COUNCIL
09/09/2015 at 6.05 pm

Present: The Mayor – Councillor Ur-Rehman

Councillors Ahmad, Akhtar, A. Alexander, G. Alexander, Ali, Ames, Azad, Ball, M Bashforth, S Bashforth, Bates, Briggs, Brownridge, A Chadderton, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Dawson, Dean, Dearden, Fielding, Garry, Gloster, Haque, Harkness, Harrison, Heffernan, Hibbert, Hudson, Hussain, Iqbal, Jabbar, Judge, Kirkham, Klonowski, Larkin, Malik, McCann, McLaren, McMahon, Murphy, Mushtaq, Price, Qumer, Rehman, Roberts, Sedgwick, Shah, Sheldon, Shuttleworth, Stretton, Sykes, Toor, Turner, Williamson, Williams and Wrigglesworth

1 **QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS FROM THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ON WARD OR DISTRICT ISSUES**

The Mayor advised the meeting that the first item on the agenda in Open Council was Public Question Time. The questions had been received from members of the public and would be taken in the order in which they had been received. Council was advised that if the questioner was not present, then the question would appear on the screen in the Council Chamber. The following public questions had been submitted: (15 mins)

1. Question from Wayne Ankers via Twitter:

"Could cllrs look at introducing traffic calming or one way system on chamber road in Shaw. Cars too fast and too many".

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that various possibilities had been investigated previously for Chamber Road, none of which were supported at this time. Officers would carry out a review, to identify if there had been any change to the use of the road since the previous investigations, to inform future decisions.

2. Question from Joanne Keight via Twitter:

"In light of current & continuous staff cuts -will there be a review of the number of councillors that represent each ward?"

Councillor Arooj Shah, Cabinet Member for Performance and Corporate Governance responded that the Council had considered a proposal to reduce the number of councillors at a recent budget meeting. The Council considered that, for a borough with our population, there would be a democratic deficit if a reduction was introduced. The Council was not aware of any similarly sized Greater Manchester metropolitan authorities who were proceeding with a proposed reduction. If the Council agreed to reduce the numbers, the matter was not solely in the Council's control. A review would be required to be carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, who would

consider and identify the appropriate number of Councillors for each ward.

3. Question from sarahlawstudent via Twitter:

"I'd like to ask whether the council will be joining other LAs in calling on the PM to support additional refugees."

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Co-operatives responded that the Leader of the Council would be making a statement on this issue later in the meeting as an item of urgent business.
The Borough had a proud history of supporting people seeking asylum from persecution, and continued to do so. There were almost 700 asylum seekers living in Oldham, some of whom were from Syria. The Council was committed to playing its part in enabling more asylum seekers to find refuge in Britain in response to the current humanitarian crisis, but it was essential that the government recognised help was needed make this happen by reforming the asylum system. Local services needed to be properly resourced to meet the costs of this and every part of the country needed to shoulder the responsibility for supporting people seeking asylum. The distribution was not equal across the country.
Local communities also had a part to play. In line with its co-operative values, the Council had put information on the Council's website to advise residents where donations could be made in support of the humanitarian effort, or how they could volunteer with organisations which supported asylum seekers and refugees in Oldham. In doing so, we were able to work together to make Oldham a borough of sanctuary for people in desperate need.

4. Question from Pauline Brown via Facebook:

"I would like to know why the residents on MEDWAY RD HOLLINWOOD,have not had a letter or any sort of communication about the DURBAN MILL, being demolished.When the trendsetter was being demolished ,we went to Lyndhurst School, to view the plans, nothing has been said about the land on DURBAN MILL site. Also i had to recarpet my home because of the dirt, brick dust etc, i will NOT be doing this again out of my own pocket!!! AWAITING A REPLY"

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that proposals for demolition were normally regarded as 'permitted development', subject to compliance with the conditions contained within the regulations. The regulations required only that the applicant displayed a site notice on or near the land for not less than 21 days (within the 28-day process) and this notice was erected on 7 July 2015. The application was submitted on 7 July 2015 and Prior Approval was granted on 4 August 2015.
The Local Planning Authority had assessed the information provided in respect of the method of demolition and restoration

of the site. Insofar as dust mitigation measures were concerned, the method statement explained that a fine water spray would be used to minimise airborne dust along with protective sheeting to help contain dust and light debris.
It was inevitable that there would be disruption caused by the demolition of the building causing short-term issues. However, the Local Planning Authority was satisfied that the method statement minimised the risk of any significant disruption, though it could not control the conduct of the contractors during the works.
Councillor Hibbert made a commitment to ask officers to liaise with the applicant and to inform them that issues have been raised by residents.

5. Question from Bob Hampson via email

“What are the chances of erecting traffic lights at the top of Burnley Lane where it meets the roundabout? It is so dangerous trying to enter the roundabout. I have asked this question previously but never had any response”.

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that half this roundabout was currently signalised. The accident level at this specific section of the roundabout was low and the accidents which had been recorded were not caused by vehicles travelling on the roundabout. The arrangements on this roundabout were constantly being reviewed, and the road markings had been recently altered to improve the traffic movement. Any further changes to the signalisation of this roundabout would have involved liaison with Highways England, due to the potential impact on trunk road and motorway.

6. Question from Mr Fitzpatrick via email.

“I wish to ask the following question at the next Council Meeting; When will Cllr Jim McMahon come clean about his regeneration schemes. When will he tell Oldham residents that the arts council have refused to make a grant to the scheme to put the Oldham Coliseum Theatre in the old Library, when will he admit that he has no private sector funding for a hotel next to the QE hall. When will he accept that the scheme to build a multiplex cinema in the Old Town hall at a cost in excess of £36 million is a massive white elephant that will have to be paid for by future generations of Oldham Taxpayers. When will take down the propaganda billboards, promising schemes that he knows he can't deliver?”

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked his question.

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise responded that this was the same question that had been asked previously and the response had not changed. He did not accept the premise of the question in relation to these schemes, which were critical to both the regeneration of the Borough and to the people of Oldham.

7. Question from Janet Brown via Twitter

“How does somebody with no money in the bank 0 income, no money for gas & Electric no food, pay 20% council tax? Please answer”

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and HR, responded that Oldham Council had been forced to make difficult choices about how to pay for services because of the reductions the government had made in public spending. This meant that Oldham had to introduce a Local Council Tax Reduction scheme that was affordable but still enabled the Council to continue to support residents. As a result, from April 2015 the Council introduced a maximum award of 85% of a Band A charge. The Council strongly encouraged residents struggling to pay their Council Tax to contact the Council Tax team straight away to discuss their issues, as they could be able to offer an alternative payment arrangement. The Council was aware that many people in the Borough were experiencing financial difficulties and provided free benefits advice to residents through its Welfare Rights, Benefits and Personal budgeting support services. The service could be contacted on 0161 770 6633.

9. Question from dmonkey via email

“Please can Oldham Council ensure that FCHO have kept to their "Offer document" promises as many customer feel they have not for example: No customer involvement in many areas of Oldham, no walkabouts or interaction with housing officers. Disabled and elderly customers being forced to move away from their homes to get adaptations or manage with no adaptations. When are FCHO going to put the customer "in the heart of everything they do" as was promised at the transfer of council housing to FCHO.”

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that he was surprised to hear how the resident felt about First Choice Homes Oldham. He knew that First Choice Homes had invested a great deal of time and resources in customer involvement and would ask them to contact the resident to discuss their specific issues. In terms of adaptations for older and disabled people, they had spent over £1M a year since the housing stock transfer in 2011. He reassured Members and residents that First Choice Homes had met and, in many cases, exceeded their Offer Document promises ahead of time.
Councillor Hibbert indicated that he had a more-detailed response and this would be forwarded to the questioner the day after the meeting.

10. Question from Andrea Greenwood via email:

“As there is a council meeting tomorrow evening (I was going to tweet my concerns with the council) please can you give me

answers and solutions to the following concerns I have. Whilst I am fully aware certain road improvements have to take place I have concerns with BULCOTE lane.
1. My young son attends St Joseph's in Shaw - this Closure has enforced a different route as a lower dingle resident which has added an extra 40 - 50 minutes travelling time if I am lucky to my day (I also work full time in Tameside) this together with the additional cost of fuel over a period of 16 weeks is a financial burden that is not my choice.
2. My son has a number of debilitating illnesses and if I required the emergency services I am concerned they wouldnt arrive on time.
3. Who on earth in your planning department approved a 16 week major link road closure just as schools return for the autumn term. Your decision makers are accountable and this is a ludicrous decision when you could have started the works at the end of July - this has nothing to do with budgets as your already part way through a financial year.
4. Why do you not authorise access only for residents at commuting times?
5. How do I claim my travel expenses back from you?
6. The residents were of the understanding that this was a road widening scheme and it appears to be retaining wall work.
I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity."

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that he was sorry to hear about the family's difficulties. As with all Highway Improvement Schemes, the emergency services had access through the works at all times throughout the closure. For this scheme, it was always planned that it would be carried out across the six week holiday but the land acquisition to enable the road widening was not completed in time for this to happen. The Council had a duty of care to maintain a safe highway. Unfortunately, this would always result in road closures and disruption to all road users, but the Council would endeavour to ensure this was minimised wherever possible.

At this point in the meeting the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

The Mayor reminded Members that the Council had previously agreed that, questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council. The following questions were submitted by Councillors on Ward or District Matters: (25 mins)

1. Councillor Toor to Councillor Hibbert

"Parking around Medlock Valley Primary School is a major issue and poses a potential hazard for pupils being dropped off & picked up by parents in their cars. Can the Executive Member look into making available the vacant land opposite the entrance to the school for the purpose of turning it into a car park."

Councillor Hibbert responded he would like like to thank Cllr Toor for bringing this to his attention. Members would appreciate parking around schools was a problem across the Borough and the Council was always looking at ways to reduce pressure at peak times with schools and parents. He would ask colleagues to look at the possibility and suitability of using the site for temporary parking and ensure a response was sent to Cllr Toor in the next week.

2. Councillor Roberts to Councillor Hibbert

“I would like to thank Cllr Brownridge for her response to my question at the July Council Meeting in regard to the condition of the footpaths in Royton Cemetery. However Cemetery Road, which I also enquired about, is a public highway. Please could the relevant Cabinet Member confirm when this road, used by residents and those using or visiting the cemetery, will be resurfaced?”

Councillor Hibbert responded that all capital funding for the 2015-16 financial year had been fully allocated and unfortunately Cemetery Road was not awarded funding at that time. It would remain on the Unclassified Network resurfacing list until relevant funding became available. In the meantime, an inspection had been arranged to ensure that any significant-sized defects were removed. Due to Cemetery Road being lined with mature trees, increased costs would be incurred due to the care required for construction around them. Local people would not want the trees removed.

3. Councillor Fielding to Councillor Hibbert

“There is a longstanding problem with pigeons roosting under the Hardman Lane Metrolink Bridge in Failsworth and fouling the pavement with their droppings. Prior to the rail lines' conversion to metrolink, a net spanned the entirety of the underside of the bridge preventing this problem; this was removed during the conversion works and has not been replaced. Could the council please use it's influence to make metrolink reinstate the net? So far, my enquiries and lobbying have fallen on deaf ears.”

Councillor Hibbert responded that he had raised this issue with the Metrolink Director at Transport for Greater Manchester, who had advised that, as part of the Metrolink works, some areas were fitted with deterrent spikes and further netting works were carried out by the contractor. He had confirmed that they would now carry out a further review to ascertain if any measures needed to be taken at this location. He would ensure that the review was carried out in the next 2 weeks and recommendations would be brought forward regarding any further measures to be taken.

4. Councillor Williamson to Councillor Brownridge

"The Leader will doubtless be aware that Shaw and Crompton Ward Councillors received, in early August, a briefing note relating to the Royton Leisure Centre opening.
The briefing note was emailed by our Marketing Department - it contained the bombshell that "Existing members of the Shaw gym will also be contacted and informed that the facility will close".
This news completely contradicts the reassurances that ward councillors have consistently been given by the Administration that whilst the pool would close, the gym would remain open.
Can the Leader tell me when the decision was first taken to close the gym in Shaw and – given the ill-feeling and controversy surrounding the decision by this Administration to relocate all of Shaw's community leisure facilities to Royton - can he tell me why ward councillors were not offered the courtesy of a face-to-face meeting to discuss the rationale behind this decision, rather than merely an impersonal briefing note?"

Councillor Brownridge responded that the Council undertook an independent review of leisure services in Oldham during Winter 2010/11, which considered the current provision across all sectors and provided a clear evidence base, and supply and demand analysis, to support the Council's need to reconfigure the leisure estate in Oldham, in order to both reduce the revenue burden on the Council and improve the leisure offer to the public. The review supported the view that an overall leisure estate of fewer, higher quality public sector facilities, well distributed across the Borough, with a Town Centre facility at its heart, together with the private and voluntary sector provision, would be a realistic way forward.
In March 2012, Cabinet approved a report entitled Leisure Estate - Approval of Outline Business Case. The report approved the provision of two new facilities within Oldham and Royton. In addition it approved the closure of a number of facilities including Crompton Pool and Fitness Centre. At that time the Council stated its ambition to retain the current Crompton pool and fitness facility until the new pool at Royton opened. It was unable to keep the pool open but had managed to keep the gym open. When the new Royton Leisure Centre opened later this month the gym will close, as set out in the original reports.

5. Councillor Garry to Councillor Brownridge

"At the last meeting of the Failsworth and Hollinwood District Executive, Failsworth West Ward decided to make an allocation of £6000 towards street tree planting. Labour Councillors featured this in their most recent local newsletter and have since been inundated with enquiries from residents who would like trees planted on their streets.

It is clear that the £6000 we have allocated will not be enough to meet the demands of residents for planting and so can Council

commit to match fund our allocation and increase the impact of this popular idea?"

Councillor Brownridge responded that the Council had introduced the 'Green Dividend' scheme, where a borough-wide budget of £100K for 2015/6 & 2016/17 had been made available. This would give the opportunity for community groups to apply for funding for additional trees to be planted within their community. Bids were being coordinated through Environmental Services and a residents/application pack would shortly be sent out to those who had expressed an interest. A Ward Councillor briefing pack would also be available to all Councillors.

6. Councillor Mushtaq to Councillor Hibbert

"I have had and continue to receive numerous questions regarding the selective licensing scheme which has been and is being implemented in parts of the borough including Alexandra. The queries include a lot of technical questions around payments for example. However the broader theme seems to be 'what practical protection will landlords and their properties receive from bad or 'rogue' tenants? Can the relevant Cabinet Member please provide some information?"

Councillor Hibbert responded that he was grateful for the opportunity to dispel some of the myths and address some of the concerns about the scheme. Landlords would receive training and information which would ensure that they were equipped to prevent bad or rogue tenants from taking a tenancy in their properties. This included:

- Knowing their rights and responsibilities;
- Direct contact numbers of officers for advice and information;
- Knowing how to obtain reputable references for prospective tenants;
- Knowledge on how they should be managing their tenants to ensure they can spot signs of a bad tenant;
- Taking of deposits etc;
- Clear processes for evicting tenants;
- Clear processes of being able to have housing benefit paid direct to the landlord if the tenant falls into rent arrears;
- Referrals for tenants who may have complex needs;
- Mediation offer between landlord and tenant where necessary.

The Council was determined to deal with the increased number of problems caused by a minority of landlords.

7. Councillor Qumer to Councillor Hibbert

"I welcome the highways improvements in St Marys and across Oldham could the relevant Cabinet Member please advise when the work will be complete."

Councillor Hibbert responded that there was currently increased activity in St Mary's due to integration of Metrolink and

significant development works around the Town Centre, including the Leisure Centre. Other significant highway improvement works included the Gateway Corridor programme to implement the 24 hour repair promise. However, the maintenance of the highway was an ongoing process and would continue beyond the development work, albeit on a reduced level.

8. Councillor Harkness to Councillor Hibbert

"I would like to thank Cllr Hibbert and the relevant officers for attending the recent meeting to consult the public about the traffic issues arising in Dobcross as a result of the new school. It was good that the meeting remained focused on the advertised purpose of the meeting - traffic - rather than straying into questions related to the site as some in the protest group wished. There are other opportunities and forums more appropriate for this.
I felt overall that this meeting was very positive and even-handed in that it gave residents the opportunity to raise any traffic questions or concerns and gave the officers and elected members an opportunity to respond professionally and courteously and to acknowledge genuine issues that must be addressed.
I feel that we have now together begun to identify the engineering and management solutions that are needed to make traffic to and from the school work within the wider community. This dialogue has to continue.
Can I therefore ask the Cabinet Member to reassure me that this dialogue will continue with ward members and with my constituents and that we shall receive regular updates as the project progresses?"

Councillor Hibbert thanked Councillor Harkness for his support and responded that he was always happy to work with the local people and their Councillors. There was no need to ask the question, as Councillor Harkness knew the answer was yes.

9. Councillor G Alexander to Councillor Hibbert

"Why are roads being closed for over a week and although signage has been put in place works have not commenced. This causes unnecessary disruption especially when the roads are being closed for 17 weeks."

Councillor Hibbert responded that non-disruptive carriageway works were due to commence on Bullcote Lane as soon as the road was closed and the diversion route set up. Unfortunately, the contractor had not started these works as per the agreed programme. However, as soon as the Council were notified that works had not commenced, the road was reopened to minimise further disruption. The cost of the abortive Traffic Management would be borne by the contractor and the issue would be reflected in the Contractor's Key Performance Indicators, affecting future work opportunities.

10. Councillor S Bashforth to Councillor Brownridge

"I am working with a Royton resident Mr Jeff Vernon, to open a Branch of the Royal British Legion in Royton. We have a venue and the Royton Councillors are fully behind the scheme and will help support Mr Vernon to get a new Royton branch up and running. We are looking to open the branch after this November's remembrance ceremony in Royton and will be inviting Roytoners to join us for light refreshments and to ask questions about the RBL and hopefully sign up to join. Could I ask the relevant Cabinet Member to lend us advice and support in this project?"

Councillor Brownridge responded that the answer was yes.

11. Councillor M Bashforth to Councillor Hibbert

"After the welcome resurfacing works in Royton could the relevant Cabinet Member reassure our residents that all white lines and other road markings are fully reinstated, together with works to ensure manholes and grids are properly finished off before the works are accepted by Highways?"

Councillor Hibbert responded that approximately 10 to 14 days after the treatment had been laid, the surface would be swept to remove the excess chippings and the road markings applied. Small areas of the road marking element would take slightly longer. The replacement of the ironwork was a slower process and was carried out under a separate programme, which could take up to 3 months following the completion of the surfacing due to the sheer volume.

12. Councillor A Alexander to Councillor Brownridge

"Do we have any more information about the Gardening Hub that was supposed to be happening at Lees Park? An answer from the Cabinet Member may prevent the spread of more misinformation about the Park."

Councillor Brownridge responded she apologised the work had taken so long. It should not have done and the lesson would be learned for the future. The growing hub at Lees Park was definitely still going ahead (subject to the usual formalities) and was currently subject to an advertisement for the change of use from a bowling green to a growing hub. The Council was unable to progress this any further until the above had been concluded.

13 Councillor Wrigglesworth to Councillor Hibbert

"With Autumn approaching bringing with it shorter days more people will be travelling to and from work in the dark. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what has been done and if any more can be done to improve the lighting on the path to the Metro Station near Coalshaw Green Park?"

Councillor Hibbert responded that he could confirm that additional lighting had been provided and a night inspection was

due to take place which would identify if any further improvement in lighting levels could be achieved.

14 Councillor Iqbal to Councillor Hibbert

“Please could I have an update on the progress of the bridge near the Sixth-Form College?”

Councillor Hibbert responded that he and the Leader had met with the engineers and looked at the various proposals. It had been hoped that work would start during the holidays, but this had not proved possible. The work was in hand and officers would meet with Ward Councillors and Medlock Vale Ward Councillors before work began.

15 Councillor Turner to Councillor Hibbert

“Sometime last year, my ward colleague, Councillor Murphy, brought to the attention of Highways officers issues relating to speeding traffic along Thornham Road, Royton (Crompton ward). After a traffic speed survey was carried out, which recorded speeds of over 79mph in a 30mph zone, a promise of police presence was made; however, there have not been any operations in this area to combat anti-social and dangerous behaviour. Ward Councillors funded out of their budgets speed camera signs which helped for a short while until people realised that it was an idle threat. So can the Council work with the police to arrange for action to be taken?”

