

Report to CABINET

Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation: Consultation Results and Approval to Support Establishment

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7th September 2026

Reason for Decision

Officers are seeking Cabinet approval to support the designation of the proposed Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) area and the establishment of the Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation.

The proposed MDC is intended to provide a focused statutory delivery vehicle to accelerate regeneration across Oldham's key intervention areas, including SportsTown, Northern Roots and the Town Centre regeneration programme. It is intended to improve coordination across multiple projects and partners, strengthen investor confidence, support delivery planning and help overcome persistent barriers around land, infrastructure, viability, funding and governance.

The public consultation has shown strong support for the principle of establishing an MDC in Oldham. As such, Cabinet is asked to note the consultation results and approve Oldham Council's support for the next steps in the statutory designation and establishment process.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The results of the consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposed designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Oldham are noted;
- Oldham Council supports the designation of the proposed Oldham MDC area and the establishment of the Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation.
- Delegated approval be given to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Director of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer, Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer and GMCA, to finalise any legal, technical, financial requirements and documentation needed to support the designation, constitution and establishment process of the MDC;
- Delegated approval be given to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to decide upon the MDC business plan, governance, appointments, resourcing, budget and implementation arrangements and to bring forward reports for Members visibility and awareness through the relevant governance channel; which includes the draft Business Plan being submitted to the Council's relevant scrutiny committee before approval by the MDC Board and
- The Council notes that, subject to the Mayor of Greater Manchester being satisfied that the statutory requirements have been met and approval by GMCA at its meeting on 25 September 2026, the Mayor may publicise the designation, notify the Secretary of State of the designation and confirm the proposed name, "Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation".

Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation: Consultation Results and Approval to Support Establishment

1 Background

- 1.1 Oldham is entering a pivotal phase in the regeneration of its Town Centre and wider intervention areas. Across SportsTown, the Town Centre and Northern Roots, there is a significant programme of housing, sport, health, culture, green growth, public realm, infrastructure and place-based investment activity.
- 1.2 The proposed Oldham MDC is intended to provide a focused place-based delivery framework to accelerate regeneration, improve coordination across multiple projects and partners, and help overcome persistent delivery barriers. These include fragmented governance, land and site complexity, viability and funding gaps, infrastructure coordination, heritage and cultural asset challenges, and the need to improve market confidence.
- 1.3 The MDC is intended to support Oldham Council's wider priorities of A Great Place to Live, Green and Growing, and Healthier, Happier Lives, while also helping to position Oldham as Greater Manchester's first Live Well Regeneration Pilot.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 Consultation has been undertaken on the proposal to establish an Oldham MDC. The consultation sought views on whether an MDC is the right approach for Oldham, the proposed name, the proposed boundary, planning powers and the opportunities, risks and concerns that should be addressed.
- 2.2 The consultation was carried out via an online survey hosted on GM Consult and was open from 20 May 2026 to 1 July 2026. Every address within the proposed MDC boundary received a letter inviting them to respond to the consultation.
- 2.3 A total of 362 online survey responses were received. In response to the question "Do you agree with the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Oldham?", 302 respondents answered "Yes" (83.43%), 58 answered "No" (16.02%) and 2 did not answer (0.55%).
- 2.4 In relation to whether the MDC would support development, growth and improvements across the borough, 80.94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 13.26% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 5.52% were neutral and 0.28% did not answer.
- 2.5 In relation to the proposed boundary, 69.61% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 17.13% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 12.98% were neutral and 0.28% did not answer.
- 2.6 In relation to the current approach that the MDC should not have planning powers and that planning should remain with Oldham Borough Council, 57.18% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 17.12% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 25.41% were neutral and 0.28% did not answer.

3 Proposed Decision

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- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves Oldham Council's support for the designation of the proposed Oldham MDC area and the establishment of the Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation.
 - 3.2 The proposed MDC would be a statutory delivery vehicle focused on securing regeneration within the proposed area. It would work alongside Oldham Council, GMCA, landowners, delivery partners, investors, anchor institutions and communities.
 - 3.3 The MDC would support a connected regeneration programme across SportsTown, the Town Centre and Northern Roots. Its role would include strategic coordination, delivery planning, land and site readiness, infrastructure coordination, funding and investment assembly, partner engagement and a clearer platform for regeneration decision-making.

