State. This is called the 'Submission stage', pursuant to Regulation 22 and requires approval at Council. A separate report seeking approval to submit the Publication Plan for examination will be brought to Council, prior to submission May / June 2026.
- 1.9 In terms of the purpose of this report the legal, financial and procurement implications are considered in sections 6, 7 and 8. With regards to other implications:
 - (a) Community Cohesion Implications, including crime and disorder implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – not applicable

- (b) Risk Assessments – not applicable
- (c) If relevant, Co-operative Implications, Human Resource Implications, IT implications, Property Implications, and Environment and Health and Safety Implications – Publicising and consulting on the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan will involve updating our website to make the documents available. Oldham Council assets may fall within designations proposed as part of the Local Plan, however, planning policies are consistent with national and PfE. No sites are being allocated for development.

1.10 In terms of how the Local Plan links to the Corporate Plan and priorities, as explained further in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 below, it provides an opportunity to bring together and express spatially those parts of The Oldham Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan that can be shaped and delivered through the planning system. Their aspirations and priorities are the golden thread that runs through the Local Plan, along with supporting and facilitating delivery of the Council's Building a Better Oldham agenda.

2 Current Position

Oldham's current Local Plan

- 2.1 Oldham's current Local Plan comprises a series of documents which together provide the statutory development plan for the Borough and are:
 - Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan for Bury, Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan, adopted March 2024
 - The Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in November 2011
 - Proposals Map
 - The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan, adopted in April 2012
 - The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan, adopted in April 2013
- 2.2 Places for Everyone (PfE) provides the strategic framework for the Oldham Local Plan. It sets out our housing land requirement in Policy JP-H1, and our industry and warehousing and office supply in policies JP-J3 and JP-J4, as well as the spatial strategy for future growth. It allocates sites for employment and housing across the Borough - at JPA2 Stakehill (cross-boundary allocation with Rochdale), JPA10 Beal Valley, JPA11 Bottom Field Farm, JPA12 Broadbent Moss, JPA13 Chew Brook Vale, JPA14 Cowlishaw, JPA15 Land south of Coal Pit Lane' and JPA16 South of Rosary Road. The Plan also identifies important environmental assets across the Borough that will be protected and enhanced, defines a new Green Belt for the Borough and supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities.
- 2.3 With the Core Strategy being over 10 years old there is therefore a need for a succinct and up-to-date plan that:
 - Accords with PfE and supports its implementation at a local level;
 - Meets the latest national planning policy and guidance where relevant; and
 - Reflects the changes in the Council's regeneration ambitions and Building a Better Oldham.
- 2.4 The Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan does not repeat the strategic policies set out in PfE. The focus of our revised Local Plan is instead on development management policies, which will help to implement PfE at an Oldham level whilst helping to deliver our

regeneration ambitions and priorities for the Borough. For this reason, the Local Plan does not allocate sites for future development – either housing or employment related, and it has been prepared to align with the plan-period of PfE, that is 2022-2039.

Progress to date

- 2.5 To begin preparation of the Local Plan the Council carried out a Regulation 18 Notification between July and August 2017. At this stage we asked the local community and other interested parties what the Local Plan should contain, the key planning issues for Oldham, and what the main aims of the Local Plan should be.
- 2.6 Following on from the Regulation 18 Notification stage, Issues and Options were prepared and consultation was carried out on these from 5 July to 29 August 2021. This again formed part of the Regulation 18 stage. The Issues and Options document set out questions on a range of topics to gather views about the future of the Borough. These included questions on homes, economy and employment, our centres, addressing climate change, the natural environment and open land, green infrastructure, the built environment, transport and improving connectivity, communities and infrastructure. In total around 100 individuals and organisations submitted over 850 comments to the consultation. These comments were considered in the formulation of the Draft Local Plan. Details of these comments can be found online¹.
- 2.7 Consultation on the Draft Local Plan was then carried out from 10 January to 25 February 2024. Details of the comments received at Draft Local Plan stage can be found in the Draft Local Plan Comments and Response Schedule which will be published alongside the Publication Plan. Representations received to the Draft Local Plan and additional evidence undertaken have then helped to shape the Publication Plan. The main changes that have taken place between Draft Local Plan and Publication Plan stage are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of main changes to Local Plan between Draft Local Plan and Publication Plan stage