Councillor Hibbert responded that he would give a short verbal answer and a full written response would be provided to all Councillors. He had interrogated the results of the traffic survey recently undertaken along Thornham Road. The recorded injury accident database had also been interrogated and had revealed that no injury accidents had occurred in the previous three years. The average speeds recorded, although higher than the 30 mph limit, were not considered excessive, however in view of the high speeds recorded, he felt it was necessary to apply to the Police for Thornham Road to be treated as a site of community concern.

16 Councillor McLaren to Councillor Hibbert

“Please could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the situation regarding disabled access at Mills Hill station?”

Councillor Hibbert responded that he had raised this several times with Transport for Greater Manchester. He was aware that this was something that was of great concern to many members of the public and it was something he would do his best to rectify as soon as possible.

17 Councillor Sedgwick to Councillor Hibbert

“Can the Cabinet Member confirm to the residents and myself when is West Street and Burton Street going to be resurfaced?

They are a complete disgrace. We have two churches, St Thomas and St Edwards, in this area. Funeral processions have to go up and down these streets and it does not give a very good impression or provide a dignified ending for the deceased. We need action now. We have waited long enough."

Councillor Hibbert responded that the capital investment for highways improvements was currently being prioritised to improve the strategic route network and the secondary network roads. When these roads were to standard, funding would be allocated to the unclassified routes. These roads remained in the list of unclassified roads in the meantime and, given the specific issues caused by the condition of these roads, he would ask officers to see if there were any interim remedial works that could be carried out.

At this point in the meeting the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

RESOLVED that the questions and the responses provided be noted.

2 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moores, Salamat and Blyth

3 **TO ORDER THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 15TH JULY 2015 BE SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2015 be approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of the actual motion at Item 12, Motion 2, page 21.

4 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY MATTER TO BE DETERMINED AT THE MEETING**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Councillor Wrigglesworth declared a personal prejudicial interest in Item 8, Outstanding Business from the Previous Meeting, by virtue of being a Rail Track tenant.
Councillors McCann, Harrison, Chauhan and G Alexander declared a personal interest in Item 15b – Minutes of the Oldham Care and Support and Oldham Care and Support At Home Company, by virtue of their appointment to the Board.
Councillors Ahmad and Dearden declared a pecuniary interest in Item 13 – Notice of Administration Business Motion 1, by virtue of being magistrates.

5 **TO DEAL WITH MATTERS WHICH THE MAYOR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT BUSINESS**

The Mayor informed the meeting that no items of Urgent Business had been received.

6 **TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor advised the meeting that he had received a letter from the Leader in relation to the humanitarian crisis in Syria and indicating the Leader would be convening a meeting of Group Leaders of the Council to discuss the detail of a collective response. The letter was circulated to all Members and the Mayor read the letter to the meeting.

7 **TO RECEIVE AND NOTE PETITIONS RECEIVED RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor advised that one petition had been received for noting by Council.

RESOLVED that the following petition received since the last meeting of the Council be noted:

Neighbourhoods and Cooperatives

Duchess Street Experimental TRO Order (received 15 July 2015) (78 Signatures) (Ref 2015-16)

8 **OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Mayor informed the meeting that there was one item of Outstanding Business from the last Council meeting.

Councillor McLaren MOVED and Councillor Hibbert SECONDED:

“This Council was dismayed to hear, that Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin had announced that electrification work on the Transpennine route between Leeds and Manchester was being "paused".
This Council is extremely concerned that any delay in progressing plans for electrification and the introduction of faster and more reliable trains linking Manchester and Leeds will hamper economic recovery. Transport connections and infrastructure are the foundation on which an economy is built; the north already loses out substantially in terms of investment, now it will see this vital project fall even further back in the queue. This decision is bad for regional growth and jobs. How can the government expect to build a northern powerhouse if it is unwilling fund vital transport links and infrastructure? This decision is another example of the inequality that exists when it comes to regional investment, it will have a negative impact on the residents of Oldham.

This Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to Patrick McLoughlin, Transport Secretary and Hon George Osborne, Chancellor of the Exchequer, asking them to remove the “pause” that was placed on the electrification of the TransPennine route between Manchester and Leeds.

Also to write to Debbie Abrahams MP, Angela Rayner MP and Michael Meacher MP to ask them to support the motion and to use any other parliamentary means available to remove any further delay to the electrification of the TransPennine route between Manchester and Leeds".

AMENDMENT

Councillor Harkness MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED:

"Insert after the word "paused" in paragraph one, the following wording and paragraphs:
'Less than half of the British rail network is electrified. Since 1997 roughly 60 miles of existing track were electrified; 50 of them during the period of the 2010 – 15 Coalition Government. The Coalition Government supported the electrification of the Transpennine line as Government technical reports estimated that electrification would be "self-financing, paying for itself through lower train maintenance, leasing and operating costs. This means that this investment can take place without reducing already planned infrastructure enhancement work".'
Original second paragraph becomes fourth paragraph.
Insert after "Oldham" in the fourth paragraph, the following wording and paragraphs:
'In March 2015 the North of England Electrification Task Force published its final report. This identified the electrification of this line as bringing 'Tier One' economic benefits to the region (i.e. the highest possible).
'In a 2009 Network Rail report, electrification was described as having a "significant role to play in reducing carbon emissions. Electric vehicles, on average, emit 20 to 30 percent less CO2 emissions than diesel counterparts and tend to be quieter in operation".
Council therefore believes that the decision to "pause" the work by the new Conservative Government is illogical on:

- Finance
- Economic and
- Environmental grounds'

Original third paragraph becomes eighth paragraph.
Original fourth paragraph becomes ninth paragraph"

Councillor Briggs spoke on the motion.

Councillor McClaren did not exercise his right of reply.

Councillor Harkess exercised his right of reply.

A vote was then taken on the AMENDMENT

On being put to the VOTE, NINE votes were cast IN FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT, with FORTY SEVEN votes cast AGAINST

and NO ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

AMENDMENT 2

Councillor Heffernan MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED:

"Insert a final paragraph:
'Also to write to the Interim Mayor of the new Greater Manchester combined authority Mr Tony Lloyd asking him to support the efforts of local MPs and local authority leaders in overturning this decision'."

Councillor McClaren did not exercise his right of reply.

Councillor Heffernan did not exercise his right of reply.

A vote was then taken on AMENDMENT 2

On being put to the VOTE, NINE votes were cast IN FAVOUR of the AMENDMENT, with FORTY SEVEN votes cast AGAINST and NO ABSTENTIONS. The AMENDMENT was therefore LOST.

A vote was then taken on the ORIGINAL MOTION. On being put to the VOTE, the meeting UNANIMOUSLY voted IN FAVOUR of the MOTION, which was therefore CARRIED.

9 **LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT**

In delivering his Annual Statement the Leader of the Council, Councillor McMahon stated that staff had worked incredibly hard in the past year to make a difference to people's lives.

He reflected on the eventful year the Council had had and the many challenges that lay ahead at local, regional and national levels – whether that was cuts to Council funding, Greater Manchester devolution or the state of the economy and the new measures introduced in the recent Emergency Budget. The Council had undertaken a huge amount of work in the past twelve months to help ordinary residents deal with the issues that affected them.