4 Rationale for the Decision

- 4.1 Development Corporations can be important tools for delivering complex regeneration programmes where there is a need for dedicated focus, delivery coordination, public-sector commitment, investment confidence and statutory delivery powers.
- 4.2 The rationale for the Oldham MDC is based on the scale of the current regeneration pipeline and the persistence of delivery barriers. The MDC is intended to be a practical delivery tool that can align people, powers, investment and programme management around a coherent regeneration agenda.
- 4.3 The consultation indicates strong support for the proposal. Respondents cited the opportunity for regeneration, investment, housing, infrastructure, jobs, business confidence and local economic growth. Support was also expressed for SportsTown, particularly where it could improve access to modern sports facilities, support health and wellbeing, strengthen community pride and benefit children and young people.
- 4.4 The consultation also identified issues that will need to be addressed as the MDC is developed, including local democracy, accountability and trust; how benefits will be felt across the borough; cost and governance; and the potential impact of development on existing communities and infrastructure.
- 4.5 Having regard to the consultation responses, the scale of support for the principle of an MDC, and the strategic case set out in the draft Business Plan and Governance paper, it is considered that establishment of the Oldham MDC would support better outcomes for regeneration, economic growth, investment, housing, health, wellbeing and place-based delivery.

5 Governance and Delivery Approach

- 5.1 The draft governance model proposes a three-tier architecture comprising the MDC Board, Senior Leadership Team and Delivery Team. The Board would provide strategic leadership and decision-making; the SLT would provide programme leadership and assurance; and the Delivery Team would manage day-to-day programme execution.
- 5.2 The proposed Board comprises nine voting members: an Independent Chair, three elected members, one GMCA member / representative, one Oldham Council senior officer representative, and three independent NEDs covering sport / major events / regeneration, investment / capital markets, and regeneration delivery / development.
- 5.3 The governance model is intended to be investment-led, delivery-focused, politically durable, government-connected and expertise-based. It is intended to balance delivery agility with public accountability and cross-party legitimacy.

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- 5.4 The MDC will prepare a five-year Business Plan for approval by the MDC Board. The draft Business Plan will be brought to the Council's relevant scrutiny committee before approval by the MDC Board. Thereafter, an annual report will be presented to scrutiny, providing a review of performance and delivery during the preceding year and setting out the priorities, programme and intended activity for the year ahead.

6 Options/Alternatives

- 6.1 Option 1: approve Oldham Council's support for designation of the proposed MDC area and establishment of the Oldham MDC. This is the recommended option. It supports the creation of a focused statutory delivery vehicle to accelerate regeneration, strengthen investor confidence and coordinate delivery across the proposed area.
- 6.2 Option 2: do not approve support for the establishment of the MDC. This is not recommended. Without an MDC, Oldham would continue to rely on existing delivery arrangements, with the risk that individual projects remain disconnected and that opportunities for public and private investment are weakened.
- 6.3 Option 3: defer the decision. This is not recommended. Deferral could delay the statutory process, reduce momentum and weaken Oldham's ability to position itself as investment-ready within Greater Manchester's emerging approach to MDCs and growth locations.