Theme	Summary of main changes
Homes	Policy H3 Housing Mix – amended to allow more diversity and flexibility whilst being based on Local Housing Need evidence. Policy H4 Providing for Local Housing Needs – a combined policy that addresses the needs of older people, disabled persons and children and care leavers. Policy H8 Vacant Building Credit, Policy H9 Rural Exception Sites, and Policy H11 Custom/ Self-Build and Community-led Housing deleted. Policy H13 Housing Allocations has been deleted.
Economy and Employment	Policy E4 Office, Industry and Warehousing Allocations has been deleted.
Our Centres	Local shopping parades have been identified and added to the retail hierarchy under Policy C1 Centres.

¹The Issues and Options Comments and Response Schedule can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7824/Issues_and_Options_Comments_and_Response_Schedule

Theme	Summary of main changes
Oldham Town Centre	<p>Policies updated to reflect latest position of Oldham Town Centre Development Framework.</p> <p>Policy OTC5 Parking in Oldham Town Centre has been deleted.</p>
Addressing Climate Change	<p>Policy CC1 Sustainable Construction, Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting has been deleted as covered by PfE.</p>
Natural Environment and Open Land	<p>Policy OL2 now called Protecting Oldham's Green Belt and repetition with PfE removed.</p> <p>Policy OL3 Extensions and Alterations to Existing Buildings within the Green Belt – the % of size of extension unlikely to be approved has been increased from 30% to 'more than 40%'. </p>
Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency	<p>Policy N2 Restoring Nature has been amended to focus on how the Council will have regard to the GM Local Nature Recovery Strategy.</p> <p>Policy N3 Enhancing Green Infrastructure through Development has been amended to include Urban Greening Factor targets.</p> <p>Policy N4 Trees now provides a broad approach including the need to demonstrate how trees have been retained and contribute to increasing tree canopy cover.</p>
Oldham's Historic Environment	<p>Policy H4 Oldham's Mills has been updated to reflect changes on the ground to any mills and mill clusters since publication of the Mill Strategy.</p>
Achieving High-Quality Design	<p>Draft Plan policies D1 to D4 have been combined and condensed into one overarching design policy – Policy D1 Achieving High Quality Design.</p>
A Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham	<p>Policy T1 Delivering Oldham's Transport Priorities has been reworded with a section on supporting Oldham's role in the economy and to more clearly reflect the priorities of our Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Policy T2 Creating Sustainable Streets deleted to avoid repetition with PfE and replace with new policy focusing on how we will support Travel Hubs and Park and Ride Facilities across the Borough.</p> <p>Policy T3 Car Parking Standards in Oldham – amended to be more criteria based rather than setting specific standards.</p>
Communities	<p>Policy CO1 Protection of Existing Open Spaces amended to reflect Playing Pitch Strategy.</p> <p>Previous policies on new and enhanced open spaces, and standards, have been combined into a new CO2 New and Improved Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision.</p> <p>New Policy CO6 New Development and Health has been expanded to set out when proposals for new health facilities will be supported, what will be required as part of the Health Impact Assessment and how health facilities will be sought as part of new residential development.</p> <p>Policy CO7 Hot Food Takeaways and Fast Food Outlets. Amended to state that planning permission will not be granted where they are within 400m of a primary and secondary school or in locations where children congregate in line with NPPF.</p>

Theme	Summary of main changes
Protecting our Local Environment	Policy LE1 broadened out and retitled 'Ensuring a High Standard of Amenity in New Development'.
Infrastructure, Delivery and Monitoring	New Policy M1 - Monitoring Framework added which sets out how the council will assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Local Plan.

Oldham's Publication Plan

2.8 Oldham's Local Plan will guide development in the Borough up to 2039 to reflect the plan-period of PfE, that is 2022 to 2039. Underpinning the Plan will be the principles of sustainable development, and it will meet the needs of Oldham and its residents whilst also achieving high quality design, addressing climate change and increasing accessibility for all.

2.9 The Local Plan will cover the whole Borough except that part which falls within the Peak District National Park.

2.10 The main purposes of the Plan are to:

- Set out the policies through which the Council will manage development coming forward and use to determine planning applications;
- Identify designations for the protection of the Borough's environmental and historical assets, our town centres, employment areas and infrastructure; and
- Enable the development of supporting infrastructure, such as transport, health, education, open space, sport and recreation facilities and utilities.

