



# STOCKPORT

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Council Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Stockport on 21 November 2024 at 6.00 pm.

## PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Suzanne Wyatt) in the chair; Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Rachel Bresnahan, Jon Byrne, Christine Carrigan, Asa Caton, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Peter Crossen, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Huma Khan, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Micheala Meikle, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Mike Newman, Dan Oliver, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Frankie Singleton, Catherine Stuart, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Pete West, Wendy Wild, David Wilson, Rachel Wise, Paul Wright, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

## **1. FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### (i) Minutes

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting of the Council held on 1 October 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### (ii) Urgent Decisions

No urgent decisions were reported.

### (iii) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that since the last Council Meeting she had attended a number of engagements and specifically referenced the moving Remembrance Day service held at Stockport War Memorial on Sunday, 10 November 2024.

The Mayor then stated that in the coming weeks a Christmas Fair would be held in the Town Hall on 5 December 2024 between 12 noon and 6.00 pm. It was further stated that the Mayor's Christmas Carol Service would be held on Wednesday, 18 December 2024 at 6.30 pm.

### (iv) Declarations of Interest

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the summons for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:-

Personal Interests

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Grace Baynham	Summons Item 7(iii) – ‘Motion - Support for the 2024 Government Budget’ as there was a reference to Stepping Hill Hospital of which she was an employee.
Rachel Bresnahan	Summons Item 7(iii) – ‘Motion - Support for the 2024 Government Budget’ as there was reference to the Household Support Fund which an organisation of which she was a director was a recipient of funding from.
Dominic Hardwick	Summons Item 7(iii) – ‘Motion - Support for the 2024 Government Budget’ as there was a reference to Stepping Hill Hospital and he was a member of the Stockport NHS Foundation Trust.

**2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

(i) Public Question Time

Members of the public were invited to put questions to the Mayor and councillors on matters within the powers and duties of the Council.

Three public questions were submitted as follows:-

- Relating to the potential for the establishment of a network of community-owned and operated renewable energy infrastructure in Stockport and whether the Council would lobby the government for support to introduce this and seek cross-party support in doing so.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment (Councillor Mark Roberts) responded that community renewable energy was something that the Council was very interested in and was actively exploring ways to help facilitate. It was stated that as part of the ongoing Climate Action Now work the Council was looking at ways to accelerate community-led renewable energy generation and was working with Stockport Hydro in Marple to explore possibilities to establish facilities such as a community-run district heat network. Councillor Roberts confirmed that he would be happy to look at supporting lobbying of central and regional government in relation to this matter and that he would raise the matter at the cross-party Climate Action Now Steering Group.

- Relating to the need to see a significant increase in the use of public transport and whether it was agreed that public ownership and management of all bus, train and tram services, alongside the massive expansion and improvement of such services was key to realising this

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment (Councillor Mark Roberts) responded that unlocking the

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potential of public transport and giving everyone the opportunity to access affordable and convenient services was vital in the steps towards a sustainable future. It was further stated that the Liberal Democrats nationally had called for new public bodies to hold rail companies to account and for an increase in funding to improve transport infrastructure. It was further stated that the Council continued to push for the introduction of Metrolink services to the borough.

- Relating to how the Council had considered and determined that carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases warmed the planet.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment (Councillor Mark Roberts) responded that the questioner was entitled to their views, but that they were not interested in hearing an explanation of the science from the Council. It was stated that the questioner could find the answers to the question he asked through online searches.

A further five public questions were submitted where the questioners were not in attendance at the meeting, and in accordance with the Code of Practice, the Chief Executive was requested to respond to the questioners in writing.

### (ii) Petitions and Presentations

There were no petitions or presentations.

### (iii) Joint Authorities

#### (a) Greater Manchester Police, Crime & Fire Panel

There were no questions in relation to the business of the Greater Manchester Police, Crime & Fire Panel.

#### (b) Greater Manchester Combined Authority

There were no questions in relation to the business of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Greater Manchester Bee Network Committee or the Greater Manchester Waste & Recycling Committee.

## **3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### (i) Report of the Election of Councillors

RESOLVED – That the report of the Returning Officer as to the persons elected to the office of Councillor on 17 and 31 October 2024 be noted.

