

**Chronicle
Comment**
THE VOICE OF OLDHAM

**Hurrah for
home care**

IT WAS the news that everybody wanted to hear but nobody was taking for granted: that the worthy Hospice at Home pilot scheme would get full funding approval from the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group.

So when it was confirmed the CCG would be investing £276,000 a year it was smiles all round in the knowledge that the support network can be provided for those wishing to end their days at home rather than in a hospice or hospital.

In these times of acute financial constraint, there were genuine concerns the pilot scheme — part-funded by the CCG and the ever-generous Stoller Charitable Trust — might not achieve full funding.

But that first year of support has proved invaluable. It certainly made a big difference to the 197 individuals and their families.

As Hospice at Home co-ordinator Lindsey Harper put it: "Sadly, when it comes to dying we have only one chance to get it right."

Sir Norman will be delighted that his seed funding enabled the scheme to show its worth. The philanthropist is renowned for giving projects a chance.

It is visionary and vital to improving Oldham in a myriad of ways.

The celebrations will be brief. There is important work to do but Vernon Cressye, Dr Kershaw's Chair of board of director, is rightly very proud of the team that has achieved so much in a short space of time.

How to contact us

NEWSDESK 0161-633 2121
24-HOUR NEWSLINE
0161-622 2111
FAX 0161-652 2111
E-MAIL
editorial@oldham-chronicle.co.uk
WEB SITE
www.oldham-chronicle.co.uk

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Your Letters

Write to the editor, PO Box 47, 172 Union Street, Oldham, Lancs OL1 1EQ — Fax Letters to: 0161-652 2111 — email: editorial@oldham-chronicle.co.uk

Need a new school

WE HAVE written to Cllr Amanda Chadderton (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills), together with the Chief Executive and Council Leader as follows:

We write following the outcome of the Judicial Review by Mr Justice Kerr relating to Saddleworth School which now causes further delays on a project where a new school should have been built and occupied for some time. No doubt many parents, grandparents and pupils will be so disappointed at the further delay in providing a new school building for Saddleworth suitable for 21st century education yet they still reside in crumbling accommodation reaching the end of its life. Indeed the words by Saddleworth school head boy, Joe Wheeler stating "The construction of the new school should not be a battle between the villages. We should all be in unison to allow the children of tomorrow every single opportunity to flourish within their education"

shows some wise shoulders and great leadership that we could all learn from. In moving forward we all have to work together to ensure we get a new secondary school.

We are sure you know that our priority has always been to ensure that we get a new secondary school in Saddleworth and have always worked constructively with the council and other partners to achieve this. After all this time, we do not want to see the worst case scenario of the Diggle site being occupied by industrial units (as per its site designation), funding being pulled and us eventually having no secondary school in Saddleworth. We believe we need to be open and transparent to get the best outcome for our young people. In newspaper reports it was stated: "The council heard the council accepted that redeveloping the school on its existing site, whilst a more expensive option, would be 'viable and affordable'."

The implication of this statement suggests that the Education Funding Agency would provide even more funding to cover the significant costs of building in Uppermill and presumably financially supporting the decant of students to alternative accommodation during the process. This contradicts every single briefing I and my colleagues have ever received from Oldham council and others. If we have learnt anything from this process it is that the silence will be filled with inaccuracies. I am therefore asking that the comments be addressed head on. We need to be in possession of the facts. If it is apparent that councillors have been misled then I would call for a full investigation and if appropriate, disciplinary action to be taken. If the accusations are false then such reporting should be condemned and Oldham Council need to put the record straight. We are more than willing to work with you to ensure that we get a new school for Saddleworth. Other schools funded in this programme are now built, occupied and providing the facilities we want for our young people. This has gone on too long and we need to get the best for our young people.

Cllrs GARTH HARKNESS, DEREK HEFFERNAN and JOHN McCANN
CHRON13

Help social club

I AM APPEALING to the community-minded people of Oldham, to seek their help in finding volunteers to help us organise our club activities.