2.11 The policies contained in the Publication Plan are organised by theme – Homes; Economy and Employment; Our Centres; Oldham Town Centre; Addressing Climate Change; Natural Environment and Open Land; Addressing the Biodiversity Emergency; Oldham's Historic Environment; Achieving High Quality Design; A Sustainable, Active, Accessible Network for Oldham; Communities; Protecting our Local Environment; Infrastructure and Delivery in Oldham; and Monitoring.

2.12 The Local Plan provides an opportunity to bring together and express spatially those parts of The Oldham Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan that can be shaped and delivered through the planning system. Their aspirations and priorities are the golden thread that runs through the Local Plan, along with supporting and facilitating delivery of the Council's Building a Better Oldham agenda. A myriad of other plans and strategies such as Oldham's Green New Deal Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Cultural Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy have also been reflected in the Plan.

2.13 Underneath the overarching theme of Building a Better Oldham there also sit several thematic priorities for Oldham that policies within the Local Plan seek to address, such as the creation of healthy communities, tackling the climate emergency, and responding to the housing crisis we currently face across the Borough. For example, policies will:

- Encourage and facilitate development in the Borough that provides opportunities for healthy lifestyles, contribute to the creation of healthier communities, and helps to reduce health inequalities through:
 - Creating healthy, inclusive and well-designed places that are well connected to key services and facilities, with access to high-quality open spaces and green infrastructure;
 - Promoting opportunities for active travel and access to sustainable and accessible transport; and

- Supporting the provision of health facilities, requiring the completion of health impact assessments for new development where appropriate, and promoting healthy food choices through restricting the location of hot food takeaways.
- Mitigate the impact of climate change and increase resilience through:
 - Ensuring that development is located having regard to flood risk and is designed to increase water efficiency, reduce demand on water resources and protect water quality.
 - Encouraging the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy and sustainable construction techniques to minimise energy consumption.
- Ensure the delivery of quality homes to meet local needs and diversify the housing stock by:
 - Providing for, and supporting the delivery of, at least 11,560 homes in line with PfE.
 - Delivering a diverse housing offer to meet the needs of all our residents including affordable housing and homes for families, older people and disabled persons,
 - Ensuring the delivery of high-quality, sustainable and well-designed homes at appropriate densities, and making the best and most effective use of brownfield land.

Green Belt, Local Green Space and Oldham's Publication Plan

2.14 The Borough's Green Belt has been established through PfE. As such, the Publication Plan does not propose any strategic Green Belt boundary revisions. A 'tidy up' of Oldham's Green Belt has however been carried out to identify minor changes of a technical cartographical nature that have arisen primarily from the move to GIS mapping. These minor technical boundary revisions proposed to the Green Belt are set out within Appendix 8 of the Publication Plan.

2.15 The Publication Plan proposes to designate areas as 'Local Green Spaces' (LGS) in line with national planning policy. LGS are spaces that are important to local communities due to their proximity to the community and because they are demonstrably special and hold local significance due to beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife. Most LGS are already designated Other Protected Open Land (OPOLs). A review of the current OPOL has been undertaken against LGS criteria to ensure the policy approach is robust and up to date. As a result of this updated evidence there have been boundary changes to some LGS, five have been de-designated (either because they do not meet the new LGS criteria or they have been allocated for development as part of PfE), and a new LGS has also been identified in Sholver.

Integrated Assessment

2.16 The Publication Plan is supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), attached at Appendices 4 to 6 to this report. The IA incorporates the following:

- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA);
- Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA);
- Oldham Impact Assessment Tool (incorporating the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA); and
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

2.17 The role of a SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the emerging Local Plan against economic, environmental and social objectives (including opportunities for net gain). Significant adverse effects should be avoided and wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where

significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).