7 Preferred Option

- 7.1 Option 1 is the preferred option. This option enables Oldham Council to support the designation, constitution and establishment process for the proposed Oldham MDC, subject to the Mayor of Greater Manchester being satisfied that the statutory requirements have been met.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 Consultation was undertaken from 20 May 2026 to 1 July 2026 through an online survey hosted on GM Consult. Every address within the proposed MDC boundary received a letter inviting them to respond.
- 8.2 A total of 362 online survey responses were received. Most respondents responded as individuals, with 323 responses recorded as "Myself" (89.23%) and 35 as organisations (9.67%).
- 8.3 The consultation showed 83.43% support for the creation of an Oldham MDC; 80.94% agreement that the MDC would support development, growth and improvements across the borough; 61.21% agreement with the proposed name; 69.61% agreement with the proposed boundary; and 57.18% agreement with the current approach that planning powers should remain with Oldham Borough Council.
- 8.4 The main themes of support were regeneration, investment, housing, infrastructure, jobs, business confidence, local economic growth and SportsTown. Respondents also highlighted the opportunity to improve sports facilities, health and wellbeing, community pride and opportunities for children and young people.
- 8.5 The main themes of concern were local democracy, accountability and trust; whether the boundary should be expanded to cover more of the borough; cost and governance; green space and Clayton Playing Fields; and the potential impact of development on existing communities, roads, parking and infrastructure.

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- 8.6 Letters were also received from Jim McMahon MP, United Utilities, the Lawn Tennis Association and the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust. These letters were supportive of the principle of an MDC, while also raising points for further consideration including fair distribution of benefits, infrastructure, planning powers, SportsTown and health and wellbeing alignment.
- 8.7 A separate youth consultation undertaken by Oldham Youth Service received 409 responses, primarily from young people aged 11 to 15. Overall, young people supported the proposed MDC and raised issues including youth provision, town centre safety, infrastructure and involvement in decision-making.
- 8.8 The approach adopted by the MDC will take account of concerns raised through consultation and seek to mitigate those concerns as far as practical. Key areas expected to be addressed include governance, transparency, community benefit, housing, infrastructure, transport, town centre impacts, delivery priorities, social value and borough-wide economic benefit.
- 8.9 Following recent changes to the Localism Act 2011 introduced by the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 and associated regulations, the Mayor is now required to consult all Greater Manchester constituent councils on the proposed designation and establishment of the Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation. That additional statutory consultation has been undertaken and completed, and the responses will be considered by the Mayor and GMCA as part of the final decision-making process. Establishment of the MDC remains subject to the Mayor being satisfied that all statutory requirements have been met, approval by GMCA at its meeting on 25 September 2026, and the subsequent statutory designation, notification and establishment process.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications in relation to supporting the designation of the proposed MDC area and establishment of the Oldham MDC at this juncture.
- 9.2 Should the Mayor of Greater Manchester designate the MDC area and establish the MDC, it is anticipated that there will be costs in relation to staffing the MDC and project development. The precise requirements cannot be quantified at this stage and it will be necessary for further approval to be sought in relation to the financing of the MDC.
- 9.3 GMCA has confirmed Flagship Projects revenue funding of £300,000 per annum for the three financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29, providing an initial funding envelope of £900,000 to support MDC mobilisation, staffing, supporting functions and priority project-development activity. The detailed allocation of this funding will be subject to the GMCA grant conditions, the MDC Business Plan and Annual Delivery Plan, and the Council's relevant financial and governance approvals. No commitment beyond confirmed external funding will be made without further approval.

James Postle

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) is a statutory body that is established under Part 8 of the Localism Act, as amended, together with the relevant provisions of the Greater Manchester devolution arrangements. The power to designate an MDC area and establish an MDC, rests with the Mayor of Greater Manchester, subject to the statutory requirements being satisfied, including consultation requirements.

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- 10.2 The Council is not being asked through this report to establish the MDC itself but to indicate its support for the proposed designation of the MDC area and the establishment of the Oldham Mayoral Development Corporation following the conclusion of the consultation process and the responses received.
- 10.3 The decision maker should be satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken and that the consultation responses have been thoroughly taken into account in reaching its decision. The report summarises the consultation outcomes and identifies the principal issues raised by respondents.
- 10.4 The precise powers, functions, governance arrangements, membership, funding arrangements and any delegation of functions to the MDC will be subject to further detailed consideration and approval through the relevant statutory and officer governance processes. Any transfer, delegation or exercise of planning, land, regeneration, property or other local authority functions would require compliance with the applicable statutory framework and, where necessary, separate approvals.
- 10.5 For the avoidance of doubt, approval of this report does not transfer or delegate any of Oldham Council's statutory functions, legal powers or decision-making responsibilities to the MDC. Oldham Council will remain the Local Planning Authority at establishment, planning powers cannot currently be delegated to the MDC without a new act of parliament. No Council-owned land or property will transfer into the ownership of the MDC through this decision.
- 10.6 As the MDC develops its business plan, governance arrangements and delivery programme, consideration will need to be given to compliance with public law principles, subsidy control requirements, procurement legislation, public sector equality duties, information governance requirements and any land acquisition or property-related statutory processes.