### (ii) Allocation of Places on Committees in Accordance with the Proportionality Rules

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the outcome of a review of the allocation of seats to political groups following the by-elections held on 17 and 31 October 2024.

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RESOLVED – (1) That the composition of the Council and consequent allocation of seats to Political Groups on committees, as detailed in Section 3 of the report, be noted and approved.

(2) That it be noted that the Council has previously given approval to the adoption of alternative arrangements in respect of appointments to committees which are not strictly in accordance with proportionality under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

(3) That Councillor Ian Hunter be appointed to replace Councillor Aron Thornley on the Planning & Highways Regulation Committee.

### (iii) Annual Report regarding Councillor Conduct

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update to the council on complaints received about the conduct of members during the 2023/24 municipal year.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

### (iv) Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee (Councillor Colin Foster) submitted the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24 (copies of which had been circulated) summarising the work of the Scrutiny Committees during the Municipal Year.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **4. LEADER'S REPORT AND CABINET QUESTION TIME**

### (i) Cabinet Business

The Leader of the Council; and the Cabinet Members for Children, Families & Education; Communities, Culture & Sport; Economy, Regeneration & Housing; Finance & Resources; Parks, Highways & Transport Services made a report on the conduct of Cabinet business since the last Council Meeting.

### (ii) Questions

The Leader of the Council; the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment; and the Cabinet Members for Communities, Culture & Sport; Economy, Regeneration & Housing; Finance & Resources; and Parks, Highways & Transport Services answered questions and responded to comments relating to the business of the Cabinet in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the Minutes of the Cabinet held on 5 November 2024 (copies of which had been circulated) and the record of executive decisions taken (copies of which were circulated) since the last meeting of the Council to be duly received.

## **5. SCRUTINY**

### (i) Scrutiny Business

There were no reports from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees on the conduct of their business since the last Council Meeting.

### (ii) Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Scrutiny Committees in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the Minutes of the following Scrutiny Committees (copies of which had been circulated with the Summons) to be duly received:-

Adult Social Care & Health – 17 October 2024

Children & Families – 16 October 2024

Communities & Transport – 14 October 2024

Corporate, Resource Management & Governance – 15 October 2024

Economy, Regeneration & Climate Change – 17 October 2024

Scrutiny Co-ordination – 11 November 2024

## **6. ORDINARY AND AREA COMMITTEES**

### (i) Regulatory Business

There were no reports from the Chairs of the Planning and Highways Regulation, Licensing, Environment and Safety or Audit Committees on the conduct of their business since the last Council Meeting.

### (ii) Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Ordinary, Area and Ward Committees in accordance with Council Meeting Procedure Rule 11.

### (iii) Minutes

The Mayor declared the Minutes of the following Ordinary and Area Committees (copies of which had been circulated with the Summons) to be duly received:-

#### Ordinary Committees

Appeals Panel – 9 October 2024

Audit – 18 September 2024

Employment Appeals – 4 and 18 October 2024

Member – 15 October 2024

Planning & Highways Regulation – 25 September 2024

Area Committees

Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South – 4 November 2024  
Central Stockport – 31 October 2024  
Cheadle – 29 October 2024  
Heatons & Reddish – 28 October 2024  
Marple – 30 October 2024  
Stepping Hill – 29 October 2024  
Werneth – 28 October 2024

Ward Committees and Area Sub-Committees

Brookfield Park Shiers Family Trust Sub-Committee – 30 September 2024

**7. MOTIONS - NOTICE OF WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURE RULE 12**

(i) Review of Borough's Grit Bin Policy

RESOLVED - This Council notes:

- The Borough's Winter Services Policy and Winter Services Operational Plan last reviewed in 2018 sets out the current criteria used for decision making regarding current carriageway gritting routes, footway and cycleway gritting routes, grit box and additional grit locations.
- A report coming to the Communities & Transport Scrutiny Committee on 2 September 2024 on the matter. At that Committee meeting it was minuted that:

‘Members could use ward highways budgets to fund grit bins for their local areas.’