- 2.18 The purpose of a Habitat Regulations Assessment of land use plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European protected sites is an integral part of the planning process at the local level. The findings of the HRA have been integrated into the IA.
- 2.19 The Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective, accessible to all, and which meet different people's needs. The Council considers the impacts of its activities on the defined equality characteristics through the Oldham Impact Assessment Tool (OIA), which provides a framework for considering the scale, likelihood and length of impact. Through applying the OIA, consideration has therefore been given to the aims and effects of the Publication Plan on the following groups – Disabled people; Particular ethnic groups; Men or women (including impacts due to pregnancy / maternity); People of particular sexual orientation/s; People in a marriage or civil partnership; People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment; People of low incomes; People in particular age groups; and Groups with particular faiths and beliefs. The findings of the OIA have been fed into the IA.
- 2.20 The need to complete a HIA is not a statutory requirement however it's use provides a further opportunity to embed health and wellbeing matters into the preparation of the Local Plan. As with the HRA and OIA the findings of the health assessment have been fed into the IA.
- 2.21 In addition to the above, as part of previous stages in the preparation of the Local Plan (that is, the Issues and Options and the Draft Local Plan) IA Scoping Reports have been produced. The Scoping Report has been updated for the Publication Plan and can be found at Appendix 5. A Non-Technical Summary of the Integrated Assessment has been prepared and is available at Appendix 6.

Evidence

- 2.22 A comprehensive evidence base has been prepared to support preparation of the Local Plan, details of which can be found at <https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201236/evidence>. Most recently, this has included a Local Plan Viability Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that policy requirements for developer contributions are assessed for viability, alongside proportionate evidence in relation to infrastructure requirements and affordable housing need for example, at the plan-making stage so ensure that such policies do not undermine the deliverability of the Plan.
- 2.23 Several thematic Topic Papers will also be published alongside the Publication Plan. These pull together the evidence in one place and set out how this and previous consultations have helped to inform the Publication Plan.

Duty to Co-operate and Statement of Common Ground

- 2.24 Paragraph 24 of NPPF sets out that local planning authorities continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Through the Duty strategic policy-making authorities are required to collaborate on the identification of relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans. This is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy.
- 2.25 To demonstrate effective and on-going joint working paragraph 28 of NPPF states that strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of

common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these.

2.26 PfE sets out our strategic policies and spatial strategy and those matters with cross boundary implications are dealt with through the Joint Plan, including districts local housing need. As such, given the development management policy focus of the Local Plan there are limited cross-boundary matters. Furthermore, a recent letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) dated 27 November 2025 removes the Duty requirement for plans being prepared under the current planning system. Nevertheless, local planning authorities are still encouraged to collaborate across their boundaries, including on unmet development needs from neighbouring areas.

2.27 As such, the Council has sought to continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and key organisations, in a bid to ensure that those aspects with cross-boundary and strategic implications are appropriately addressed.

2.28 A Statement of Common Ground has been prepared to support the review of Oldham's Local Plan and will be published alongside the Publication Plan. The Statement has been updated at each stage of the Local Plan review process, providing updates on cross-boundary matters, demonstrating our commitment to working collaboratively with our neighbouring authorities and the relevant public bodies.

Consultation on the Publication Plan

2.29 At Publication Plan stage, whilst anyone can make a representation on any point, only those pertaining to 'soundness' will be considered by the Inspector(s). As set out in paragraph 36 of NPPF, plans are sound if they are:

- Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework and other statement of national planning policy, where relevant.

2.30 Inspectors also consider submissions concerning legal compliance issues, for example the Integrated Assessment, the Habitats Assessment Regulation and the Duty to Co-operate.

2.31 Consultation on the Publication Plan will be carried out in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement, most recently adopted July 2021².

2.32 In line with paragraph 4.65 of the SCI 2021 the Council will, as a minimum:

- Publish a Public Notice outlining details of the Publication Plan;

² Oldham Council's Statement of Community Involvement (28 July 2021) can be found online at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201232/engagement/253/statement_of_community_involvement

- Issue a press release with details of the Publication Plan;
- Publish the Publication Plan documents on the Council's website;
- Make the Publication Plan documents available at public libraries across Oldham and at the Council's principal office; and
- Inform those on our Local Plan mailing list, Oldham Partnership and Oldham Councillors that the Publication Plan documents are available for consultation and where they may be viewed.

2.34 In addition to those in paragraph 4.65 of the SCI, as outlined above, the Council may also make use of additional engagement tools where appropriate as outlined in paragraph 4.67 and Table 1 of the SCI 2021.