A number of significant projects had been undertaken during the last year and the Leader highlighted the following:

- Oldham Foodbank, which had provided food for 3,716 adults and 1,620 children.
- Investment in the Welfare Rights Service ahead of the implementation of Welfare Reform.
- Get Oldham Working campaign had created 3,025 opportunities, including 1,672 jobs and 475 apprenticeships.

- Introduction of the Living Wage at Oldham Council, which had given five hundred and forty employees a new £7.86 minimum hourly rate from April 1.
- Signed up businesses to the Fair Employment Charter.
- Embedded 'Social Value' into all of the Council's activity.
- Launched Our House in June: the country's first-ever payment store run by a not-for-profit business.
- Introduced a licensing scheme for private landlords
- Warm Homes Oldham, had lifted more than 1,900 people out of fuel poverty in its first two years.
- Put plans in place for thousands of aspirational homes to be built here that would give real choice and variety to communities.
- Activated dormant trust funds in excess of £1 million, to let them be used for grassroots activities to improve neighbourhoods.
- Delivered the Oldham Youth Guarantee.

The Leader referred to the strategy for Oldham to 'invest to grow' and businesses were hugely important partners in all the plans.

Successful regeneration and a growing economy would mean that more businesses would be paying business rates and more residents in work would be paying Council Tax. This would help protect frontline and vital services that people depended on.

The Leader gave some examples of how the Council was helping local firms, which included:

- Warehouse to Wheels - more than 50 of the first trainees had graduated from this scheme.
- Independent Quarter - the scheme had been so successful that it was now being rolled out to help revive district town centres in Failsworth, Shaw and Lees.
- Oldham Enterprise Fund - had processed more than 90 applications and given a range of practical funding help and expert support to start-ups and existing businesses.

The Leader reflected that, last October, the Council had spun out its Adult Social Care operation into two services. Oldham Care and Support delivered adult care services bought by the Council on residents' behalf and Oldham Care and Support at Home was actively taking on and competing with private sector companies in the home care and personal assistance market.

This year 'Volunteering for All had been launched, a new project for residents who wanted to meet new friends or needed help with daily tasks. This included befriending, help with technology, shopping and everyday tasks, community clubs and travel companions. It was a vital voluntary contribution to improving lives for all who take part in it.

The Leader stated that there could be few better examples of co-operative working than the Oldham Dementia Action Alliance. The Council had teamed up with more than 30 organisations to create a scheme which had a target to sign up 500 people to agree to learn more about dementia in 45-minute training

sessions. After just three months it had created an astonishing 2,592 Dementia Friends in the borough prompting Simon Stevens, the Chief Executive of NHS England, to visit Oldham to see its pioneering work.

The Leader referred to the many unsung heroes in the borough. People here were industrious and selfless. For every one flytipper or rogue landlord or tenant Oldham had dozens of fantastic people who deserved better and would play their part in improving the place. That was why the Council was working so hard to help them – and why it would continue to leave no stone unturned in making 2015/6 another successful year for Oldham.

RESOLVED that the content of the Leader's Annual Statement be noted.

10 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

Youth Councillors TJay Turner, Saadiqah Begum and Marouf Ahmed spoke on the following Motion:

"Inhumane, discriminatory and ineffective… The 'Mosquito Device' is an alarm that emits a high-frequency sound that can only be heard by people under the age of 25. We believe that the mosquito device should not be used against young people and believe that its use should be prohibited.
Mosquito alarms are strategically placed outside of buildings where anti-social gatherings are known to take place. The purpose of its presence is to disperse groups of young people and to prevent loitering around buildings.
It has come to our attention that there is a mosquito device in operation in the Shaw and Crompton ward. Its presence has been highlighted to the Youth Council directly from young people and has been an issue that has been raised on social media.
We believe these devices are unjust as they specifically target young people regardless of their behaviour. It therefore threatens the fundamental human rights of young people and in our opinion, alongside that of the Council of Europe, we believe the use of the device also breaches the *UN Convention on the Rights of a Child 'Article 37' (Inhumane Treatment and Detention)*[1]
The device is incapable of differentiating between those who are anti-social and those who are not, causing a breach of *'Article 15' of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (Freedom of Association)*[2]. The right entitles children and young people to assemble freely and without restriction if doing so peacefully, which the mosquito alarm prohibits without inflicting *"torture"*[3].
We understand that anti-social behaviour is an issue that should always be challenged; we also know that young people are not the only demographic who are involved in anti-social behaviour. Using these devices is not a proportionate response to loitering as groups causing a nuisance can simply move somewhere else. The use of the device doesn't effectively tackle the issue, it simply moves it elsewhere. There are other more effective interventions that can have a longer term impact.

We understand that Oldham Council already has a framework in place to control the use of these devices however we propose that this is reviewed and a policy agreed to reduce the risk of discrimination of young people.

Appendix:

1) *Article 37:*

States Parties shall ensure that:
(a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
(Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age)
(b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
(c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age.
In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;
(d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.
(Reference: Unicef - http://www.unicef.org.uk)

2) *Article 15:*

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
(Reference: Unicef - http://www.unicef.org.uk)

3) *Torture:*

Definition:
Noun. The action or practise of inflicting severe pain on someone as a punishment or in order to force them to do or say something.
(Reference: Oxford English Dictionary - " http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/derfinition/english/torture)"

Councillor Fielding spoke in support of the Motion.

It was MOVED by Councillor McMahon and SECONDED by Councillor Williamson that under the Council's Constitution - Part 4 - Rules of Procedure - Rule 8.4d this motion be referred to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to which representatives of the Youth Council would be invited to attend.

On being put to the VOTE this suggestion was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

RESOLVED that the Motion be referred to a future meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board to which representatives of the Youth Council would be invited to attend.

11 **LEADER AND CABINET QUESTION TIME**

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Sykes, raised the following questions:

1. OFSTED Children's Services Report

"My first question to the Leader tonight concerns the recent report by OFSTED about the performance of our children's services department and the Safeguarding Board.
In 2012, when OFSTED last published a report on these services they were judged to be Good. In the August 2015 report they were deemed to be Requiring Improvement – a significantly worsened position.
Mercifully, in the report, OFSTED affirms positively that the four children's homes operated by the local authority "were judged to be good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection" and that "There are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm".
I am sure that this news will at least be a relief to all members in this chamber given recent tragedies involving vulnerable children and young people elsewhere; tragedies that I have previously raised in questions to the Leader.
But the report also states damningly that "The authority is not yet delivering good protection and help for children, young people and families" and that it is "not yet delivering good care" for looked after children and young people.
OFSTED also states that "Leadership, management and governance require improvement" and that "the characteristics of good leadership are not in place".
I am sure that like me the Leader will share the expectation of OFSTED that "all children and young people in Oldham receive the level of help, care and protection that will ensure their safety and help prepare them for adult life".
Certainly this was an expectation that we always worked to meet during my administration and this was why the Leader was able to inherit a Good rating in the last report.
So can he therefore now tell me what plan will be put in place to ensure that our Children's Services will be improved and our leadership, management and governance structures made fit for purpose, so that we may avoid another such damning verdict in future?"

