

Oldham Borough Council



Council Meeting

Wednesday 16 July 2025

Responses to Public and Member Questions

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Public Questions - Full Council: Wednesday, 16th July 2025

	From / Date	To	Question	Response
1	Roger Blackmore 14/04/2025 21:05	Councillor Arooj Shah Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth	Will Oldham Council's plans for the former Saddleworth School site include space for social housing and genuinely affordable housing? This site is still waiting to be developed and its position close to the centre of Uppermill could provide a significant contribution to local housing needs. Residents in Saddleworth, especially young people, find it increasingly hard to find genuinely affordable homes. Will Saddleworth be receiving a reasonable share of the 500 social homes the Council is aiming to deliver in the next five years as part of the Housing Delivery Action Plan?	Thank you for your question. Whilst full demolition and a number of site surveys have now been completed on the former Saddleworth School site, there are certain property issues that are still being worked through before the site can be taken forward for disposal. The site does however remain allocated for residential development, and as the property matters are resolved, specific plans with regards to the exact number or type of new homes to be delivered will be drawn up. I can however assure you that this will include a significant proportion of affordable and social homes, as well as all properties being low carbon housing, thereby supporting the borough's pioneering Green New Deal, with all new homes on Council sites being built to the government's Future Homes Standards on sustainability. This is a very important site for Saddleworth, given how little land there is under Council control that's suitable for housing in this part of the borough, and we will therefore do all that we can to ensure that we get the right type of housing that benefits as many local residents as possible.

2	Magda Sachs Fri 30/05/2025 08:17	Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability	Six months ago Oldham Council committed itself to ensuring ethical investment by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund. With reference to investment in fossil fuels, the urgency of action, in view of the increasing intensity of climate breakdown, is clear. What update can you provide on the creation a plan for stepping up divestment in fossil fuel companies, and also on ensuring transparency on the investment decisions taken by the Fund? Who is taking the lead on the actions in the motion? Can you provide a timetable of actions taken and planned?	Thank you to Magda for the question. We all recognise that the climate emergency is one of the biggest challenges facing our times and everyone has a responsibility to do their part. The Greater Manchester Pension Fund does invest in companies such as Shell and BP as part of its commitment to ensure the best return for members of the scheme. The Fund does recognise the need to ensure that it balances sound investment with an ethical approach and has committed to net zero by 2050. We can all agree that they should move faster towards this goal and align it better to the Greater Manchester target of 2038. It believes in constructive engagement with the companies it invests with, arguing for greener practices. They also invest in renewables which as we all know is the way to a sustainable future. But we can all agree that they need to go further, faster and I will continue to make that case as Oldham's representative on the body.
3	Hannah Roberts Thu 26/06/2025 14:48	Councillor Barbara Brownridge Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing	NHS England has pledged to eradicate cervical cancer by 2040 – it affects 3,200 women annually in the UK, and 800 die. Unfortunately, HPV vaccination rates are below the target of 90%, and the cervical screening target of 80% is also not reached.	Vaccinations are an essential approach to preventing and reducing spread of disease and infections. Although HPV vaccination rates are lower than where we would like, Oldham has seen an increase in HPV vaccination coverage for both males and females in Year 8 between 2022-23 and 2023-24. The service is commissioned through GM, but Oldham continues to promote the vaccine through our school nurses.

			Those who miss screening tests will receive home testing kits from January 2026. Can the Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing confirm the take up rate of HPV vaccinations in Oldham and what the Council can do to encourage more young people to be vaccinated and to support those who receive home testing kits to use them?	In the 2023/24 academic year, 71.1% of 12–13-year-old females in Oldham received at least one dose of the HPV vaccine, which is only very slightly below the national average of 71.3%. In the 2023-24 academic year, 67.7% of 12–13-year-old males in Oldham received the HPV vaccine, which is also slightly below the national average. Oldham continues to take a data led approach to identify groups with low uptake for screening programmes including cervical screening. In Oldham, uptake is lowest in some of our ethnic minority communities, and noticeably in our most deprived areas. Greater Manchester commissions the Answer Cancer programme delivered by a number of partners to increase cervical screening rates in areas of lowest uptake. When the home tests become available, the Council will actively work with partners and community groups to promote this
4	Jenny Harrison Thu 26/06/2025 16:16	Councillor Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways	The Oldham Times reported that Greater Manchester will receive a £2.5 billion boost to transport spending, including 1000 new electric Bee Network buses and a new tram stop at Cop Road, between Derker and Shaw and Crompton. Can the Cabinet Member for Transport give us any further information about how this funding will benefit Oldham and	On 4 June 2025, the Chancellor of the Exchequer visited Rochdale to announce devolved 'Transport for City Regions' funding for regional transport infrastructure. The Chancellor's announcement confirmed that Greater Manchester is set to receive £2.5 billion of a national £15.6 billion pot – the full amount set out in the previous government's indicative allocation in October 2023. This funding runs from March 2027 to March 2032 and will form part of Greater Manchester's Integrated Settlement.

