

Notice of Motion for Full Council

Under Paragraph 12 of the Council Procedure Rules

The following Motion to be submitted to Council on the date indicated below:-

A Borough-Wide Strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and Improve Life Chances for Children in Oldham

This motion seeks a practical, measurable and cross-party programme for reducing child poverty in Oldham, building on work already undertaken by the Council and learning from effective approaches elsewhere.

This Council notes that:

- Child poverty and deprivation continue to affect too many children and families across Oldham, with particularly severe pressures in some of the borough's most deprived communities.
- Oldham Council already provides important support through financial assistance, Family Hubs, early help, food and holiday support, housing and welfare advice, and employment and skills programmes.

The Council's existing work provides a strong foundation on which to build.

- In 2024, Oldham Council resolved to support the development of a national Child Poverty Strategy and to explore further support for families affected by the two child limit, including through free school meals.
- Oldham Council's current support includes more than £5.7 million of financial-crisis support for 2026/27, including assistance for families and around 21,000 children eligible for Free School Meals during school holidays.
- Oldham's Children and Young People Scrutiny Board has recognised the importance of intervention rather than waiting for crisis, and has discussed poverty, Family First, breakfast clubs and the expected impact of changes to the two-child benefit cap.
- Local government cannot eliminate child poverty alone. However, the Council can use its convening power, services, partnerships, procurement, data, community networks and political voice to reduce the impact of poverty and improve children's life chances.
- Approaches to tackling child poverty have been developed by councils elsewhere in England. Oldham should learn from proven practice while developing a strategy specifically suited to the borough's communities and circumstances.

This Council believes that:

- No child should have their life chances determined by the income or circumstances of their family.
- Reducing child poverty should be treated as a long-term corporate priority, with clear outcomes, measurable targets and democratic accountability.
- Prevention and early intervention are more effective than waiting until families reach crisis point.
- Children, parents, schools, health services, voluntary organisations, faith groups, businesses and communities should have a meaningful role in shaping solutions.
- Action should be focused particularly on communities experiencing the greatest levels of deprivation while ensuring that families across the borough can access support.
- A cross-party approach gives Oldham the best opportunity to maintain progress over successive administrations.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- 1 Develop an Oldham Child Poverty Reduction Strategy within 12 months, led by the Council

and developed with partners, children, young people and families. The Strategy should establish a clear baseline, identify priority interventions and set measurable targets and timescales.

2 Establish a cross-party Child Poverty Partnership comprising councillors from across the political groups, relevant Council officers, schools and education leaders, health and public-health partners, voluntary and community organisations, faith groups, local businesses, parents, children and young people. Its purpose should be to advise on, monitor and help deliver the Strategy.

3 Introduce an annual Child Poverty and Family Wellbeing Impact Statement alongside the Council's major budget and policy decisions, identifying where decisions may increase or reduce financial pressure on children and families and setting out appropriate mitigation where necessary.

4 Publish an annual Child Poverty Scorecard for Full Council, including progress against agreed indicators such as child poverty, free-school-meal eligibility, food insecurity, school attendance and attainment, access to early help, housing insecurity, employment and financial resilience, with data broken down where appropriate to identify inequalities between communities.

5 Prioritise early intervention and prevention, including strengthening the reach of Family Hubs, breakfast provision, holiday food and activity programmes, welfare and debt advice, housing support, employment and skills support, and routes into training and secure work.

6 Improve access to support by reviewing how residents are informed about available help and by developing a simple, coordinated communications approach across Council services and partner organisations, with particular attention to families who may not currently access support.

7 Work with schools and education partners to identify practical opportunities to reduce the effects of poverty on children's education, including access to free school meals, uniform and essential-cost support, attendance initiatives, enrichment and digital access.

8 Use the Council's convening and commissioning role to bring together public, voluntary, community, faith and business partners to identify additional resources, funding opportunities and practical initiatives that can reduce hardship and improve children's life chances.

9 Ask officers to identify external funding and best-practice opportunities and report to the relevant scrutiny body on potential initiatives that could be adapted for Oldham.

10 Write to Oldham's Members of Parliament and the Government's relevant Child Poverty Task Force setting out the scale of the challenge in Oldham, sharing local evidence and calling for national measures and funding that will help reduce child poverty.

11 Bring the completed Strategy and first-year implementation plan to Full Council for consideration and debate within 12 months, followed by an annual progress report.

Implementation and accountability.

The Strategy should complement, rather than duplicate, existing Council plans and statutory responsibilities. Before finalising the Strategy, officers should map current provision, identify gaps, establish a baseline and assess the resources required. Any new expenditure should be subject to the Council's normal financial, legal and equality-assessment processes.

A clear message from Oldham

Child poverty should not be accepted as inevitable. Oldham has communities with significant strengths, committed public services and a strong voluntary and community sector. This motion asks the Council to bring those assets together around a single, measurable ambition: to reduce

child poverty, prevent families falling into crisis and give every child in Oldham the strongest possible start in life.

Date of Council meeting: 16th September 2026

Notice submitted from (must be received no later than noon, seven working days before the meeting e.g. the Monday before the meeting on Wednesday)

The submission must be signed by at least one Member

Councillor Proposing: Zaheer Ali

Signature:

Councillor Seconding: Sonny Arstan

Signature:

On completion of the above please submit your motion to constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk