

COUNCIL, Wednesday, 26th July, 2023

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Evans) in the Chair

Ahmed	Durrans	Patient
Ashton	Fazal	Pillai
Atkinson	Fenton-Glynn	Rivron
Barnes	Ford	Robinson
Beech	Foster	Scullion
Bellenger	Gallagher	Sutherland
Benton	Hey	T Swift MBE
Blagbrough	Hutchinson	Thompson
Brundell	Issott	Thornber
Cairney	Khan	Tremayne
Carr	Kimber	Veitch
Clarke	Kirton	Whittaker
Courtney	Kingstone	Wilkinson
Dacre	Leigh MBE	Wood
Dickenson	Lynn	
	Monteith	

19 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22ND MARCH 2023 AND 17TH MAY 2023

It was moved by the Mayor,
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger, and

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22nd March 2023 and 17th May 2023, having been printed and a copy sent to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and signed by the Mayor.

20 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor T Swift MBE declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6a - National Analogue To Digital Switchover / Community Alarms And Mobile Response Service Contract as a family member was the recipient of the service.

Councillor T Swift MBE declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6e – The Piece Hall Funding as he was a Council appointed Trustee of the Piece Hall Trust.

Councillor Blagbrough declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6e – The Piece Hall Funding as he was a Council appointed Trustee of the Piece Hall Trust.

21 TO RECEIVE THE MAYOR'S OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

There were no Mayor's or Chief Executive's announcements.

22 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS, IF ANY, PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

- (A)** Councillor Kirton presented a petition on behalf of the residents of Bailiff Bridge regarding the 'Upgrade of the children's play area at Bradford Road, Bailiff Bridge'.

The Mayor confirmed that the petition would be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Petitions Scheme.

- (B)** Councillor Durrans presented a petition on behalf of the residents of North Halifax regarding 'Stop the cycle lanes in North Halifax'.

The Mayor confirmed that the petition would be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Petitions Scheme.

23 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12.

(A) Question from Vishal Gupta to Councillor Courtney, Cabinet Member for Towns, Tourism and Voluntary Sector

During the Warley ward forum on March 6, 2023, it was announced that £1 million had been invested in the deprived areas of Warley. I am interested to know what specific initiatives were taken using these funds and their impact on the Warley ward. I had previously asked this question during the June 8, 2023 Warley ward forum, but the councillors did not respond. Therefore, I am bringing it up with the Council

In response, Councillor Courtney advised:

In 2018, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) awarded Calderdale Council £1,003,623 (just over £1m) to deliver the Delivering Inclusive Growth in Calderdale Programme. The pilot ran until December 2022 and tested a community wealth building approach to increase economic activity in the wards of Park and East Warley. The programme invested in locally co-produced solutions, employment and enterprise support, and social value. Decision making was by a community steering group made up of local anchor organisations, volunteers, and residents.

The Park and Warley Inclusive Economy Project was a key project for the Inclusive Economy Strategy for Calderdale and the Inclusive Economic Recovery Plan and will be used to inform the review of the strategy going forwards.

Evaluation of the project is currently underway by Leeds Beckett University.

Specific initiatives funded:

- A Change Internship programme designed specifically to support jobseekers in Park and Warley with disabilities and long-term health conditions who face significant barriers in looking for, and keeping, work. 42 interns completed the programme and subsequently engaged with a work placement at a variety of local organisations (e.g., Calderdale Council, Iscal, Bankfield Museum, Victoria Theatre). The intern roles varied and included roles such as technician, marketing officer, parks assistant, better living advisor, and adult learning office assistant. 23 interns went on to secure a job external to their work placement, 9 are still in their intern role, 2 secured casual work, 2 received enterprise grants to support their own businesses, 2 enrolled in further education (e.g., college and University study), 1 became a full-time parent, 1 went abroad, and 2 became unemployed due to health issues.
- Enterprise grants for residents from Park and Warley. The pilot team worked with 15 companies (12 in Park and 3 in Warley) to create 24 jobs in a range of sectors (e.g., digital, construction, healthcare, accountancy, beauty).
- Computer suite at Pellon Hub.

- Go4Growth - a commissioned service to support SMEs to grow and bid for public sector contracts. The employment of the Social Value Improvement Officer enabled major changes in attitude and changes in behaviour towards social value, particularly across inclusion in key, high value projects. A key outcome of this role was to develop and embed a real understanding of social value and its opportunities in the day to day thinking of officers who work on high value and or high impact projects, to change thinking and behaviour as part of their procurement thinking. Over 120 officers attended social value workshops to share experiences and understanding to change behaviour, and the procurement team report a greater interest in incorporating social value within projects as a result. Supplier forums helped develop relationships with a range of suppliers, targeted involvement with the local Health Trusts and the CCG (including training for staff), also helped build partner relationships. To help support suppliers, particularly VCSE and SMEs, the Council partnered with Go4Growth, delivering support via a range of media and direct delivery, on how to improve bidding skills for public sector opportunities, including working on bid specific projects.
- Women's Activity Centre's delivered a social care pathway project to provide supervised work-placements for local people who were interested in starting a career in Health and Social Care. 20 12-week placements provided by trained support workers to the target group and completed the 12 key elements of Adult Social Care. 24 placements enrolled on an accredited qualification. 35 older people were given training in digital skills.
- St. Augustine's delivered three programmes of holistic language and integration support for centre members seeking asylum. 305 new arrivals attending English language classes who are unable to access other provision due to immigration status or personal circumstances. 80 people gained skills in English language, teamwork, leadership, or computer skills through volunteering opportunities. 29 newly arrived or vulnerable Sanctuary seekers benefiting from the befriending service with 100% making progress on a 5-point scale for confidence and independence.
- Unique Community Hub provided work experience development, a one year pilot to develop and deliver a localised solution to work experience coordination across Park and Warley aimed primarily at young people aged 14-25. 150 young people receiving support around employment, volunteering, training, and work experience. 23 work experience opportunities created with local organisations.
- Hot Employment Project provided a dedicated employment support key worker providing holistic employment support and guidance to residents of the wards of Park and Warley. Between March 2020 and Dec 2021 Halifax Opportunity Trust actively engaged with 152 people from Park and Warley communities achieving 27 job starts, 6 work experience placements and supporting 71 people to access education and training. During the pandemic sourcing volunteering and work experience opportunities became difficult, which is reflected in the outcome figure. All teams across the Trust were redeployed to support the collective effort to support the community. As the 3 main community organisations in Park, HOT, St Augustine's and HIMMAT issued a joint statement to outline their response and to keep services open (even in a limited capacity) to support the neediest in our community and tasked themselves with ensuring the most vulnerable received access to essential items such as food. The

Employment Support worker played a critical role in sourcing, packaging, and delivering up to 180 parcels per week to those households most in need. They also made regular contact calls to isolated people on a weekly basis to check on mental health and well-being. In addition, the Employment Support worker created an employment based Covid response – recognising that many workers in the immediate community could lose work due to the lockdown (such as taxi drivers, local food outlets etc.) They offered a service to help people access Universal Credit through supporting with new claims and getting back into work. This service was offered face to face, and marketing materials were translated into Urdu and Czech to ensure reach with these communities.

- The Flavourfest festival, which was a month-long programme of 27 separate events and activities in various venues across Park and Warley capturing existing and new opportunities for enterprise, community celebration and integration, education, and work experience. 48 businesses were engaged including 19 new market traders attending the Flavourfest market and 30 in total involved across various activities. Flavourfest brought an estimated 5,520 visitors to the area. 40 students from Calderdale College participated in 5 work experience opportunities. 25 community partners were involved in planning and delivery of events and 10 grants were provided to VCSE groups.

Staffing for the programme comprised:

- 1 x Programme Lead to establish and deliver project governance, identify priorities, develop key new projects arising from the engagement plan, managing team staff and financial resources. The role explored and captured new opportunities for joint working and projects in the target areas to enhance support to local people
- 1 x Programme Coordinator led on community engagement and devised and delivered the engagement plan to form the basis of projects and spend.
- 1 x Enterprise Advisor worked with local businesses and individuals to help existing businesses to thrive and new businesses to establish
- 1 X Social Value Improvement Officer increased an understanding of opportunities offered through including social value in the Council's procurement procedures and other wider options it may offer, and developed and embedded new policy and practice on social value.

The community steering group co-produced an investment plan agreed at the steering group meeting on 15th December 2022 to allocate the remaining funds at the close of the pilot for the continuation of:

- Change Internship programme
- HOT employment project
- St Augustine's programmes of support
- Women's Activity Centre social care pathway project
- Unique Community Hub youth work including work experience pilot
- Enterprise grants for Park and Warley business start-up.

And the development of HOT Mentoring project with Halifax Academy and the encouragement of community activity in Pellon (e.g., venue hire at Pellon Hub/St Columba's).

24 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) NATIONAL ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL SWITCHOVER / COMMUNITY ALARMS AND MOBILE RESPONSE SERVICE CONTRACT – EXEMPT

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor T Swift MBE,

that the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 18 (Part (b) and (c) be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) The capital sum detailed in the report be incorporated into the Council's Capital Programme to allow for the purchase and installation of the digital units, to be funded by prudential borrowing; and

(b) the additional revenue funding required to service the borrowing as detailed in paragraph 6.6 of the Director, Adult Services and Wellbeing's written report be added to the Council's revenue budget from 2025/26 onwards.

(B) REVIEW OF FIXED PENALTY NOTICE CHARGES

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor Lynn,

That the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 26 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) a review of the Fixed Penalty Notice Charges set out in the Director, Public Services written report having regard to guidance issued by DEFRA on the use of fixed penalties, and the increase to the upper limits finable for fly tipping and graffiti, be approved;

(b) the tariffs for Fixed Penalty Notices and the associated discounts for early payment listed in Appendix 1 of the Director, Public Services written report be approved; and

(c) the Director, Public Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities be given delegated authority for reviewing Fixed Penalty Notice Charges.

(C) HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and

Seconded by Councillor Patient,

That the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 27 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the new Housing Enforcement Policy in its current form be approved and adopted; and

(b) the Director, Public Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities be given delegated authority for implementing any future operational changes to the Policy.

(D) ADOPTION OF ANTI-RACISM CHARTER

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor Dacre,

That the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 28 be approved.

RESOLVED that the Anti-Racism Charter be adopted

(E) PIECE HALL FUNDING

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor Dacre,

That the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 31 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the contributions detailed within the report to the Piece Hall be added to the budget for 2024-25 and 2025-26; and

the contributions be included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

25 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY CHAIR FOR THE 2023/2024 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Whittaker, and
Seconded by Councillor Leigh MBE,

That the recommendation of the Audit Committee contained in Minute Number 3 be approved.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to the Council that Councillor Bellenger be appointed as Deputy Chair of this Committee for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year.

(B) 2022/23 AUDIT COMMITTEE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

It was moved by Councillor Whittaker, and
Seconded by Councillor Leigh MBE,

That the recommendation of the Audit Committee contained in Minute Number 5 (Part (b) only) be approved.

RESOLVED that the 2022-23 Audit Committee Annual Report be submitted to Council in July 2023.

Councillors Leigh MBE and Dacre commented on the recommendation.

26 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) REVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY - TRADE UNION FACILITIES POLICY – EXEMPT

It was moved by Councillor Foster,
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 35 be approved.

RESOLVED that the proposed revisions be approved.

(B) REVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY - LEAVE/TIME OFF ENTITLEMENTS POLICY – EXEMPT

It was moved by Councillor Foster,
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 36 be approved.

RESOLVED that the revised Leave/Time Off Entitlements Policy be approved.

(C) APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR FOR THE 2023/2024 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Foster,
Seconded by Councillor Barnes,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 5 be approved.

RESOLVED that Councillor Bellenger be appointed as Deputy Chair of this Committee for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

**(D) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCRUTINY BOARD MEETINGS
(DEPUTATIONS)**

It was moved by Councillor Foster,
Seconded by Councillor Scullion,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 7 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) all deputations should be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting;
- (b) the deputation should not exceed three persons and the speech should not exceed five minutes;
- (c) any deputations received which were not related to the agenda items for that Scrutiny Board meeting be given consideration by Members on whether it was an item which could be included on the relevant Scrutiny Board's Work Programme;
- (d) a deputation would not be accepted when information of a personal nature was included, or which was defamatory, offensive, frivolous, repetitive or vexatious; and
- (e) a deputation would not be accepted when it had the sole or predominant purpose of promoting any company's or individual's own business interests or financial position.

27 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR FOR THE 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Hutchinson,
Seconded by Councillor Kirton,

That the recommendation of the Planning Committee contained in Minute Number 3 be approved.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to the Council that Councillor Clarke be appointed as Deputy Chair of this Committee for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year.

28 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR FOR THE 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Scullion,
Seconded by Councillor Barnes,

That the recommendation of the Standards Committee contained in Minute Number 3 be approved.

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RESOLVED that it be recommended to the Council that Councillor Megan Swift be appointed as Deputy Chair of this Committee for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year.

(B) REVIEW THE APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS AND INDEPENDENT PERSONS TO SERVE ON THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Scullion
Seconded by Councillor Barnes,

That the recommendation of the Standards Committee contained in Minute Number 5 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) Appointments of Co-opted Members Canon Reverend Hilary Barber and Andrew Johnson, as independent Members of the Standards Committee be extended for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year; and

(b) Five Vacancies of Independent Persons or Co-opted Members and Parish Councillor of the Standards Committee be appointed to.

29 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY BOARD ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) APPOINTMENT OF PARENT GOVERNORS TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY BOARD

It was moved by Councillor Parsons-Hulse,
Seconded by Councillor Tremayne,

That the recommendation of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board contained in Minute Number 3 be approved.

RESOLVED that Mr David Meredith and Dr Mandeep Kaur Khela, Parent Governors be appointed as Co-optees to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board.

(B) WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

It was moved by Councillor Parsons-Hulse,
Seconded by Councillor Tremayne,

That the recommendation of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board contained in Minute Number 14 be approved.

RESOLVED that Caroline Thirkhill, be appointed as a Co-optee to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board.

30 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON THE WORK OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY.

The Leader, Councillor Scullion submitted a written report that provided Members with an update on the work of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).

The Leader advised that she was pleased to join fellow Council leaders and West Yorkshire Mayor, Tracy Brabin to launch the shared West Yorkshire Plan in May. With five missions, the Plan set out the joint commitment to boosting progress on jobs, housing, transport, climate and crime, and helps us clearly articulate the assets and opportunities that West Yorkshire holds.

The five missions were:

- A **prosperous** West Yorkshire, built on an inclusive economy with well-paid jobs.
- A **happy** West Yorkshire, full of great places and healthy communities.
- A **well-connected** West Yorkshire, held together by a strong transport system.
- A **sustainable** West Yorkshire, rich with greener lives and communities.
- A **safe** West Yorkshire, free of the fear of crime so everyone can flourish.