We are a social club for people with learning disabilities and have been in existence for 50 years. In recent times we have lost many of our valuable helpers through sickness, dying or moving from the area.

We meet on Wednesday evening at St Anne's Rugby Club between 6.30 and 9.30pm.

If you are interested you can either call into the club on Wednesday evening or contact me by telephone (01706 341858 or email ms1941@btinternet.com). New helpers do have to be vetted with a DBS check, but this is completed with no cost.

MARJORIE SMITH
Oldham Gateway Treasurer

I HEAR what Pessimist says (March 3, website) but I would have thought that in St Mark's case, the demographics of the area has a large bearing on the issue, otherwise following his theory i.e. that white flight has nothing to do with it, but applying it in reverse then why do you not see any mosques in, for example, Saddleworth. I can't speak for other religions, but Christianity is not a 'superstition' - it's a faith and I'm sorry if Pessimist hasn't got the hang of it. It's not simply a matter of blindly doing what you're told and accepting it. Amongst other things, Christians experience occasions when they feel she overwhelming love and care of God for them in whatever life gives - and throws at them - something which is just not forthcoming in pure superstition. It's a two way street, and anyone can travel along it. Like it or not, our British way of life is based on Christian values. Can Pessimist honestly say that 'No longer brainwashing children' and 'no longer indoctrinating children with superstition' - as he puts it - has led to a better, less selfish, more caring society? Give it a whirl Pessimist, you might become an optimist!

K COOPER

I WRITE in response to the letter from nom de plume Alec Trician (6th March). I wonder if Alec would contact me directly. Perhaps he/she would like to join the list of the local people I and my colleagues are working with who have kindly agreed to look at restarting The Friends of High Crompton Park.

We met with them recently and walked round the park identifying issues. There are some potentially exciting things happening at the High Crompton Park which Alec or anyone else is welcome to be part of. Feel free to get in touch. dave.murphy@oldham.gov.uk or 01706 840056

Cllr DAVE MURPHY

FROM THE WEB

www.oldham-chronicle.co.uk

Landlord fined for lack of licence

What a surprise. As a landlord myself with multiple properties there is a standard that we have to adopt. Well some of us do but obviously people like this think they are above the law and create the term "slum Landlords".

Should have been hit with a higher cost. It is the only way they will learn you provide a service then it had better be up to standard.

OVERSEAS

Woman robbed in street

Shame on these two individuals. May it come back to haunt them.

I hope this poor lady recovers from this episode quickly.

Well done to the men who chased after the offenders.

Hopefully they managed to get the vehicle registration.

ROYTONT

No description of the robbers despite two men chasing them, and no description of the car either?

FLAKE

Nuisances facing ban from public transport

Does this mean each and every tram will have staff from the Travelsafe Unit on board? If not, a waste of time and once banned, how does one stop them travelling?

LESUPTHEWALL

Hospice home service secure

Dr Kershaw's does such good work, it is brilliant that this care can now reach more people.

My father had hospice at home and it was such a comfort

for him and a support for my mother and the whole family at such a difficult and scary time. The lovely hospice team helped us every step of the way and made the experience bearable. Please consider sending a donation or going to one of their fundraisers!

TOWN CENTRE DWELLER

College is wheely grateful for bikes

And we are told the country is skint. Can't kids buy a second hand bike?

Did kids 20 years ago have bikes bought for them by the state?

CHRON13

PLEASE NOTE
Letters to the editor must be accompanied by a name and address, even if you wish to use a nom-de-plume.

Quotes of the day

"To think that a woman was not ashamed to go to America to hold hands with a man who has bragged about sexually assaulting women"

- **Bianca Jagger attacks Theresa May for her invitation to Mr Trump to visit Britain**



"Donald Trump is making me gain weight. I start the day with liquids, but after the morning news, I eat pancakes smothered in maple syrup!"

- **Singer Barbra Streisand**