- Section 41(1a) of the Highways Act 1980 puts the LA under a duty to maintain and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice
- That the current policy is being applied as so to restrict new Grit bin locations to high altitude areas of the Borough only at the cost of more highly built up areas in the Central of the Borough with highest populations and where residents can assist with gritting on inclined footways on major thoroughfares such as to railway stations.
- That Members and residents are best placed to know where grit bins are best situated in their communities based on testimonies from vulnerable residents such as the elderly and disabled.
- This Borough's policy ‘A Plan for Walking and Cycling in Stockport 2019-2029’. That states:
  - (a) OBJECTIVE 1 - To make walking and cycling the natural choices for all ages and abilities for commuting, utility and leisure trips over shorter distances both within Stockport and to neighbouring areas.
  - (b) OBJECTIVE 4 - Ensure that neighbourhoods and district centres are "walking and cycling friendly" to encourage local trips by bike and on foot
  - (c) When walking and cycling infrastructure improvements are made, there is an increase in the ‘feel good’ factor for the local community.

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This Council resolves:

- That the relevant Cabinet Member arranges for the review of the Borough's current winter policy around grit bins forthwith and amend it so that grit bin requests are dealt with through a common sense approach and that Ward Members can use the Highways budget delegated to them as they see fit on priorities residents set.
- That this review takes place imminently before freezing temperatures are upon us.
- That all Members are updated by December 2024 on this.

### (ii) Supporting Stockport's LGBTQ+ Community

*In accordance with the provisions of Council Meeting Procedure Rule 14.7 (Alteration of Motion) at the request of the mover of the motion the Council Meeting gave its consent to the alteration of the motion as tabled to incorporate an alteration which had been published and circulated in advance of the meeting.*

RESOLVED – (51 for, 4 against, 3 abstentions) This council recognises:-

- LGBTQ+ people have been part of Stockport for as long as it has existed. They are our family, our friends, our coworkers and members of our communities.
- There should be no conflict between improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people and improving anyone else's lives. Any attempt to suggest there must be a conflict between for instance women's rights and LGBTQ+ people's rights is false.
- That improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people contributes to building a more inclusive, fair, and supportive society for everyone. Advancing equality, acceptance and inclusion for one group should strengthen the foundations of equality for all.
- LGBTQ+ people are facing rising levels of discrimination and hate crime. We should all be working together to eliminate all discrimination and hate crime.
- That, according to official statistics, between March 2021 and March 2022, sexual orientation hate crimes rose by 41%, and transgender identity hate crimes increased by 56%. More recent official figures, ending March 2024, show that there has been a 4% reduction in sexual orientation hate crimes and a 5% reduction in transgender identity hate crimes. Whilst this decline is welcome, the overall number of sexual orientation and transgender identity hate crimes in 2023/24 remains significantly high at 29,000, compared to 4,500 in 2012/13. As such, we should be working together, particularly through the Safer Stockport Partnership, to eliminate all hate crime.
- Due to the systemic oppression they face LGBTQ+ people can often face significantly worse outcomes when it comes to healthcare, education, housing and work.
- That, in particular, transgender people within our communities face severe challenges in accessing healthcare, work and education opportunities
- LGBTQ+ people have been part of Stockport for as long as it has existed. They are our family, our friends, our coworkers and members of our communities.
- That in the most recent iteration of the Safer Stockport Partnership there is a commitment to identify and work to eliminate the causes of hate crime.
- That the council has already taken actions to support Stockport's LGBTQ+ community such as previously passing a motion condemning conversion therapy, supporting its own staff's LGBTQ+ network and currently funds Stockport's LGBTQ+ Network known as the RESPECT Network.

This council calls on the government to:

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- Fully ban all forms of conversion therapy relating to gender and sexual orientation.
- Fully enact its manifesto commitment to implement a comprehensive ban on conversion therapy, including protections for transgender individuals, and reform the Gender Recognition Act to simplify the process for transgender people to obtain legal recognition of their gender.
- Add a gender-neutral option on all forms of official documentation such as passports and remove the requirement for gender markers on such documentation.
- Produce and fully fund a robust, community led and well researched plan to identify and eliminate the causes of discrimination and hate crime.
- Improve LGBTQ+ people's access to official documentation, healthcare, education, housing, government services and work.