In addition to the report the Leader advised that the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO), in 2024 would be 50 years old and that Calderdale was one of the founding members.

- Councillor Issott asked who represented Calderdale on the WYCA Vision Zero Board that overlooked the West Yorkshire Partnership Board, what funding was available and was there any funding channelled through to Calderdale? Councillor Issott explained her concerns of the road safety in her Ward and asked what priority the Council was giving the Highways Department to address road safety issues? In response, the Leader advised that Councillor T Swift MBE was the representative on the Board. The Leader confirmed that she would ask Cabinet colleagues to provide responses as road safety bridged many directorates. Councillors Lynn and Patient were involved in terms of community safety and school streets.
- Councillor Dickenson asked what could WYCA do to influence and address the implementation of cleaner buses? In response, the Leader advised that the WYCA had bid for funding for Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) buses and she confirmed that Calderdale would receive some funding for this. The Leader advised that there was a reduction in services from bus companies which was an issue for residents in Calderdale and explained that WYCA was also trying to provide people with a choice of transportation. WYCA was spending time working through the government framework in relation to public transport, specifically buses, and was trying to develop an enhanced partnership with bus companies to address those services that may not be appealing or profitable, and to also address the potential franchising of services.
- Councillor Leigh MBE stated that in relation to road safety there was a condition that was used that until there was a death or serious injury nothing could be done to address the issues. He asked was there anything WYCA could do to moderate this condition? In response, the Leader advised that there was no such rule. She advised that there needed to be evidence before public money was spent and explained a number of ways money had been spent to address road safety in the Borough, for example traffic calming initiatives. The Leader further advised that

the Council did have to make sure it followed the national framework and legislation from the Department of Transport in terms of road safety.

- Councillor Bellenger asked for more information to be shared with Members about what WYCA was doing to address the problem around bus service reductions from bus companies as many constituents were becoming frustrated by the lack of information. In response, the Leader thanked Councillor Bellenger for his question and briefly explained some of the issues bus companies faced recruiting drivers. She confirmed that she would pose the question to the Chair of the WYCA Transport Committee.
- Councillor Carr advised that many constituents in her ward were dreading the light nights as this brought out antisocial drivers who were disrupting people's lives due to speeding. Councillor Carr shared her frustration that on the one hand the Council was saying that road safety was important but on the other the road safety development in her Ward was no longer being funded. In response, the Leader advised that she would investigate the funding issue and explained that the Council did not have the power to enforce penalties on drivers and this sat with the Police. She explained some of the ways that Highways could implement deterrents such as speed cameras and traffic calming measures.

31 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS ON THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL:

A) LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

The Leader, Councillor Scullion submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of the Council. The Leaders report also covered her role as Lead for Regeneration/Local Plan.

The report provided background information on the Clifton Enterprise Zone and the improvements to the Planning Department.

(B) CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

(i) Deputy Leader and Public Health

Councillor T Swift MBE, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Halifax Master Planning and Regeneration, Health Partnerships and Public Health.

In addition to his report, Councillor T Swift MBE provided further information on the work that the Vision Zero Board was undertaking and how the West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor was providing clear leadership on the Board and was able to use her influence in relation to policing across the region. The Board brought together the five Public Health Directors who represented their own local authorities. Councillor T Swift MBE further advised that the Board was reviewing some of the criteria around road speed, speed cameras and safety cameras and how this could support Highways departments in implementing restrictions in all areas of the Borough. Councillor T Swift MBE questioned

whether Councillors could do more to raise speed awareness with constituents and that speed cameras were there for a reason and not to be a hindrance.

(ii) Adult Services and Wellbeing

Councillor Fenton-Glynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Services and Wellbeing, submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on the closure of Calderdale Retreat Care Home, Working for Better Quality Assurance, Focusing on Celebrating our Team, Disabled Adults Partnership Board, Registered Managers Meeting, the Care Charges Audit, Older Peoples Care Home Sufficiency, Quality of Provision, Homecare, Extra Care, Supported Living and Strategic Developments.

In addition to his report, Councillor Fenton-Glynn shared that he attended an event, Social Care Futures, which brought together people involved in social care within Calderdale and the wider region which was a powerful event that provided first hand experiences of the challenges faced in social care.

Councillor Fenton-Glynn thanked and paid tribute to the hard work of staff who had rehomed 43 residents following the closure of the Calderdale Retreat Care Home.

(iii) Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Wilkinson, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Young People's Services, submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last Council meeting.

The report identified and provided background information on Education, Children's Social Care and Children and Young People's Commissioning.

(iv) Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing

Councillor Patient, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last Council meeting.

The report identified and provided background information on Housing, Green Economy and Active Travel and Strategic Travel Projects including bus and rail, Flooding, Transport Services and Green Spaces and Street Scene.

In addition to his report, Councillor Patient highlighted the proposed railway ticket office closures within Calderdale and advised that the consultation had been extended until September. Councillor Patient shared the thoughts of a resident and the impact the closures would have on the residents of Calderdale.