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, responded that this was an important question and it was right to flag up the issue. Whilst the Ofsted report was not what was wanted, it was not unexpected. The Council's budget had been cut in half, which affected the Council's ability to reward and retain qualified staff. Staff had to do more and their casework loads were significant, complex and stressful, with referrals being up by a third. This was a national crisis in social care, with 5000 vacancies across the country for qualified social workers and new social workers needed time to develop. It was accepted the Council would have to make difficult decisions in the future. The Ofsted report was fair, though the review could have been fuller on political leadership. The Council had a plan in place to rebuild and improve.

2. Elder Abuse

"My second question concerns another group of vulnerable people – this time elderly people subjected to abuse.
Although there is much media attention focused on the abuse of children there is comparatively little given to that meted out to our elders. And here I am referring to neglect and financial and emotional abuse, as well as physical abuse.
The UK charity Action on Elder Abuse estimates that 8.6% of older people living in our communities are subject to elder abuse – over 500,000 people. Yet this is hidden from sight from the majority of people.
Breaking the statistics down a little - 60% of victims are over 80 years of age, more than 15% are over 90 years old, and almost one in five – 19% - have dementia.
Although most people have heard reports of abuse in care homes or in hospitals, the majority of older victims of abuse live in their own homes, and the majority of abusers are relatives not professionals. Most shockingly a quarter of those abused actually live with their abusers.
My second question to the Leader tonight is to ask him what is being done to address elder abuse in this Borough?"

Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, responded that the Council's responsibilities covered adults as well as children. The Council considered serious case reviews and reports, and there was not the same media interest in adult abuse as that in children. The Council had a good team in place that had picked up cases of abuse in care homes and private residences and, where there had been gaps, it had learned from them. It was really important that people in the community who had concerns reported them. The Council would look into the matter and, where a person was in danger, they would move that person to a place of safety.

Councillor Hudson, a Leader of a minority opposition group, raised the following question:

Councillor Hudson referred to Members sticking together as a co-operative Council and asked that they did not make overly-

political comments when they were all trying to work to give better services to the people of Oldham

Councillor McMahon responded that he did not agree that Councillors were gratuitously political. Members debated the issues that affected the people of Oldham and there were government decisions that affected Oldham. If the Council wanted a co-operative Oldham, the first thing to do was to put party politics aside in pursuit of what was best for Oldham. There would be times when party allegiances should be put aside to fight a government that was damaging Oldham. There was no way the extensive cuts could continue and the Council still provide quality services. Members could respect each other's political views but represented the people of Oldham and needed at times to stand up to the government and highlight what they were doing.

The Mayor reminded Members that the Council had previously agreed that, following the Leaders' allocated questions, further questions would be taken in an order which reflected the political balance of the Council.

Members raised the following questions:

1. Councillor Fielding to Councillor Jabbar

"Will the appropriate Cabinet Member advise if the Chancellor's announcement of the misleadingly named 'national living wage' in the July budget will have any effect on the salaries of the staff of Oldham Council?"

Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and HR, responded that the short the answer was that this would have no effect on the salaries of Oldham Council staff, as Oldham already responsibly paid beyond the national minimum wage rate.

When the Chancellor referred to the National Minimum Wage, this was currently £6.50 per hour and set to increase to £6.70 per hour from 1st October, and to £7.20 from 1 April 2016. By comparison, the National Living Wage recommended by the Living Wage Foundation was currently £7.85 for families to live decently in areas outside of Greater London. There was a substantial difference between what the Foundation considered a living wage and what the Chancellor was saying. The Council's scheme covered all employees and not just those over 25, as it was not fair to pay young people less.

As long ago as April 2012, Oldham Council introduced an Oldham Living Wage of £7.11 per hour. That had now been increased to £7.85 per hour for all directorate staff. This did not include school staff and schools were being encouraged to sign up to both the Living Wage and Fair Employment Charter. Currently 80.4% of schools were paying the Living Wage and the Council was working to raise this to 100%.

2. Councillor Judge to Councillor Brownridge

"We are only months away from the government's compulsory micro-chipping of dogs. Can the relevant Cabinet Member please tell us what Oldham Council are doing to help the process go as smoothly as possible? Can they also tell us what flexibility there is in the legislation to help Oldham tackle the problems of things like dangerous dogs that attack children and other pets, marauding dogs that attack livestock, abandoned dogs, dog mess and stolen or lost dogs?"

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Co-Operatives, responded that the Council was be working with colleagues in Greater Manchester to raise awareness of the changes in the microchipping of dogs. The Council had already purchased a stock of microchips to assist dogs owners with micro-chipping and will be promoting this.

The main change in the legislation for the Council was the ability to issue a 14 days' notice for non-compliance, when it was informed or became aware that a dog is not microchipped. The Council was still awaiting clarification on the process of enforcement which could involve either a fixed penalty notice or be addressed via the courts.

The majority of dog owners were responsible the Council had very few cases where dogs posed a risk to animals or children. The Council would continue to work with the Police where there was a dangerous dog. The Council's animal warden service would continue to investigate any incidents where an injury has not occurred and would investigate any incident involving attacks on livestock, and would prosecute.

With regard to dog mess it was likely the Council would look to consolidate existing Orders to set out what precisely what was acceptable in public areas. This would be an improvement, but the problem lay with irresponsible dog owners and, where Councillors or members of the public could provide evidence, the Council would prosecute.

3. Councillor Mushtaq to Councillor Hibbert

"There's a significant amount of road improvement taking place in the borough, for which I'm personally grateful as I'm sure are residents. However as I have raised previously there is a concern with the longevity of the improvements. Can the relevant cabinet member inform me if the condition of the re-laid surfaces is monitored especially over the winter months and if any steps are taken to ensure we get the best value for the money being spent?"

Councillor David Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Highways responded that the highway improvements that had taken place around the borough were made up of multiple solutions and treatments depending on the current condition of the carriageway.

In recent years Oldham Council had carried out a preventative treatment programme that applied a treatment to carriageways that were starting to show signs of deterioration and required an improvement in Macrotexture and skid resistance.

The treatment used was Ralumac Microasphalt which was a duel-layered thin surface system designed to extend the residual life of the carriageway by up to 12 years. The treatment was not without its flaws and the Council would endeavour to ensure that best quality finish was applied throughout the Borough.

Councillor Hibbert indicated a copy of his response would be sent to Councillor Mushtaq.

4. Councillor Harkness to Councillor Akhtar

"I welcome the establishment of a new project to offer employment opportunities for young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities.

Regrettably job seekers with learning disabilities are often discriminated against by employers and consequently they can encounter significant difficulties in finding work.

Can the Cabinet Member please provide me with an update on the progress that has so far been made on this project, particularly on the status of our arrangements with our partners New Bridge School, Remploy, Oldham Care and Support, Oldham College and Pure Innovation?