This council resolves to:

- Provide quarterly updates, to the council and relevant stakeholders, on the progress of the Safer Stockport Partnership's aim to identify and work to eliminate the causes of hate crime.
- Fully progress its membership of Stonewall's Diversity scheme. Or a similar scheme that provides independent, external accreditation.
- Encourage Stockport's schools and colleges to sign up to programmes, such as those provided by The Proud Trust, aimed at improving LGBTQ+ students experience during education.
- Encourage more Stockport GP's to sign up to the Pride in Practice initiative offered by the LGBT Foundation which works to improve the experiences of LGBTQ+ people accessing primary care services.
- When creating and altering the council's constitution, policies and documentation to, where appropriate, use gender neutral language.
- Offer help and advice to Stockport's LGBTQ+ groups to access funding and support to help with the good work they do.
- Encourage councillors and council employees to, when they are able to, attend LGBTQ+ events and initiatives in Stockport.
- Encourage council employees to make use of the Employee Volunteering Policy, using a proportion of their paid time to volunteer with local Stockport groups doing good work, including for the LGBTQ+ community.
- Continue to support the LGBTQ+ community in Stockport asking the existing cross-party Inequalities Working Group to Fully consider the needs of all those within the LGBTQ+ community that face discrimination. Whilst we would not want to be prescriptive in the scope of issues addressed, we would like to ensure particular attention is given to:
  - The ability of the LGBTQ+ community, especially transpeople, to access adequate support for their physical and mental healthcare and how the council can provide practical support.
  - The issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community due to discrimination and bullying within educational settings and consider practical solutions to protect them from harm.
- Identifies how the council and its trusted partners can meaningfully embed diversity, equity and inclusion across all its work and policies.
- Offers help and advice to Stockport's LGBTQ+ groups to access funding and support to help with the good work they do.



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- Considers the requirements for progress reports to include existing initiatives such as the Safer Stockport Partnership's aim to identify and eliminate the causes of hate crime.
- Reports back to the council with its recommendations for service improvement by July 2025 and at quarterly intervals thereafter.

### (iii) Support for the 2024 Government Budget

MOVED AND SECONDED - This council welcomes the recent 2024 Government Budget and acknowledges its benefits for the residents of Stockport.

The budget outlines significant investments and reforms aimed at strengthening public services, supporting local businesses, and addressing cost-of-living pressures.

This Council particularly acknowledges the following points :

- The increase in the National Living Wage to £12.21 per hour will support many low-paid workers , boosting income for families and helping to alleviate financial pressures
- We applaud the allocation of additional funding for the NHS, including an investment to deliver more than 1.25 million diagnostic tests and expand capacity for 30,000 procedures. We also welcome an additional £1 billion to reduce the backlog of critical NHS maintenance, repairs and upgrades, and will be making the case for much needed investment into Stepping Hill Hospital
- A substantial increase in local road maintenance funding to address potholes. The budget goes beyond the government's initial pledge to fix an additional 1 million potholes each year, providing an extra £500 million to the 2024-25 baseline for local roads maintenance
- We recognise further investment in social care, with a minimum of £600 million in new grants specifically aimed at supporting social care services. More investment is needed though in this field, and we will work with the Government to help achieve this.
- Increased investment in children's services, including a £1 billion boost for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and alternative provision, will improve services for families in Stockport.
- The government plan to simplify the wider local funding landscape, reducing the number of grants and consolidating them into the Local Government Finance Settlement, as well as moving towards a multi-year settlement for local government so local authorities can plan more effectively.
- The £500 million boost to the Affordable Homes Programme will support the development of more desperately needed affordable homes in Stockport. Future grant investments will prioritise social housing, enabling Stockport to expand its supply of homes for social rent, providing secure, affordable options for those in need.
- Finally, we welcome the extension to the Household Support Fund, with the government providing £1 billion in 2025-26.

This council expresses its support for the 2024 Budget and its contributions to improving the quality of life for our residents. We look forward to working alongside the community to maximise these benefits and drive positive change across Stockport.

AMENDMENT MOVED AND SECONDED – This council recognises the chronic lack of underfunding that the Local Government sector faces is a result of the deliberate choices made by consecutive Conservative Governments. These deliberate choices utilised

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insufficient funding to compel councils to increase council tax, thus using a regressive funding model to place the burden on local people.

This council notes that in the upcoming local government funding review, the Government should move towards a fairer approach, to reduce the inequality gap and benefit our poorest residents.

This council welcomes the recent 2024 Government Budget and acknowledges its benefits for the residents of Stockport.

The budget outlines significant investments and reforms aimed at strengthening public services, supporting local businesses, and addressing cost-of-living pressures.