(v) Public Services and Communities

Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities, submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Customer Access, Neighbourhoods and Cohesion, Welfare and Benefits, Sports Services, Cultural Services, Transport Services, Bereavement Services, Waste Management, Community Protection Team, Parking Services, Green Spaces and Street Scene, and Regeneration and Strategy.

In addition to her report, Councillor Lynn explained that there was a significant amount of work that was undertaken by the Highways Department and that there were processes that needed to be followed in relation to road safety. She explained the Council worked closely with the Police in relation to road safety and shared statistics from the recent Hawmill Operation carried out by the Police. Councillor Lynn confirmed that she was a member of the Community Safety Partnership and briefly explained some of the work the partnership was undertaking.

(vi) Resources

Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, submitted a written report on the work she had undertaken since the last meeting of Council.

The report identified and provided background information on ICT and Digital, Performance Management, Transformation and Business Intelligence, Finance, Legal and Democratic Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development, Employment and Skills and Adult Learning, Corporate Asset and Facilities Management and Markets.

(vii) Towns, Tourism and Voluntary Sector

Councillor Courtney, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Towns, Tourism and Voluntary Sector submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Thriving Towns, Inclusive Economy, Business Start Up, Growth, Resilience and Engagement, Tourism and Visitor Economy, Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise Sector.

Following the delivery of the Cabinet Member reports Members asked the following questions:

- Councillor Carr thanked Cabinet Members for their comments and asked Elected Members when speaking to their constituents to bring to their attention Operation Snap, a national Police initiative where members of the public could provide photographic/video evidence in relation to driving offences.
- Councillor Bellenger shared his thoughts around the problems the Police faced in relation to antisocial drivers and suggested the use of more vehicle activated speeding signs as a deterrent in Calderdale.
- Councillor Blagbrough asked for an update on the A641 Scheme from Huddersfield to Brighouse. In response, Councillor Patient advised that he would provide a written response.

- Councillor Hey referenced the recent parking charge increases at Shibden Park and noted that Shibden Park in parts was badly serviced in terms of pedestrian access and was not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchair users. He asked if the Council could look at improving access to the Park. In response, Councillor Lynn noted that there had been some adjustments to the original Cabinet report in relation to Shibden Park and the timings of when charges would be enforced. Councillor Lynn confirmed that pedestrian access to Shibden Park would be looked at and advised that bus services was another area that she was determined to address to encourage residents from all over the Borough to enjoy its recreational grounds.
- Councillor Foster advised that she wanted to draw members attention to the incredible work of the volunteers who work to support Council services, in particular Memory Lane Café that was run by two amazing people. Councillor Foster explained that it was recently Volunteers Week and stated that a lot of services would not run without volunteers. In response, Councillor Courtney thanked Councillor Foster for her comments and advised that a number of Councillors and senior members of staff attended an event in Volunteers Week to show their support and gratitude for the work they carried out in the Borough.
- Councillor Issott asked that following the refusal of the environmental permit for Calder Valley Skip Hire, could the Council assure residents that they would not be in this situation again should another appeal arise and would the Council be making a public statement or apology for putting them in this situation. In response, the Leader advised that Cabinet had taken advice and explained that it was a quasi-judicial process where there was a possibility of an appeal or new application. Cabinet had been advised that they had to be careful with their statements and welcomed any advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. The Leader confirmed that she had nothing further to add.
- Councillor Cairney shared that an area in his ward had been mis identified as private land when a request had been submitted to remove fly-tipping. After investigation it was identified as Council owned land and the fly-tipping subsequently removed. He asked had this error been investigated and what was the cause of the misinformation, and were there other parts of Calderdale that had been incorrectly labelled as private land, and what was being done to address this in the future? Councillor Cairney further asked if CCTV cameras owned by Together Housing could be used to tackle fly-tipping?

In response, Councillor Lynn apologised for the mistake. In relation to the uncertainty to other land in the Borough being mistakenly identified as private land, Councillor Lynn explained that a piece of work was being undertaken to address this which would cover a number of directorates to form one database with the information. In relation to CCTV cameras, Community Protection Officers were investigating which areas could be used to install the new cameras purchased by the Council. Councillor Lynn advised that there were regulations that needed to be adhered to

when using CCTV and she confirmed that Together Housing and other housing associations did work with the Council and attended Safer, Cleaner, Greener meetings when focusing on areas where there was social housing.