And can he also tell me what is being done to support older job seekers with learning disabilities through the Get Oldham Working programme?"

Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills responded that there were several partnership arrangements in place that offered employment opportunities for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pure Innovation and Oldham College offered a Supported Internship programme, which was an employment-based course that gave students with learning disabilities/difficulties the opportunity to develop employability skills in a real work place surrounded by other working people. The expected outcome of the programme was that employment was secured after the academic year. The programme would commence with 10 interns on the 14th September 2015, with 9 young people placed within different Council departments and 1 within the Pennine Care; each individual would experience a different placement each term so that they could explore roles and develop relevant skills.

Pure Innovation worked with the young people to offer the employment and progression support. The College delivered a 'preparing for employment' qualification alongside the work placements, together with English and maths which were

mandatory for all students who were undertaking a learning programme through a college.

New Bridge Horizons were exploring a partnership with Manchester College to deliver an additional Supported Internship programme locally where they would place 10 students on 10 week work placement over 3 rotations, with a view to securing a job on completion. To date, New Bridge had potentially identified 6 young people for the Get Oldham Working programme.

Remploy had agreed to offer employability support towards the end of the work placements as they had existing employer relations with large companies.

The Council was continuing to work with Oldham Care and Support. There was support available for older job seekers with learning disabilities through the Get Oldham Working programme. Get Oldham Working (GOW) was a direct referral agency to Remploy's Work Choice programme. This meant that any residents with a disability or learning difficulty could be directly referred to Work Choice by GOW without need for their Job Centre Plus advisor making that referral.

There would be an event on 29th September to discuss and agree the GM Vision for Employment for young people with additional needs and actions going forward for a GM strategy on employment/preparation for employment for disabled young people.

At this point in the meeting the Mayor advised that the time limit for this item had expired.

RESOLVED that the questions asked and responses provided be noted.

12 **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE UNDERMENTIONED DATES, INCLUDING THE ATTACHED LIST OF URGENT KEY DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, AND TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS OR OBSERVATIONS ON ANY ITEMS WITHIN THE MINUTES FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, AND RECEIVE RESPONSES FROM CABINET MEMBERS**

The Cabinet Minutes for the meetings held on 22nd June 2015 and 20th July 2015 were submitted.

An observation was raised on the Cabinet Minutes:

Councillor McCann – Cabinet meeting - 15th July, Item 15, page 39, Acquisition and Disposal of Land at the Former Westhulme Hospital, Chadderton Way, Oldham – welcomed that the site was to be redeveloped after so many years and congratulated Councillor Hibbert, as the relevant Cabinet Member. The extra

parking was excellent news for hospital staff and users, and those who lived around the hospital, as it would alleviate parking problems.

Councillor Hibbert responded that he was sure Councillor McCann's congratulations extended to all the other Cabinet Members involved.

RESOLVED that:

1. The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 22nd June 2015 and 20th July 2015 be noted.
2. The observation on the Cabinet Minutes be noted.

13 **NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS**

Motion 1

Councillor Mushtaq MOVED and Councillor Ball SECONDED:

"This Council notes with considerable concern that the Secretary of State for Justice has announced the closure of a number of courts in the country including Oldham County Court and Oldham Magistrates Court. The closures in a borough like Oldham will have a much more profound effect than other areas particularly when combined with other policies and 'tough decisions' taken by the government.
Access to justice is one of the fundamental freedoms we all enjoy but the impact of this decision will affect local residents in a number of ways including:

- Increased travel times and cost associated with accessing the courts and justice system.
- Residents potentially being denied justice given the out of touch guarantee that residents will be able to access a court in one hour, by car should their local court be closed.
- Potential relocation of law firms from Oldham due to the adverse impact on their business with the knock on effect on Oldham's provision and economy.

The list could go on but the underlying theme is an inaccessible justice system and an attack on the fundamental rights of everyone in the borough.
The Council resolves to:
Instruct the Chief Executive to write to Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Justice, to ask him to reconsider the decision to close the County Court and Magistrates Court in Oldham. To note the impact the cuts have already had on the regions ability to deliver justice for its residents and to refrain from targeting boroughs such as Oldham as an easy first option when making 'tough decisions'.
Also to write to Debbie Abrahams MP, Michael Meacher MP and Angela Rayner MP to ask them to support the motion and to use any other parliamentary means available to achieve the same outcomes."

Councillors Chauhan, Gloster, S Bashforth, Turner, Wrigglesworth, Fielding, Rehman, Brownridge and Judge all spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Mushtaq exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the VOTE, the meeting UNANIMOUSLY voted IN FAVOUR of the MOTION, which was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Chief Executive be instructed to write to Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Justice, to ask him to reconsider the decision to close the County Court and Magistrates Court in Oldham. The impact the cuts have already had on the regions ability to deliver justice for its residents should be noted and he should refrain from targeting boroughs such as Oldham as an easy first option when making 'tough decisions'.
2. The Chief Executive be instructed to write to Debbie Abrahams MP, Michael Meacher MP and Angela Rayner MP to ask them to support the motion and to use any other parliamentary means available to achieve the same outcomes

Motion 2

Motion 2 was carried over to the next meeting.

14 **NOTICE OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

Motion 1

Councillor McCann MOVED and Councillor Sedgwick SECONDED:

"This Council notes that:

- Many people beyond the age of 50 are denied the opportunity to participate in employment on the grounds of age
- 10.2 million people in the UK are aged between 50 and the state pension age, yet 2.9 million (or 28%) are out of work
- People continue to lead full and productive lives well beyond state pension age, and this can include a desire to participate in paid employment
- Denying work on the grounds of age to people who wish to do so has a deleterious effect on their well-being and upon the economy
- Its responsibility, as a leading employer in the borough, to have a diverse workforce, including an age-diverse workforce, to reflect the community it serves

This Council further notes:

- The report 'A New Vision for Older Workers: Retain, Retrain and Recruit' published by Dr. Ros Altmann CBE, the Government's Business Champion for Older Workers, in

which recommendations of good practice are made to employers, including:

- Monitoring and promoting age diversity in the workforce
- Carrying out audits to identify skill shortages when older workers leave
- Ensuring training remains available to employees over 50
- Offering mid-life career reviews to employees over 50
- Retaining older employees as mentors, rather than forcing them to retire
- An alumni programme for retired staff
- Making flexible working arrangements available so that older employees who care for others or who have a health condition can continue to work
- Providing Gap Breaks and Family Crisis leave, especially for carers, to help retain older staff
- Establishing 'age-blind' recruitment processes
- Valuing the experience of job applicants as much as the possession of a degree whenever possible in the selection process
- Creating Mature Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for applicants over 50

This Council also notes the welcome expansion of the Council's Traineeship scheme to applicants of all ages.