			when we can expect the Cop Road stop to open.	The indicative programme for Transport for City Regions funding sets out an aspiration to deliver 1000 new electric buses on to the network in Greater Manchester. This will include the continued deployment of more electric buses onto the network in Oldham, which will provide benefits such as reduced CO2 emissions and improved air quality. The investment will also improve the journey quality for residents through newer vehicles. In terms of the new stop at Cop Road, council officers are supporting TfGM in progressing designs and a business case for the new stop. This business case will set out strategies for funding and delivery. The target date for the stop opening is 2030/2031, subject to successful completion of the design, approval of the business case and securing the necessary funding for delivery. In terms of other projects, Oldham will benefit from projects such as the proposed Tram-Train Pathfinder, which will connect Oldham, Rochdale, Heywood and Bury. Oldham will also benefit from GM's plans to integrate local rail services into the Bee Network, which will fully join up travel with buses, trams and active travel. This newly announced funding commitment is just the start of work to deliver Greater Manchester's integrated pipeline ambition. Work to identify, develop and deliver
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				the specific infrastructure priorities in every area of Greater Manchester will take time and work will now progress at pace with local authority leaders. Priorities include: • Works to enable local regeneration • Highways maintenance • Active travel infrastructure • Vision Zero interventions (including school streets and crossings) • Bus priority measures
5	Stephen Ingham Thu 26/06/2025 19:45	Councillor Shah Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth	I'd like to congratulate Oldham Athletic on their win at Wembley and promotion back to the Football League. I recently saw an article about work starting at Boundary Park on 'SportsTown' - can the Leader of the Council confirm what benefits SportsTown will bring to the borough and young people in our community?	Thank you for your question Stephen SportsTown is a public-private venture between the land owners around Boundary Park to provide enhanced educational, health and sports facilities for Oldham's communities. This includes new further education and higher education courses which specialise in routes to jobs connected with either health and / or sports – early examples include sports coaching, sports sciences, physiotherapy and other community health provisions like radiography as the facilities are developed. SportsTown is also about ensuring the professional standard facilities are made available for community clubs and sports to provide enhanced facilities for Oldham's young people aspiring to be the best in their

				field, and to allow a wider range of sports to benefit like netball, darts, and cricket. As the works on site develop, I will ensure there is more information available for Oldham's communities about what will soon be available as part of the SportsTown offer.

Cabinet Questions - Full Council

From / Date	To	Question	Response
Cllr G Shuttleworth	Cllr Elaine Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	An article last month in The Independent stated that 21% of private rented homes - more than 1m homes - do not meet the Decent Homes Standard, with almost 500,000 privately rented homes affected by category 1 hazards, reserved for issues that pose a serious and immediate risk to health and safety. What checks do the local authority undertake to ensure that such properties within the borough meet the Decent Homes Standard?	Thank you for your question Cllr Shuttleworth. The Decent Homes Standard is a set of criteria for social housing in England to ensure properties are safe, in a reasonable state of repair, have modern facilities, and provide a comfortable living environment. The standard is currently under review, with potential implications for the private rented sector through the introduction of the Renters' Rights Bill. Locally, the Environmental Health team respond to private rented disrepair cases and undertake a detailed Housing Health and Safety rating System inspections to identify category 1 and 2 hazards. So everyone is aware, category 1 hazards are very serious and the law dictates enforcement action must be taken by the Council when these sorts of hazards are found. In 2024/25, 910 service requests regarding Housing Standards were reported to the Council and investigated. In addition, since the introduction of Selective licensing, 477 audits of privately rented properties have been conducted to address Housing Standards.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	<i>Q: Can the Cabinet member responsible confirm why since March 2025 to date that the broken tap in Royton Cemetery has still not been repaired and who they are waiting sign off from in order for repairs to take place?</i> To note:	Thank you for your question Cllr Quigg. We have experienced a recurring issue of taps being damaged by vehicles; this has led to a recurring requirement for repairs and the associated costs. We have designed a solution to reduce the likelihood of damage moving forward and I can confirm that a contractor has been appointed to complete the works imminently.