- Councillor Thornber asked for an update on the overhanging trees on Sowerby New Road, the trees were shielding the street light and causing residents to walk on the road. In response, Councillor Lynn advised that she was disappointed that this still had not been addressed and confirmed that she would look into this.
- Councillor Robinson asked the Leader what would she be doing differently in her leadership? In response, the Leader advised that she was not in favour of change for the sake of change and would not take a radical approach to be symbolic. She confirmed that she was proud that there had been a seamless change of leadership and that this had been recognised at a recent Local Government Association meeting by other leaders. The Leader noted that Calderdale was a well-run, principled and ethical Council and a Council that managed change well.
- Councillor Kimber noted that in Councillor Patient's report it made reference to Biodiversity Net Gains and asked for more information about this. In response, Councillor Patient advised that Biodiversity Net Gain would be a government mandated requirement and that the Council had advertised for someone to co-ordinate this work. Councillor Patient briefly explained some of the ways that this was being addressed in flood alleviation schemes across the Borough by planting two trees for every one lost, and through the work of the Environment Agency. Councillor Patient advised that the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Report for the Local Plan was due in Spring 2024. Councillor Patient explained some of the work the White Rose Forest Network was undertaking, and the work of the Council's Ecological Emergency Officer to address biodiversity.
- Councillor Ashton noted that in Councillor Wilkinson's report it mentioned the Council Tax exemption for care leavers. Councillor Ashton explained that as a Corporate Parent the Council should do everything it could for the children and young people in care, he asked if this was something that could be delivered. In response, Councillor Wilkinson advised that the Council's responsibility to care leavers and our corporate parenting responsibilities had been scrutinised in recent months by Ofsted, a Peer Review and Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers. Councillor Wilkinson advised that there had been a number of recommendations following the visits and that a report would be presented to Leader's Briefing concerning Council Tax for care leavers, which would hopefully be presented to Cabinet for a decision.

Councillor Wilkinson shared that there was a lot of excellent work being undertaken around Corporate Parenting and shared that Members were more than welcome to attend the Calderdale Corporate Parenting Partnership Board meetings.

32 TO APPOINT MEMBERS AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (AS NECESSARY) TO SERVE ON SCRUTINY BOARDS/PANELS AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES.

RESOLVED that Members of the Council and others be appointed to serve as Members and Substitute Members of Scrutiny Boards, Panels and Committees for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year:

Governance and Business Committee	Delete Councillor Caffrey as a Substitute and replace with Councillor Robinson. Delete Councillor Holdsworth as a Substitute and replace with Councillor Carr.
Adults Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board	Add Councillor Foster as a substitute.

33 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES (AS NECESSARY) TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

RESOLVED that the following Members of the Council and others be appointed to serve as representatives of the Council on outside bodies unless they resign, become disqualified or are replaced by resolution of the Council as follows:

Brighouse War Memorial (Nurses Endowment) Fund	Councillor Blagbrough, Councillor T Benton, Councillor Kirton, Councillor Pillai, Councillor Whittaker, Councillor Monteith. Mrs C Blagbrough, Mr M Blagbrough, Ms P Fellows, Mr C Hopkinson, Mr O Willows Ms C Kirk Fr Paul Webb Revd Michelle Petch Rachel Dilly Joseph Matthews Hope Williams Louise Reed Be appointed as Trustees for a one year term of office expiring in July 2023.
Crossley and Porter Orphan Home and School Foundation	Stephen Baines MBE and Mr C Hodgson be appointed as Trustees for a further three year term of office to April 2026
West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee	Appoint the following Councillors as Substitutes to the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee: Councillor Brundell Councillor Leigh MBE

Yorkshire and Humberside Employers Committee	Remove Councillor Lynn as a Member and replace with Councillor Dacre
Elland and District Partnership Board	Remove Councillor Gallagher as a Member and replace with Councillor Veitch

34 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.

There were no questions received under Council Procedure Rule 13.

35 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14:

(A) Local Authority of Sanctuary & Migration Pledge

It was moved by Councillor Lynn,
Seconded by Councillor Rivron,

This council notes that:

- Calderdale is proud of our history of welcoming people seeking safety in the borough and upholding the principles of dignity and respect for all, by promoting a compassionate and welcoming response to asylum seekers, refugees, and all migrants and supporting the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution.
- No migrant should be considered illegal. Currently there are no safe and legal routes for people to enter the UK for the purpose of seeking asylum. The circumstances a person can enter the country as a refugee on humanitarian grounds are extremely limited.
- The Nationality and Borders Act (2022) created a two-tier immigration system in the UK. Those who arrived directly and claimed asylum without passing through a safe country were classed as group 1 and given refugee status and a 5-year route to settlement. Those who arrived in the country having passed through a safe country or via 'irregular means' such as a small boat were classed as group 2 and given temporary refugee permission to stay for 30 months and a 10-year route to settlement.
- Last month it was announced that the two-tier immigration system would be 'paused' by the Government with effect from July 2023, and all refugees would be given group 1 status. The stated reason was the proposed Illegal Migration Bill will bring stronger measures, making the asylum and human rights claims of people who arrive in the UK through 'irregular means' inadmissible and imposing a duty on the Home Secretary to remove them.

