

## OLDHAM EAST & SADDLEWORTH POLL, JANUARY 2011

1,503 adults in the Oldham East & Saddleworth constituency were interviewed by telephone on 5 and 6 January 2011. Data have been weighted to be representative of all adults living in the constituency.

### 1. BY-ELECTION VOTING INTENTION

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Debbie Abrahams, the Labour candidate         | 46% (+14% since GE) |
| Elwyn Watkins, the Liberal Democrat candidate | 29% (-3%)           |
| Kashif Ali, the Conservative candidate        | 15% (-11%)          |
| Others  | 10% (-)             |

**Are you fairly sure that is you're going to vote for [that party] in the by-election on January 13th, or do you think you may well change your mind between now and then?**

|                                     | ALL | Labour voters | Con voters | Lib Dem voters |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---------------|------------|----------------|
| I'm fairly sure that's what I'll do | 87% | 91%           | 86%        | 87%            |
| I may well change my mind           | 11% | 9%            | 14%        | 10%            |

### 2. REASONS FOR SWITCHING

**What is the main reason you have decided to vote for [that party] having voted for [a different party] at the general election a few months ago?** [303 respondents saying they will vote for a different party at the by-election from the one they voted for at the general election]

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Disapprove of Lib Dems role in coalition/u-turn on tuition fees | 28% |
| Voting tactically/Conservative is wasted vote                   | 10% |
| Didn't like Phil Woolas   | 5%  |
| Become disillusioned with all main parties                      | 3%  |
| Didn't like Gordon Brown  | 3%  |
| Like the Lib Dem candidate/legal stand                          | 3%  |
| Like the Conservative candidate                                 | 2%  |
| Impressed with Conservatives in govt                            | 1%  |
| Don't Lib Dem candidate/legal appeal                            | 1%  |
| No answer/Don't know  | 44% |

### 3. PERFORMANCE OF PARTY LEADERS

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Please rate the following people for their performance on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “terrible” and 10 means “excellent”.

|               | ALL  | Labour voters | Con voters | Lib Dem voters |
|---------------|------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| David Cameron | 4.61 | 3.35          | 7.38       | 6.25           |
| Ed Miliband   | 4.40 | 6.47          | 3.37       | 3.74           |
| Nick Clegg    | 3.96 | 2.92          | 5.39       | 5.95           |

### 4. LOCAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

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We’re interested in the extent to which people locally have heard from the political parties over the last few weeks. Please can you tell me whether Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have done each of the following:

|   | Labour | Conservatives | Lib Dems |
|---|--------|---------------|----------|
| Delivered leaflets or newspapers to your door     | 71%    | 57%           | 72%      |
| Put up posters or billboards in your area         | 31%    | 26%           | 42%      |
| Knocked on your door                              | 21%    | 7%            | 19%      |
| Written a personally addressed letter to you      | 37%    | 25%           | 57%      |
| Set up stalls or handed out leaflets in your area | 30%    | 23%           | 33%      |
| Phoned you  | 19%    | 5%            | 20%      |
| Sent you an email                                 | 2%     | 1%            | 2%       |

### 5. THE BY-ELECTION AND THE COURT DECISION

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As you may know, the by-election is happening because a court annulled the result of the vote in this constituency at the general election in May. This was because the judges found that Labour’s Phil Woolas, who narrowly won the election in May, had knowingly made false statements about his Liberal Democrat opponent, which may have influenced how some people voted. Please say if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

|  | Agree | Disagree |
|--|-------|----------|
| Phil Woolas did make false statements about his opponents and this probably affected the result, so it is right that the election is being re-run  | 75%   | 19%      |
| The Liberal Democrat candidate, having been narrowly defeated in the general election, is just being a bad loser and should not have dragged the case through the courts, causing this by-election         | 40%   | 51%      |
| All political parties insult their opponents and distort the policy positions of opposing candidates and what Phil Woolas was accused of was no worse than what goes on all the time in election campaigns | 62%   | 31%      |
| Voters are used to the rough and tumble of an election campaign, and when they reach their decision it is wrong for judges to overturn the result  | 48%   | 43%      |

## 6. PERFORMANCE OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

Please say how well or badly you think the coalition government is doing so far overall.

|             | ALL | Labour voters | Con voters | Lib Dem voters |
|-------------|-----|---------------|------------|----------------|
| Very well   | 4%  | 1%            | 9%         | 7%             |
| Quite well  | 36% | 15%           | 70%        | 63%            |
| Quite badly | 29% | 38%           | 13%        | 17%            |
| Very badly  | 27% | 45%           | 7%         | 9%             |

## 7. THE ECONOMY, THE DEFICIT AND PUBLIC SPENDING

The coalition government is committed to a range of public spending cuts to reduce Britain's budget deficit, which has been running at more than £160 billion a year. Thinking about the government's planned cuts, please say if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

|  | Agree | Disagree |
|--|-------|----------|
| However unpleasant they may be, the public spending cuts being proposed by the coalition government are necessary and unavoidable  | 63%   | 33%      |
| The coalition government is cutting spending because it is instinctively hostile to public services and the public sector – it is just using the budget deficit as an excuse | 47%   | 47%      |
| The last Labour government must accept a large part of the blame for the economic problems that Britain faced at the end of its time in government                           | 77%   | 20%      |
| The Conservatives seem to be getting their way over spending cuts despite the presence of the Liberal Democrats in the coalition government                                  | 76%   | 15%      |
| The coalition government is right that we needed to start cutting back on public spending to deal with the deficit, but they are cutting too deeply and too quickly          | 74%   | 22%      |

With our economy facing challenges in the months ahead, who do you most trust to manage the economy in the best interests of Britain David Cameron, Nick Clegg and the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne or Ed Miliband and the Shadow Chancellor Alan Johnson?

|                          | ALL | Labour voters | Con voters | Lib Dem voters |
|--------------------------|-----|---------------|------------|----------------|
| Cameron, Clegg & Osborne | 37% | 12%           | 85%        | 74%            |
| Miliband & Johnson       | 22% | 58%           | 1%         | 7%             |
| Neither                  | 28% | 20%           | 11%        | 11%            |

## 8. BY-ELECTION RESULT EXPECTATIONS

Regardless of which Party you might vote for, which Party do you think is most likely to win the by-election in Oldham East & Saddleworth?

|                   | ALL | Labour voters | Con voters | Lib Dem voters |
|-------------------|-----|---------------|------------|----------------|
| Labour            | 42% | 73%           | 35%        | 23%            |
| Liberal Democrats | 32% | 12%           | 41%        | 66%            |
| Conservatives     | 6%  | 5%            | 18%        | 2%             |

## 9. A LIB-CON PACT?

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If, instead of the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives standing separate candidates in next week's by-election, there was a single candidate representing both parties and standing on behalf of the coalition government, would you vote for Labour, the Conservative-Lib Dem coalition or another party – or do you think you probably wouldn't vote at all?

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Labour                         | 46% |
| Conservative-Lib Dem coalition | 39% |
| Others                         | 15% |