		I was advised that it would be repaired from April 2025 and that it was awaiting sign off for the works.	
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr C Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	<i>Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please advise on when or if real time bus information will be installed on ancillary bus stops in particular on the 409 bus route?</i> To note: These are usually LED display units placed in covered stops and not all stops.	Thank you for your question Cllr Quigg. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) have confirmed that several stops along route 409 have been identified for potential installation of Passenger Information Display Screens (PIDS), including at Oldham General Hospital, subject to on-site surveys and further feasibility assessments confirming installation can proceed. While TfGM are not able to confirm specific timescales for delivery, the current year's programme includes work to assess and progress the next phase of roll-out following the survey work. TfGM's Customer team will be in position to provide more details of the installation programme in the coming months and we will continue to work closely with TfGM as plans are developed so timely updates can be provided to elected members and affected communities.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	<i>Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please advise:</i> Why many streets, grids and paths look like they have not been sprayed with weedkiller as many are now sprouting extra foliage on kerbsides and in grids and gullies. It is worth noting that we have not had any more rainfall than usual, in fact we have had less rain fall	Thank you for your question. The whole borough has been subjected to the first phase of weed spraying. Typically, the materials used take approximately 4 weeks to kill the weeds and to date. We are aware that in some locations the weeds may be more resilient to the herbicide being used. Where this happens, we are using specialist herbicides and undertaking additional spraying. There are occasions where parked vehicles or other access issues mean that operatives are unable to spray the weeds as effectively as we would

		compared to last year, so can the Cabinet member advise if this is due to 1. Them being missed during the initial phase of spraying? 2. The weedkiller not working as expected? 3. If there will be another round of spraying in the next few weeks?	like. In such circumstances, hand spraying has been done, but in some instances, this has had limited effect due to parked cars. Another weed spray of the borough is planned and will commence in mid-August and will cover the whole borough once again. We will be targeting missed areas or where weed die-back has not been effective. I would continue to encourage members to report any areas in their wards they feel have been missed, or where the weed killing treatment has not been effective, so that they can be assessed and treated with another suitable product.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please advise: When will Royton Park see its tennis nets being reinstated? I was told that due to costs that they will not be replaced. Given it has been over 12 months since they were taken out, and the fact the Oldham Times has advertised that we have a serviceable court when in fact Royton does not, can the cabinet member advise if and when the tennis nets will be reinstated and if not why not?	Thank you for your question. The nets were removed due to a health and safety issue with the court surface and socket holders. We understand the inconvenience this has caused and are pleased to confirm that the nets were reinstated last week. Looking ahead, I can share positive news that Section 106 funding has been allocated for Royton Park, and we'll be reviewing the tennis courts as part of wider improvement plans to enhance the facilities for the community. We appreciate residents' patience and look forward to bringing the courts back into use very soon
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr A Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please advise on : 1. The pounds and pence cost to date for achieving the carbon neutrality target by the end of 2025 and for the Borough by 2030? You	Thank you for your question - however the answer to this is vast, from money spent in the borough on replacing light bulbs, to money spent by private households on purchase of Electric Vehicles to investment made in Oldham's electricity network by Electricity North West, and investment made at national level to decarbonise the energy system. The Council would likely need to commission a major piece of research work in order to address this question and we're not sure that the data

