

Jim McMahon OBE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr Carolyn Wilkins
Chief Executive
Oldham Council
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Our Ref: SB/OMBC01002/01160625

25 July 2016

Dear Carolyn

Thank you for sending me a copy of the resolution on Ethical Procurement agreed by council.

Firstly I should say that I agree entirely that central government should learn to let go and trust that local government is responsible enough to make its own decisions. The power of democracy offers local people a clear route to holding to account decision makers through the ballot box. There is a tension which arises from this particular issue where I do feel the Government has a legitimate challenge.

Each local authority acts within the framework determined by central government and is therefore part of the UK government, albeit at a local level. The responsibility for setting foreign policy is not a devolved matter and rests firmly with central government.

I do think there needs to be a negotiated settlement whereby councils do not seek to set their own foreign policy which is counter to that of the country as a whole, but where local elected members are given freedom to trade freely, within the law, as they judge to be appropriate.

Where local government has a clear route to doing business with likeminded businesses and organisations it isn't to restrict, but to promote high standards of ethical procurement as Oldham has done with its Ethical Framework and I commend you for that.

Please be assured of my support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim McMahon".

Jim McMahon OBE MP
Member of Parliament
Oldham West & Royton

Serving the Communities of Chadderton, Royton and Oldham

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