2.35 The Council will also make use of Engagement HQ, our Council-wide web engagement platform.

Submission and Examination of Oldham's Local Plan

2.36 Following consultation the Publication Plan, representations made at the Regulation 19 stage, and other relevant supporting documentation will be sent to the Secretary of State. This is called the 'Submission stage', pursuant to Regulation 22 and requires approval at Council. A separate report seeking approval to submit the Publication Plan for examination will be brought to Council, prior to submission May / June 2026.

2.37 Upon adoption the Local Plan will replace the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD, and any remaining saved Unitary Development Plan policies and allocations (see Appendix 1 of the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan for more information).

2.38 The Oldham Local Plan will sit alongside PfE, as part of a suite of documents that form the development plan for the Borough that also includes the Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan and Joint Minerals Plan. Together these documents will inform decision-making on development proposals and planning applications in the Borough of Oldham.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1:** Members approve the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan, Policies Map and supporting documentation for publication and consultation as per the recommendations above.

Advantages – this will ensure that the Council has in place an up-to-date Local Plan in place that supports implementation of PfE at a Borough-wide level and provides a planning policy framework to enable delivery of the Council's regeneration ambitions and Building a Better Oldham, whilst meeting requirements of national planning policy and regulations.

Disadvantages - there are no disadvantages to this option as it provides a positive planning policy framework for the Borough and meets the legislative requirements at this stage in the preparation of a Local Plan.

3.2 **Option 2:** Members do not approve the Oldham Local Plan: Publication Plan, Policies Map and supporting documentation for publication and consultation as per the recommendations above.

Advantages – there are no advantages to this option.

Disadvantages - not approving the Publication Plan for publication and consultation would mean that we are not able to progress preparation of the Local Plan to the next stage. Without

an up-to-date Local Plan in place the Council would be reliant on the existing Core Strategy (elements of which are out of date) and the high-level GM-wide policies in Places for Everyone when making decisions on planning applications for the foreseeable future. The Council would not have the benefit of the positive planning framework set out in the Publication Plan that supports implementation of PfE at a Borough-wide level whilst enabling delivery of our Council regeneration ambitions and priorities.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 It is recommended that the Publication Plan, Policies Map and supporting documentation be approved for publication and consultation commencing no earlier than 28 January 2026 for a period of 6 weeks. Note, following approval there may be further formatting amendments made to the documents to address accessibility requirements prior to publication for consultation.

5 Consultation

5.1 Details of consultation carried out to date and the process for the Publication Plan can be found in paragraph 2.7 and Table 1 of this report.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 While there are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this report, the consultation itself will require minimal expenditure of up to £5k for public notices, printing and associated costs. This sum will be funded within the existing budget provision held in Planning.

Any future costs linked to the implementation of Local Plan policies will be presented in subsequent reports for approval.

(Mohammed Hussain)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 In accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation for local planning matters, approval of the Publication Plan prepared pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 is delegated to the Cabinet. The documents must be made available for public inspection at the principal office and such other places within the area as the Council consider appropriate and must be published on the Council's website. Approval of the relevant Statements of Common Ground required pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework would not fall within the definition of a key decision and can therefore be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Director.

(A Evans)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 None

(S Kapoor)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

- 9.1 An Oldham Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to inform preparation of the Publication Plan as part of the Integrated Assessment, details of which can be found in Appendix 4.
- 9.2 In summary the assessment found that the Publication Plan has a neutral impact on most equality characteristics with the exception of age and disability, on which it was considered to have a strong positive impact.
- 9.3 The assessment found that the Publication Plan is very likely to have a strong positive impact on the council's three missions / corporate priorities – A Great Place to Live; Green and Growing; and Happier Healthier Lives, over the long-term.

10 **Key Decision**

- 10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

- 11.1 RBO-16-25

12 **Background Papers**

Details of previous stages in the review of the Oldham's Local Plan can be found online at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review.

National Planning Policy Framework can be viewed at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 can be viewed at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents>.

13 **Appendices**

Attached to this report are the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Publication Plan
- Appendix 2: Publication Plan Appendices
- Appendix 3: Policies Map
- Appendix 4: Integrated Assessment (incorporating the Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitat Regulations Assessment, Oldham Equality impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment)
- Appendix 5 – Integrated Assessment Scoping Report Update
- Appendix 6 - Non-Technical Summary of the Integrated Assessment