



Cabinet Office

SAM GYIMAH MP
Minister for the Constitution

70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

Email PSCorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Telephone +44 (0)20 7276 0527
Web www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Our Ref: MP626019

Your Ref: Council – Register 20141217

Dr Carolyn Wilkins
Chief Executive
Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UG

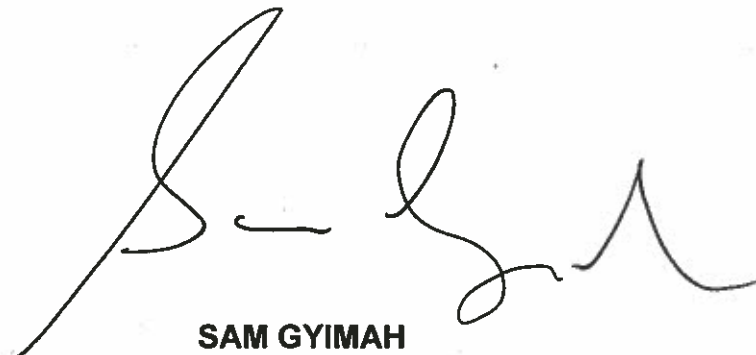
25th March 2015

Dear Carolyn

Thank you for your letter of 9 January to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, outlining Oldham Councils' resolution that the Open Register should be abolished. I am replying as Minister for the Constitution. I apologise for the delay in responding, which was due to an administrative error.

As I am sure you are aware, before 2002 any individual or organisation could ask for a copy of the electoral register and there were no restrictions on how it was used. In 2002 the law governing access to the register was changed to provide for two versions of the register – the electoral register and the open register (also known as the edited register). The full register is only available to certain carefully restricted persons and bodies for electoral purposes, law enforcement, credit checking, archiving and the prevention of money laundering fraud. The open register, from which electors can opt out, is available to anyone for any purpose.

In 2012 this Government considered the future of the open register and concluded that it should be retained. Were the open register to be abolished, there would be strong pressure for wider access to the full electoral register – from which no one can opt out – and the Government would be concerned about the potential impact this could have on registration rates. The Government therefore has no plans to abolish the open register.



SAM GYIMAH