		previously advised you did not have time to provide a full and accurate answer. Noting that you have already advised on: • £100K towards the cost of LED lighting in Oldham Leisure Centre • £290K towards the cost of Air Source Heat Pumps at Alexandra Park Depot 2. How much capital has been invested by companies, government and charities and trusts in pounds and pence into achieving net zero by the end of 2025 and 2030 respectively? 3. How many buildings owned by the council have been retrofitted and the pounds and pence cost of delivering this? 4. How many private buildings have been retrofitted? 5. If the Council will be welcoming onshore windfarms and if any sites have been identified and where?	exists to answer this specific question part 1. At present the Council does not propose to commission such a piece of work and there is no budget allocation for it. I can advise on some points within the question – in that Oldham Leisure Centre was retrofitted with LEDs and the full £100K costs were covered by a grant. With regards to Alexandra Park Depot – while the depot has been completely redeveloped – the air source heat pump elements were once again funded by an external grant covering the £290K costs. Spindles – energy works estimated at £4m as part of overall redevelopment, PSDS3a grant of £1.3m secured towards the cost of energy works. Annual running cost is now approx. £300K per annum compared to Civic Centre which was around £800K per annum. This gives a pay-back period of around 5.5 years on the investment in the Net Zero compliant energy works at the Spindles. In terms of private homes retrofitted with energy efficiency measures, through the GMCA Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery programme (which concluded in 2023) Oldham had the highest take-up, with 407 homes benefiting from over £2.1m of grant funding to help reduce energy bills. Finally Mr Mayor – I can confirm that the Council is exploring the potential of windfarms. It is not known how many sites in the borough could be suitable. However, the Council has identified some potential wind farm sites. There has been an extensive discussion on the Green New Deal at Scrutiny Committee in previous years linked to performance reviews, grants obtained and progress reporting to inform the direction of travel with this work. I appreciate Cllr Quigg has asked for the detail in pounds and pence, but the Council has not gained any additional capacity or funding to research the answers to these questions since the last time they were asked.
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Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please advise: 1. Why several parks like Dogford Park and Shaw Road End Park are seeing large parts of the grass not being cut, and weeds being allowed to grow out of control making them look unkempt and untidy? 2. When wall repairs in both parks are set to be carried out and if so when?	Thank you for your question. There are some areas where grass is being allowed to grow into meadows – this approach boosts biodiversity and creates an excellent habitat for bees and butterflies – however, in these areas, we will continue to maintain paths and recreational areas so that residents can enjoy the environment and facilities. Weed spraying and treatment is ongoing, boroughwide and this includes all parks and open spaces managed by the council. A wall repair adjacent to the Multi Games Pitch at Shaw Road End Park was completed in June. The Council is prioritising Health & Safety repairs at present – the outstanding works are not a health and safety related – however, Officers are reviewing options for the cosmetic repair and will feedback in due course.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr F Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please confirm: It is worth noting that the Council accepted an award of £276,888 from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on behalf of Oldham Council, for the purpose of delivering the Refugee Support Project via the Get Oldham Working programme, over a two-year period commencing in May 2025.	Thank you for your question councillor – I'll take each part in turn Firstly - The Refugee Support Programme aims to enhance local support for refugees and asylum seekers accommodated in Oldham. Whilst those who claim asylum in the UK are not normally allowed to work whilst their claim is being considered, refugees are allowed to work and the 25% is based on the number of refugees supported into employment. However asylum seekers are encouraged to volunteer whilst their claim is being considered and this programme will also support this. In doing this asylum seekers can support their local community, and this will also assist with their integration if they are granted leave to remain in the UK. Secondly - Oldham Council does not have any information about the numbers of asylum seekers moved to Oldham by the Home Office. The provision of accommodation and support for asylum seekers under the