- Since 2021 the number of asylum applications in the UK has increased sharply, and there is now a substantial backlog of people awaiting decisions. According to Home Office statistics on 31st December 2022 there were around 132,000 asylum applications awaiting an initial decision in the UK.
- People seeking safety in the UK face many challenges in rebuilding their lives. Waiting times for decisions can run into years, families can be separated, and refugees are at greater risk of destitution and homelessness. Refugee and asylum seekers are also more likely to be subject to criminal and sexual exploitation as well as modern slavery.
- The UK does not have the capacity to detain large numbers of people. Asylum seekers and refugees are often housed in institutional settings such as hotels and accommodation centres under national Home Office contracts. This leads to isolation and difficulty in accessing vital services. The majority are effectively barred from working and providing for themselves and their families.
- The number of people seeking asylum in Calderdale has increased since 2014, with a sharp uplift in the last 18 months. There is often a 'lag' in receiving figures from the Home Office, however the latest available data in Q3 2022 shows over 700 people seeking asylum are living in Calderdale in community accommodation and hotels.
- Calderdale has been a Valley of Sanctuary since 2021. Practical steps taken to welcome refugees include the first Library of Sanctuary award for our library service, a School of Sanctuary at Beech Hill, and the UK's first Cinema of Sanctuary at the Hebden Bridge Picture House.

This Council believes that:

- The Nationality and Borders Act did not address complex issues underpinning migration, and instead punished people seeking safety based on the journeys they made. The proposed Illegal Migration Bill is even less humane, to the extent the Government itself cannot be confident it does not breach international law.
- Current Government laws have created a hostile environment for refugees which is cruel, divisive, and inefficient and causes harm to some of the most vulnerable people across the country and in our borough.
- Calderdale is a multi-cultural and diverse community which must be celebrated. We must recognise rights for people fleeing war and persecution to seek safety.

This Council resolves:

- To recognise the contribution of asylum seekers and refugees to

Calderdale; commit to welcoming and including them in our activities; and seek to become a recognised 'Local Authority of Sanctuary' for refugees and asylum seekers.

- To find greater opportunities across the Council and borough to celebrate our migrant communities, tell their stories, and promote their voices.
- To continue working with the voluntary sector and partners including Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary, St Augustine's, health, and education, and to include those with lived experience of the asylum system in our decision making.
- To defend the right to seek safety from war and persecution in the UK
- To challenge the current government's hostile approach towards migrants and continue to identify ways to mitigate the effects of these measures in Calderdale.
- To ensure that all migrant residents of Calderdale are supported through voluntary and statutory services to meet their needs, and that our officers continue to present all options available to migrants accessing council services. This includes ensuring migrants can access information on their rights, and support for looked after migrant children.
- To learn from the City of Sanctuary local authority network to understand a best practice approach, so that migrant communities continue to be treated with dignity and respect.

After being put to the vote, the **Motion** was carried.

Councillors Tremayne, Dickenson, Carr, Kingstone, Bellenger, Courtney, Foster, Rivron and Lynn commented on the Motion.

RESOLVED that:

This council notes that:

- Calderdale is proud of our history of welcoming people seeking safety in the borough and upholding the principles of dignity and respect for all, by promoting a compassionate and welcoming response to asylum seekers, refugees, and all migrants and supporting the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution.
- No migrant should be considered illegal. Currently there are no safe and legal routes for people to enter the UK for the purpose of seeking asylum. The circumstances a person can enter the country as a refugee on humanitarian grounds are extremely limited.
- The Nationality and Borders Act (2022) created a two-tier immigration

system in the UK. Those who arrived directly and claimed asylum without passing through a safe country were classed as group 1 and given refugee status and a 5-year route to settlement. Those who arrived in the country having passed through a safe country or via 'irregular means' such as a small boat were classed as group 2 and given temporary refugee permission to stay for 30 months and a 10-year route to settlement.

- Last month it was announced that the two-tier immigration system would be 'paused' by the Government with effect from July 2023, and all refugees would be given group 1 status. The stated reason was the proposed Illegal Migration Bill will bring stronger measures, making the asylum and human rights claims of people who arrive in the UK through 'irregular means' inadmissible and imposing a duty on the Home Secretary to remove them.
- Since 2021 the number of asylum applications in the UK has increased sharply, and there is now a substantial backlog of people awaiting decisions. According to Home Office statistics on 31st December 2022 there were around 132,000 asylum applications awaiting an initial decision in the UK.
- People seeking safety in the UK face many challenges in rebuilding their lives. Waiting times for decisions can run into years, families can be separated, and refugees are at greater risk of destitution and homelessness. Refugee and asylum seekers are also more likely to be subject to criminal and sexual exploitation as well as modern slavery.
- The UK does not have the capacity to detain large numbers of people. Asylum seekers and refugees are often housed in institutional settings such as hotels and accommodation centres under national Home Office contracts. This leads to isolation and difficulty in accessing vital services. The majority are effectively barred from working and providing for themselves and their families.
- The number of people seeking asylum in Calderdale has increased since 2014, with a sharp uplift in the last 18 months. There is often a 'lag' in receiving figures from the Home Office, however the latest available data in Q3 2022 shows over 700 people seeking asylum are living in Calderdale in community accommodation and hotels.
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This Council believes that:

- The Nationality and Borders Act did not address complex issues underpinning migration, and instead punished people seeking safety

based on the journeys they made. The proposed Illegal Migration Bill is even less humane, to the extent the Government itself cannot be confident it does not breach international law.

