

Jim McMahon OBE MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dr Carolyn Wilkins
Chief Executive
Oldham Council
Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UG

Our Ref: SB/OMBC01002/01160997

21 December 2016

Dear Carolyn

Re: Oldham Council Resolution – Local Government Spending

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the above resolution that was passed by the council on the 14 December.

As the former leader of the council I fully appreciate how the Government's so called austerity regime has resulted in significant budget cuts for some local councils that are deeply unfair and divisive. Oldham has fared particularly badly and I agree that the figures outlining the cuts are extremely vicious. While many Conservative Councils have seen an average fall in spending power of £68 per household, the equivalent cut for Labour Councils is more like £340 per household, which in my view makes a mockery of the Government's claims to want to build a Northern Powerhouse.

Whilst the Government has accepted there is a crisis in social care, their proposed council tax precept can at best only be considered as a short term solution and expecting local authorities to shoulder more and more responsibility is unfair and irresponsible. What is needed is more financial certainty and more understanding from the DCLG about the risks of constantly underfunding local government. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement was appalling in that it ignored the care sector completely and failed the most vulnerable in my view.

You can be assured that I will certainly use my position as the Shadow Minister for Local Government to continue to challenge the Government's approach to public spending as requested.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim McMahon".

Jim McMahon OBE MP
Member of Parliament Oldham West & Royton

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