		Therefore, can the cabinet member confirm: 1. Given the programme has an expected progression rate of 25% for paid employment, however given asylum seekers in the UK are not permitted to work while their claim is being processed if this figure is even achievable? 2. How many asylum seekers have been moved to Oldham by the Home Office to date, given the scheme states it intends to support 250 individuals, including: 150 participants accessing English language and digital skills provision; 100 individuals engaged in structured volunteering activities? 3. Whether they think it is value for money to employ an Advisor on £82,902.99? 4. If the Home Office, or any other government contracted agency, or company has been in touch to house any further asylum seekers or migrants in Oldham given	Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 is the responsibility of the Home Office (United Kingdom Visas and Immigration Directorate), and in the Northwest of England they have a contract with Serco to deliver this service. The latest information on www.gov.uk states that there were 728 asylum seekers provided with accommodation in Oldham by the Home Office on 31 March 2025. Thirdly - The report clearly sets out that the costs are over two years. The employment advisor role has been through job evaluation and is line with industry standard and is set at a grade 6 which is c. £33,366.00 per year or nearly £41,500 per year with on costs. Finally - I can confirm that neither the Home Office, nor any government contracted agency, nor company has been in touch to house any further asylum seekers within the borough, and no-one has not been in touch to advise on any further hotels or houses of multiple occupation being used for such purposes.
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		the already increased pressures on local services?	
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member please confirm: If the Home Office has been in touch with the Council to advise on further accommodation in the Borough such as hotels and houses of multiple occupation will be used to house migrants and or asylum seekers? Who they have had conversations with about this and when? It is worth noting that according to official data from the Home Office and local authorities that Oldham as a Borough has housed 728 Asylum seekers yet there are 603 homeless households in Oldham waiting for accommodation. Does the Cabinet member think this is fair?	Thank you for your question. I can confirm that neither the Home Office, nor any government contracted agency, nor company has been in touch to house any further asylum seekers within the borough, and no-one has not been in touch to advise on any further hotels or houses of multiple occupation being used for such purposes. Oldham Council officers, the administration and other local leaders (including local MP Jim McMahon and Andy Burnham GM Mayor) have for a long time raised concerns regarding the inequity of the government's asylum dispersal policy and pressed for change. This is now changing as dispersal areas are being widened across the country. The Council team continue to work hard on preventing homelessness in the first place, supporting residents with accommodation if they do find themselves homeless, and then supporting residents to move into suitable accommodation when it becomes available.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Q: Can the relevant Cabinet member confirm: The costs incurred by the Council for having to clear up fly tipping at New Coin Street in Royton given it is a fly tipping hotspot?	Thank you for your question. The council continues to deal with fly tipping across the borough, with thousands of kilograms of waste removed weekly. There are some sites where the problem of fly-tipping is particularly acute and we have been rolling out different approaches to tackle areas subject to repeat fly-tipping occurrences.

		Can they also confirm if motion sensor cameras will be installed at such hotspots to catch this criminal behaviour and how much the boulders that are no longer in use on the road cost taxpayers given they are no longer in use?	New Coin Street is one such example. Back in March 2023, persistent fly tipping at this location regularly resulted in the closure of this road and costing thousands of pounds to clear. To address the problem in the short to medium term, boulders were placed to prevent access to this unadopted stretch of highway and cameras were installed to catch those responsible for fly tipping and to deter further instances. Mobile CCTV cameras were also installed to gain evidence of those responsible back in 2023, but they were stolen. We can revisit this once again if deemed necessary. The Council has recorded 45 reports of fly-tipping at this location since 2022, and this waste collection and clean up has cost the Council over £11k to remove and dispose. The installation of boulders cost an additional £450 and was seen as another preventative measure at the time but were removed after legitimate complaints from motorists. The boulders have been reused on other sites.
Cllr Luke Lancaster	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Question to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods re. rewarding volunteers from the local VCFSE sector.	Each year Volunteer's Week is held in early June, it is a time to celebrate and thank volunteers. Our VCFSE infrastructure organisation Action Together work with the sector to celebrate the amazing contributions of volunteers across our communities. They shine a light on the power of volunteering, showcase local volunteers and their impact, and thank those who give their time to make a difference. (Volunteer stories can be found here: Volunteers' Week Action Together) Alongside volunteering week, Action Together launched the Volunteer Celebration Fund. The grants give VCFSE groups the opportunity to say thank you to their volunteers, recognising the importance of their contribution & commitment. The fund may also be an opportunity for groups to focus on recruitment of new volunteers & in particular to consider how they might look to diversify their team of volunteers by engaging with under-represented communities. There is a fund of £20,000 and groups can bid for up to £500 grants, with 33 groups awarded grants so far this year.