This Council particularly acknowledges the following points:

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- Finally, we welcome the extension to the Household Support Fund, with the government providing £1 billion in 2025-26.

This council notes, however, that:

- The legacy of the last Conservative government and the impact of their short-sighted and ill-judged decisions which have left all public services, including the NHS and local government, woefully underfunded.
- Many of the measures mentioned above, whilst giving welcome additional funding for many areas, do not make up the shortfall local authorities face;

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- Several measures in the government's budget, such as the increase in employers' national insurance contributions, will have impact on the cost base, and our partners' ability to help us deliver services to our residents;
- The two-child benefit cap has not been lifted and will keep many families in our borough in poverty;
- Council Tax payers remain "at risk" to cover the accelerating costs and increasing demand for demand-led services such as children and adult social care and Special Educational Needs and Disability provision;
- Specific funding for the urgent building works needed to make Stepping Hill Hospital safe and able to function at capacity has not been made available, despite earlier promises that this would happen.
- The decision to drastically lower the winter fuel payment threshold without an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment and ignoring any Socio Economic Duty will result in thousands of pensioners being plunged into poverty, unless there is an immediate reconsideration.

This council expresses its qualified support for the 2024 Budget and its contributions to improving the quality of life for our residents. We look forward to working alongside the with the community to maximise any benefits, mitigates any disbenefits as far as we are able and drive positive change across Stockport.

This council resolves to

- Continue to lobby government for adequate funding for local government, to remove the two-child benefit cap, to stop council taxpayers from facing the risk associated with demand-led services, and to fund the urgent building works needed by Stepping Hill Hospital.
- Call on government to exclude the care sector, bodies delivering council services and the third sector from the increase in NI employer contributions
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Deputy Prime Minister to ask the government to reform the way in which Local Government is funded to allow for a fairer model that provides sufficient funding, and to move away from the ideological approach that widens the inequality gap and fails the poorest people in Stockport.

### **8. DURATION OF THE MEETING - COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURE RULE 9.1**

*At this stage in the proceedings the Mayor informed the Council Meeting that the provisions of Council Meeting Procedure Rule 9.1 (Duration of Meeting) would be invoked unless the Council Meeting wished the meeting to continue.*

*RESOLVED – That the provisions of Council Meeting Procedure Rule 9.1 relating to the duration of (Council) meetings be duly invoked.*

### **9. MOTIONS - NOTICE OF WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURE RULE 12** (continued)

- (i) Qualified Support for the 2024 Government Budget

Upon the amendment being put to the vote:-

For the amendment 34, 2 against, 21 abstentions.

## AMENDMENT CARRIED

It was then

RESOLVED - This council recognises the chronic lack of underfunding that the Local Government sector faces is a result of the deliberate choices made by consecutive Conservative Governments. These deliberate choices utilised insufficient funding to compel councils to increase council tax, thus using a regressive funding model to place the burden on local people.

This council notes that in the upcoming local government funding review, the Government should move towards a fairer approach, to reduce the inequality gap and benefit our poorest residents.

This council welcomes the recent 2024 Government Budget and acknowledges its benefits for the residents of Stockport.

The budget outlines significant investments and reforms aimed at strengthening public services, supporting local businesses, and addressing cost-of-living pressures.

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- The legacy of the last Conservative government and the impact of their short-sighted and ill-judged decisions which have left all public services, including the NHS and local government, woefully underfunded.
- Many of the measures mentioned above, whilst giving welcome additional funding for many areas, do not make up the shortfall local authorities face;
- Several measures in the government's budget, such as the increase in employers' national insurance contributions, will have impact on the cost base, and our partners' ability to help us deliver services to our residents;
- The two-child benefit cap has not been lifted and will keep many families in our borough in poverty;
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- Call on government to exclude the care sector, bodies delivering council services and the third sector from the increase in NI employer contributions
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Deputy Prime Minister to ask the government to reform the way in which Local Government is funded to allow for a fairer model that provides sufficient funding, and to move away from the ideological approach that widens the inequality gap and fails the poorest people in Stockport.

### (ii) Supporting Community Ownership in Stockport

RESOLVED - This Council notes the essential role that local assets play in vibrant communities across Stockport. We recognize that these valued venues come in various forms, from community centres and pubs to cinemas, libraries, and music venues.