This Council:

- Requests the relevant Cabinet Member carry out an audit of the Council's current practices to ensure that these follow best practice as identified by Dr Altmann in her report, and bring a report back to Council on this issue.
- Requests the relevant Cabinet Member actively promotes the Traineeship scheme to applicants who are 50 or over
- Requests the relevant Cabinet Member give consideration to creating Mature Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for older applicants within the Council as part of the 'Get Oldham Working' offer and that he urges other progressive employers within the borough to also do so".

Councillors Akhtar, Chadderton and Mushtaq spoke in support of the motion.
Councillor McCann exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the VOTE, the meeting UNANIMOUSLY voted IN FAVOUR of the MOTION, which was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED that:

1. The relevant Cabinet Member be requested to carry out an audit of the Council's current practices to ensure that these follow best practice as identified by Dr Altmann in her report, and bring a report back to Council on this issue.
2. The relevant Cabinet Member be requested to actively promote the Traineeship scheme to applicants who are 50 or over.

3. The relevant Cabinet Member be requested to give consideration to creating Mature Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for older applicants within the Council as part of the 'Get Oldham Working' offer and that he urges other progressive employers within the borough to also do so

Motion 2

Councillor Heffernan MOVED and Councillor Sykes SECONDED:

"Council notes that:

- Today (September 9th 2015) marks the date upon which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second has become Britain's longest serving Monarch. Her Majesty has so far reigned for 23,226 days.
- A role model for her subjects and a steadfast rock for our country, our Queen has unfailingly honoured the promise she made at her Coronation to serve this Nation and the Commonwealth well, and, despite being 89 years of age, she still faithfully fulfils a very heavy diary of Royal commitments.
- Her Majesty's reign has been momentous in many ways – she has moved from being leader of an Empire to head of the Commonwealth; there have been tremendous advances in science and technology; our nation has become much more diverse and inclusive; and her reign has been increasingly illuminated by the media with her every move, every expression and every action flashed around the world in milliseconds.

This Council, wishing to mark this momentous occasion, requests that the Chief Executive write to Buckingham Palace offering our congratulations to Her Majesty and our best wishes that she may continue her long and remarkable reign for many years to come."

Councillors Jabbar and McMahon spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Heffernan exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the VOTE, the meeting UNANIMOUSLY voted IN FAVOUR of the MOTION, which was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED that: The Chief Executive be requested to write to Buckingham Palace offering our congratulations to Her Majesty and our best wishes that she may continue her long and remarkable reign for many years to come.

Motion 3

Councillor Williamson MOVED and Councillor Harkness SECONDED:

"This Council notes that:

- Approximately 100,000 people a year die after having a sudden cardiac arrest
- The current survival rate for out of hospital cardiac arrest is less than 10%
- Research has shown that, while awaiting the arrival of paramedics, using a defibrillator in conjunction with CPR can increase the survival rate to over 70%

This Council, recognising its public health duties, acknowledges the value of installing more defibrillators in public buildings and large private-sector developments across the borough.
This Council resolves to:

- Work to increase the number of defibrillators in existing and new Council buildings, such as the Civic Centre and the two new leisure centres
- Ensure that the locations of all defibrillators in Council buildings are promptly registered with the North West Ambulance Service
- Ensure that defibrillators in Council buildings are properly maintained and that training in their use is provided to the appropriate staff
- Engage with the Council's commercial partners to ensure that the new Princes Gate, Old Town Hall and Hotel Futures developments have sufficient functional defibrillators"

There were no speakers on the motion.

On being put to the VOTE, the meeting UNANIMOUSLY voted IN FAVOUR of the MOTION, which was therefore CARRIED.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council would work to increase the number of defibrillators in existing and new Council buildings, such as the Civic Centre and the two new leisure centres.
2. The Council would ensure that the locations of all defibrillators in Council buildings are promptly registered with the North West Ambulance Service.
3. The Council would ensure that defibrillators in Council buildings are properly maintained and that training in their use is provided to the appropriate staff,
4. The Council would engage with the its commercial partners to ensure that the new Princes Gate, Old Town Hall and Hotel Futures developments have sufficient functional defibrillators.

15(a) To note the Minutes of the following Joint Authority meetings and the relevant spokespersons to respond to questions from Members

Minutes of the Joint Authorities were submitted as follows:

Transport for Greater Manchester	12th June 2015 (AGM and Ordinary)
Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Executive	26th June 2015 (AGM)
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	26th June 2015 (AGM) 26th June 2015 31st July 2015
Joint GMCA/AGMA Executive	26th June (AGM)

There were no questions or observations.

RESOLVED that:
The minutes of the Joint Authorities as detailed in the report be noted.

15(b) Minutes of the Partnership Meetings were submitted as follows:

Oldham Care and Support Company	25th March 2015
Oldham Leadership Board	25th June 2015

There were no questions or observations.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnerships as detailed in the report be noted.

16 **2014/15 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Consideration was given to a report of Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and Human Resources, which informed Members that the Council's accounts for 2014/15 had been audited, approved and published, on 19th May 2015. Cabinet had recommended that the Final Accounts 2014/15 and the external audit (Grant Thornton) reports for 2014/15 be recommended to Council for noting.

Councillor Jabbar MOVED the report, which was SECONDED by Councillor McCann.

Councillor McMahon made an observation on the report.

RESOLVED that the final accounts, the audit reports and the items referred to in the report be NOTED.

17 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2014/15**

Consideration was given to a report of Councillor Jabbar, Cabinet Member for Finance and Human Resources which reviewed treasury management activities compared to the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2014/15.

Councillor Jabbar MOVED the report, which was SECONDED by Councillor Chadderton.

RESOLVED that:

1. The actual 2014/15 prudential and treasury indicators as detailed in the report be approved.
2. The annual treasury management report for 2014/15 be approved.

18 **INTERIM GREATER MANCHESTER MAYOR - VOTING RIGHTS AND MEMBERSHIP OF AGMA**

Consideration was given to a report of Councillor McMahon, Leader of the Council, which requested that the Council consider whether it agreed to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) becoming a full Member of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA).

Councillor McMahon MOVED the report, which was SECONDED by Councillor Sykes.

RESOLVED that:
The Greater Manchester Combined Authority becoming a full member of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, as per Clause 18 of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Constitution, be approved.

19 **OLDHAM DISTRESS FUND FINAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15**

Consideration was given to a report of Councillor Stretton, the Deputy Leader of the Council. The annual report, which provided the finance statements that had been publicised on the Charity Commission website for the year ended 31st March 2015, was detailed for Members. The Oldham Distress Fund was a registered charity operated by Oldham Council, with the terms of reference to relieve poverty and hardship of people living in the Borough of Oldham. In 2012 it was used in response to the gas explosion that occurred in Shaw in June 2012.

Councillor Stretton MOVED the report, which was SECONDED by Councillor Sykes.

RESOLVED that: the Oldham Distress Fund Annual Report, including the Financial Statement, be noted.

20 **UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Legal Services which informed members of actions that had been taken following previous Council meetings and provided feedback on other issues raised at the meeting.

Councillor McMahon MOVED the report, which was SECONDED by Councillor Sykes.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 9.35 pm