			(There are case studies from last year's fund here: Volunteer Celebration Fund Case Studies 2024-25 Action Together) Throughout the year Action Together provide support to volunteer managers across the sector through the volunteering hub. This includes a wide range of training and resources for organisations to support them in implementing good practice in managing volunteers, which includes keeping volunteers engaged and inspired, treating them fairly and rewarding appropriately. (More information about this here: Volunteer Manager Zone Action Together) They also provide training for volunteers to prepare them for taking on volunteering roles. During 24-25 1,139 new volunteers registered with the volunteer hub, 750 applied to new roles, and 1,752 people were engaged through volunteering events. According to the last State of the Sector review (2021) there are 45,720 volunteers in Oldham (including committee and board members) giving 166,910 voluntary hours each week estimated to be worth £82m per annum.
Cllr Luke Lancaster	Cllr Abdul Jabbar Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability	Question to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability re. Council procurement practices.	

Cllr L Quigg	Cllr Mohon Ali Cabinet Member for Education & Skills	Q: Can the Cabinet member responsible advise What is being done to address the increasing language barriers pupils face in schools given that a number of schools in Oldham no longer have English as their first language. One school in Oldham was found to have 97% of pupils where English is no longer the first language for the majority of pupils. Can the Cabinet member also confirm: If the Council produces material and any translation costs in non-English languages and how much that has cost over the last three financial years? If it will be discontinuing such services given the cost to the taxpayer and the need for residents to be able to communicate with local service providers in English.	School censuses from 2023, 2024 and 2025 show that the proportion of pupils for whom English is an Additional Language is broadly static at 68.5%, 68.1% and 68% respectively. So, the data does not indicate that there are increasing language barriers faced by school pupils. English as an Additional Language refers to learners whose first language is not English. These pupils often speak another language at home and may require support to develop proficiency in English, often alongside their first language. This support is provided in school. 21 of 107 schools have the proportion of pupils with English as an Additional Language over 50%, i.e. a majority. School level data on English as an Additional Language ranges from 0% to 98.5%. The Council's Communications Team doesn't produce materials in non-English languages.
Cllr L Quigg	Cllr Mohon Ali Cabinet Member for Education & Skills	Q: Can the Cabinet member responsible advise on an update on the Eton Star Academy given the announcement by the Education Secretary to pause the free school programme?	As members know a proposal by STAR academies and Eton College to establish a new sixth form free school, offering 240 places a year in Oldham was approved by the previous government. The Labour Government announced that it would review all those previously approved.

			No timescales have been communicated as to when a decision will be made, we will however keep members informed of any updates as and when we get them.
Cllr Nadeem Iqbal	Cllr E Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	The Greater Manchester Good Landlord Charter will help to raise standards in private rented accommodation. Could the Cabinet Member explain how it will work and what monitoring information will be available to measure how effective it is being in Oldham?	Thank you for your question Councillor Iqbal The Greater Manchester Good Landlord Charter was launched in June earlier this year by the Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and is a voluntary charter designed to raise standards in all rented sectors across Greater Manchester by supporting landlords to aim for higher standards than the minimum they are required to meet by law. The initiative is being administered independently the Combined Authority. Being a supporter of the charter means landlords can demonstrate legal compliance with current regulations and commit to working to meet all of the charter's criteria, including well-managed, safe and decent homes (21 membership criteria grouped into 7 categories). Landlords who become supporters will be listed on the website and I can already confirm that a number of social housing providers operating in Oldham, including FCHO, have already signed up to the charter. As the charter develops, monitoring of members compliance will be reported at a district level.
Cllr Umar Nasheen	Cllr Barbara Brownridge Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing	Toothache is really miserable however old you are – it good to see the new strategy for oral health outlined in this report, building on funding from the Labour Government. How will we know if this has made a difference and improved oral health?	We have developed a new strategy in Oldham to address poor oral health across all ages. The initiatives being implemented are evidence-based and draw on national recommendations and guidelines, as well as good practice from other areas. This includes a focus on children with a supervised toothbrushing scheme and the provision of free toothpaste and toothbrushes. We are also providing support for older people, particularly those in care homes, who can experience very poor health from dental decay. We are providing support that rigorous national or international research has previously found to be effective in improving oral health, when implemented to a high standard.