Alex Bougatef – Director of Legal

11 Procurement Implications

- 11.1 There are no direct procurement approvals sought through this report. Any future procurement activity associated with MDC mobilisation, specialist advice, delivery support or project implementation will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's procurement rules and any relevant MDC governance arrangements once established.

Sandeep Kapoor

12. Risks

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
MDC is not established	Oldham may lose momentum and lack a single statutory delivery vehicle for the proposed regeneration programme.	Approve Council support for designation and establishment and continue to work with GMCA on statutory process.
Governance arrangements are not sufficiently clear	Reduced confidence from members, GMCA, partners and	Develop and finalise constitution, Board arrangements, delegations,

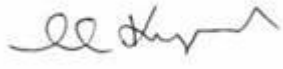
	investors.	reporting and risk management framework.
Revenue funding is insufficient	MDC may lack capacity to mobilise and deliver at pace.	Develop detailed staffing, revenue and funding proposals through business planning and further approvals.
Consultation concerns are not addressed	Potential reputational risk and reduced community confidence.	Use the consultation summary and Mayor's response to identify concerns and embed mitigations in the business plan, governance model and delivery framework.
Boundary concerns are not addressed	Communities outside the proposed boundary may perceive that benefits are not distributed fairly.	Provide clear explanation of the boundary rationale and set out how borough-wide benefits, jobs, skills, social value and investment outcomes will be captured and reported.
Planning powers position is not clearly communicated	Potential uncertainty about local planning accountability and decision-making.	Confirm and communicate the current position that Oldham Council will remain the Local Planning Authority at establishment.
Delivery pipeline is too broad	Risk of overextension and lack of focus in the early years.	Use Year 1 and Year 2 prioritisation to focus on SportsTown, Northern Roots, town centre residential priorities and enabling work.
Infrastructure and land issues delay delivery	Priority projects may not progress at pace.	Use MDC planning, land and infrastructure workstreams to identify constraints early and coordinate delivery partners.

13 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

- 13.1 The proposal is expected to have positive equality impacts where regeneration supports new homes, improved public spaces, access to sport, health and wellbeing opportunities, green space, culture, skills, jobs and social value. The MDC will need to ensure that the benefits of regeneration are accessible to residents and communities across Oldham.
- 13.2 The proposed programme includes opportunities for children and young people through SportsTown, Northern Roots, education and skills pathways, apprenticeships, health and wellbeing activity, cultural participation and improved town centre access. The separate youth consultation received 409 responses and highlighted support for investment in youth provision, town centre safety, infrastructure and involvement in decision-making. Detailed equality assessments will be required as specific projects are developed.

14 Environmental Implications

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- 14.1 The MDC is intended to support sustainable regeneration, brownfield land reuse, public realm improvement, green infrastructure and environmental enhancement. Northern Roots is a significant green growth, learning and wellbeing asset within the proposed programme.
- 14.2 Consultation responses included concerns about the potential impact on green spaces. Detailed environmental, carbon, biodiversity, transport and infrastructure implications will be considered at project level as schemes are developed, funded and brought forward for approval.
- 15 Key Decision**
- 15.1 RBO-11-26

Approved by the Chief Executive following consultation with the political group leaders. Decision made 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.	
Signed:  Shelley Kipling, Chief Executive	Dated: 8 th September 2026
Date of Group Leaders meeting	7 th September 2026

Oldham MDC – Red Line Boundary