- Current Government laws have created a hostile environment for refugees which is cruel, divisive, and inefficient and causes harm to some of the most vulnerable people across the country and in our borough.
- Calderdale is a multi-cultural and diverse community which must be celebrated. We must recognise rights for people fleeing war and persecution to seek safety.

This Council resolves:

- To recognise the contribution of asylum seekers and refugees to Calderdale; commit to welcoming and including them in our activities; and seek to become a recognised 'Local Authority of Sanctuary' for refugees and asylum seekers.
- To find greater opportunities across the Council and borough to celebrate our migrant communities, tell their stories, and promote their voices.
- To continue working with the voluntary sector and partners including Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary, St Augustine's, health, and education, and to include those with lived experience of the asylum system in our decision making.
- To defend the right to seek safety from war and persecution in the UK
- To challenge the current government's hostile approach towards migrants and continue to identify ways to mitigate the effects of these measures in Calderdale.
- To ensure that all migrant residents of Calderdale are supported through voluntary and statutory services to meet their needs, and that our officers continue to present all options available to migrants accessing council services. This includes ensuring migrants can access information on their rights, and support for looked after migrant children.
- To learn from the City of Sanctuary local authority network to understand a best practice approach, so that migrant communities continue to be treated with dignity and respect.

(B) The Council's Communications Policy Creates Information Inequalities

It was moved by Councillor Blagbrough,
Seconded by Councillor Robinson,

This Council notes:

- The hard work of Communication officers and praises their determination to provide information to the residents of Calderdale.
- That the unacceptable performance of Calderdale Council's Planning Department triggered an intervention from the Government, addressed to Calderdale's Chief Executive (CEO), warning that unless corrective actions were taken, the Council would be subject to Special Measures.
- That Council Leadership delayed their notification of the letter that contained the warning from the Government and its contents from residents and Councillors for over four weeks.
- They delayed their notification of an Appeal against the Judicial Review decision to refuse the Environmental Permit for an Incinerator near Sowerby Bridge by four months.

This Council acknowledges:

- The Special Measures threatened by Government were due to unacceptable performance (decision time) by the Planning Department, and that the letter added "this is indicative of a very poor-quality service to local residents and a significant deterrent to investment in your housing market and the wider economy."
- That delaying notification of the letter sent by the Government and its contents from Councillors and residents breached constitutional norms and the guardrails of a transparent and civil local democracy.
- That the failure to inform local objectors and Councillors in opposition to the incinerator about the Appeal produced an unfair advantage as it provided more time for the Council to refine their case against the refusal of permission.
- That in consequence, local objectors and Councillors in opposition to the incinerator were denied the same opportunity to build their legal arguments and to repudiate the case for granting the permit.
- That there were no communications to Councillors regarding the development of North Bridge Leisure Centre before the announcement by Cabinet in July, which advised the project is back on track following the project being on pause for 9 months.

This Council accepts:

- That they are failing to meet the priority of "reducing inequalities" because delaying information to residents and Councillors creates information inequalities across the Borough that can potentially create false impressions of the Council and its efficiency.
- That information inequalities relate to the siloing of information within the Leadership of the Council, so the Public is unaware of information about the Council which may impact their perception of the Council.
- That information inequalities are equally as important as other inequalities and that they should be considered in their efforts to combat inequalities because the accessibility of information and the plurality of ideas is what separates democratic and authoritarian systems of governance, with the former being most successful at

providing higher living standards and ensuring the protection of civil and individual rights.

- That they are failing to meet the priority of “strong, thriving towns and places” because the sanctioning of information has created silos within the Council that are detrimental to effective and efficient Council services.
- That a new Communications Strategy based upon transparency and expeditious publication of information which is in the public interest is paramount to resolving information inequality.

This Council resolves to:

- Publish a new Communications Strategy, which will involve transparent and expeditious publication of information, including communications from the Government.
- To ensure information equality is a core tenet of the Council's new Communication Strategy, so residents and Councillors in Calderdale are fully informed.
- To include information equality in its Equality & Community Cohesion Impact Assessments (EIA).
- Take full responsibility for the lack of communication over the letter sent by the Government and the delayed notification of the Appeal through an open letter to the residents of Calderdale which will apologise and explain the Council's new Communications Strategy.
- Improve internal communications in the new Strategy through a halt to the siloing of information within Departments and Groups of the Council and immediately call a Group Leaders meeting when information is not suitable for release to the Public - this will, in turn, ensure effective local services and a functional local democracy for residents in Calderdale.

After being put to the vote, the **Motion** was not carried.

Councillors Issott, Leigh MBE, Robinson, Hey, Bellenger, Blagbrough and Scullion commented on the Motion.

36 COMMENTS ON THE WORK OF SCRUTINY BOARDS, PANELS AND COMMITTEES AND QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE TO THE CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY BOARDS, PANELS AND COMMITTEES

There were no questions to the Chairs of Scrutiny Boards, Panels and Committees or comments from Members.