Emergency Powers Decision Report

Staying Close

Decision Maker: Chief Executive

Service Area: Children's Social Care
Directorate: Children's Services
Report Author: Nick Whitbread
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Date of Decision: October 2026

1. Power to make the decision

The decision is being taken under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions which cannot be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Decision Sought

This paper seeks agreement for Oldham Council to agree the Staying Close Delivery Plan and receive the grant from the Department for Education (DfE).

3. Reason for urgency

Pending DfE final approval, the grant is expected to be received during October 2026 for commencement of the project in November 2026. Delaying the acceptance of the grant will impact the proposed delivery plan and leave the DfE approval at risk.

4. Risk(s) of not taking the decision

Failure to participate would result in the loss of access to the DfE's Staying Close funds that are being offered to Council's across the country. This would have a detrimental impact on care leavers in the council, which we have corporate parenting responsibilities for and statutory duties to ensure suitable accommodation options. The Staying Close Delivery Bid expands these accommodation options with the implementation of a Supported Lodgings offer.

5. Financial impact if decision not taken forward

Failure to participate would result in the loss of access to the DfE's Staying Close funds that are being offered to Council's across the country. This would have a detrimental impact on care leavers in the council, which we have corporate parenting responsibilities for and statutory duties to ensure suitable accommodation options. The Staying Close Delivery Bid expands these accommodation options with the implementation of a Supported Lodgings offer.

6. Statutory Officer clearances

a. Section 151 Officer

Name Lee Walsh
Date 13 October 2026
Comments

The Department for Education (DfE) has invited the Council to submit a Staying Close proposal, with indicative grant funding of £411,701 subject to DfE approval. The report recommends acceptance of the funding to further strengthen the Leaving Care offer. All expenditure relates to new activity and will only be incurred following DfE approval and receipt of a formal grant agreement.

b. Monitoring Officer

Name: Alex Bougatef
Date:13 October 2026
Comments:

The exercise of emergency powers should be undertaken in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council. However, the Council has not yet appointed a Leader or Deputy Leader for the current municipal year so it is not possible to consult them. In addition, there is no certainty about when a Leader or Deputy Leader will be appointed as the Council has failed at successive meetings to do so. For the reasons given in the report an urgent decision relating to the report is required and it cannot await the appointment of a Leader and Deputy Leader at some undetermined future date.