This Council further acknowledges that the challenges facing our high streets, alongside slow economic growth, have contributed to the decline of key community assets in

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Stockport. These cherished places, when left empty or neglected, not only affect our local economy but also diminish community pride.

This Council welcomes the UK Government's plans to introduce a Community Right to Buy, providing communities with stronger powers to secure local assets, including the right of first refusal on a wider range of community-valued assets and an extended timeframe—from six to twelve months—for communities to raise funds for asset acquisition.

We celebrate the role that Stockport's residents have played in revitalising these spaces, helping to create community hubs that bring people together. Notable local initiatives, such as Stockport Plaza showcase the positive impact of community action. This Council is committed to furthering these successes and ensuring that these processes are accessible for everyone.

This Council commits to:

- Actively supporting community groups interested in acquiring assets, helping to connect them with local and national funding sources and organizations that offer infrastructure support, such as Plunkett UK and Power to Change.
  - Working with Council officers to develop practical steps for Stockport to:
    - (1) Promote the use of Assets of Community Value (ACVs) across Stockport.
    - (2) Simplify the application process for ACV designation to make it more accessible to local groups.
    - (3) Highlight and celebrate successful ACV stories in our community to inspire further action.
- (iii) The council calls for more powers to tackle the neglect and blight on our communities caused by private developers

RESOLVED - We believe amendments to the laws relating to compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) and blighted land are required, to:

- Give councils greater powers to take over ownership of derelict land and property which has become a blight on the local community; this is a problem affecting a number of communities in Stockport, Greater Manchester, and the rest of the country.
- Make CPOs cheaper to administer, simpler to implement and faster to progress; they can easily be prevented by the sale of the property or transfer within the owner's company structure.
- Change the emphasis with CPOs, the legal requirement should be placed on a site's owner to demonstrate progression of a scheme, thereby reducing the costs to local authorities.
- Consider increased taxation to tackle problems where blight and anti-social behaviour occur, the government could enable the funds raised to be used to facilitate construction of new homes.
- Enable councils to convert affected land into community assets, which they can retain, or dispose of for the construction of housing.

The council asks that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to highlight the

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need for change, the difficulties experienced by local residents and the lack of powers and resources the council has to respond.

- (iv) Delivering the remainder of the Edgeley > Stockport MCF scheme before the Armoury Roundabout civil engineering works commence.

RESOLVED – (27 for, 5 against, 27 abstentions) This Council notes;

- The Armoury Roundabout (Greek Street) civil engineering works taking place starting in December 2024 – March 2026 and resulting in the bridge being offline between March 2025 and March 2026.
- These works being a Network Rail led project carried out in conjunction with Stockport Council and other major stakeholders.
- The widespread disruption this will cause for day-to-day life for the people of Stockport.

This Council further notes:

- The disappointment that a relatively small public realm improvement scheme (known as 'Edgeley > Stockport MCF' to upgrade the top of Castle Street and provide road safety and pedestrian improvements to the top of the District Centre (between here and Moseley Street) remains unfunded after years of anticipation and a pledge that it would be in place before the bridge came out.
- This walking and cycling scheme was first conceived in 2019, went out to consultation in June 2021. The Town Centre section is now complete and the section between the Town Hall & A6 is due to be constructed soon.
- That the route mentioned (between Edgeley and the Thomson Street Bridge) is not fit for purpose as a designated primary diversionary route for both pedestrians and cyclists in its current state given it borders the school gates of Our Lady Primary School. This route in its current state does not meet modern standards for accessibility, for disabled persons and the thoroughfare is regularly blocked by parked cars.
- That a longer route for a primary diversion (which will be at least 12 months) is not acceptable and will not be considered.

This Council resolves:

- To write to the GMCA, Transport for Greater Manchester, GM Transport Commissioner, Chair of the Bee Network Committee and the GM Mayors Office asking them to allocate CRSTS ATF monies to this scheme as soon as possible given the uniqueness of this project and the disruption it will bring to Edgeley residents.
- In the alternative, recommend that the Cabinet agrees to draw capital funding internally as a Borough to deliver this small scheme before the Armoury Roundabout is replaced given shovels could be in the ground to deliver this scheme within a short time frame with a view that the scheme is delivered by March 2025.

The meeting closed at 10.07 pm