			A monitoring and evaluation framework is currently being developed to track changes in key oral health outcomes over time. This will draw on a range of data sources including nationally collected surveys, routinely collected healthcare data, and information from commissioned providers. For example, we will measure how many children, adults and families access our support including toothbrushes and toothpastes. The main outcome we want to see is an improvement in oral health for our residents, in particular a reduction in dental decay. We will measure this through the public health dental surveys that we take part in that show the prevalence of decay, and in information about service access for poor oral health such as hospital admissions.
Cllr Holly Harrison	Cllr Mohon Ali Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	The rollout of Universal Free School Meals and the National Breakfast Club is clearly a welcome step in tackling child hunger and supporting families. However, with only seven schools currently offering free breakfasts in Oldham, how do you plan to ensure this initiative reaches all eligible children across the borough—particularly in areas of highest deprivation—and what early evidence is there that it's having the desired impact on attendance and attainment?	That's a really important challenge, and one we've been focused on from the very start. The MegaHub isn't just about introducing young people to the world of tech—it's about breaking down the systemic barriers that have historically kept too many of our residents, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, locked out of these high-growth industries. By being the first borough in Greater Manchester to invest in this programme, we've been clear: Oldham's young people shouldn't have to leave the borough to access world-class opportunities. That's why we've partnered with industry leaders like IBM, Microsoft, and QinetiQ—not just for prestige, but to give our students direct routes into real careers. These aren't theoretical opportunities—they're tangible pipelines into apprenticeships, training, and jobs. We're embedding this work into our schools and colleges, and making sure the CyberFirst and MegaHub programmes are accessible, not just to the academically gifted, but to all young people with potential. That includes those who may not see themselves in tech—yet. We're working with community groups, parents, and educators to shift that narrative and raise aspirations. And we're thinking long-term. This isn't a one-off project; it's a strategic investment in Oldham's economic future. We want our borough to be known as a centre of innovation, where local talent thrives and stays.

			It's about giving young people the skills, the confidence, and the networks to succeed—not in 10 years, but right now.
Cllr Nadeem Iqbal	Cllr Peter Dean Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure	The free gym and swim offer for 14–16-year-olds is fantastic; is there an intention to continue or expand this beyond summer, particularly during other school holidays?	Thank you for your question Councillor The free gym and swim pass for 14-16 year olds rolls out again this summer for those eligible to attend HAF provision. This offer has been available for over a year and will continue for the foreseeable future. The passes also include access to fitness classes at any Oldham Active site. The passes are active for 2 months and are renewed when activated, meaning that access to the gym, swim and classes are funded for the whole year.
Cllr Holly Harrison	Cllr Fida Hussain Cabinet Member for Enterprise	The fall in unemployment is very welcome. Can the Cabinet Member explain more about the work done by the Restart Programme and Vanguard? Who takes part and what do the programmes offer?	Thank you Cllr Harrison for your question. The fall in unemployment has seen 420 fewer universal credit claimants since March – which is welcome news. Programmes like Restart and Vanguard have helped in supporting residents back into work. The Restart Programme supports residents who've been out of work for 9+ months, offering personalised help with job searching, CVs, interviews, and wellbeing. Participants have contact at least every two weeks, often weekly, with workshops and tailored support. The aim is for 36% of participants to earn over £5,000, verified through HMRC. The Vanguard Programme focuses on residents in work but struggling. It offers 1:1 coaching, access to 26 weeks of therapy, gym passes, and strong links with Oldham's social prescribing. The goal is to help people stay in work, improve wellbeing, and progress their careers. Both programmes are about more than just finding a job—they're about helping people build skills, overcome obstacles, and move towards a better

			future at their own pace. And we're seeing real success stories across Oldham as a result.
Cllr Nadeem Iqbal	Cllr Chris Goodwin Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	Given the significant number of streets visited and inspections conducted, are there opportunities to share that proactive inspection data with residents to demonstrate improvements?	Thank you for your question Councillor Throughout the year, the Highways service proactively inspects the over 800km of adopted highways according to a planned, risk assessed and prioritised regime – this aligns directly with national standards. This results in all adopted roads / streets being visited as a matter of course, with inspection regimes of monthly, 3 monthly and annually, depending on the assessed category of the road. For example, in the last financial year over 3,750KM of network was inspected by the Council's inspection team equating to 8,588 streets visited. This extensive regime of planned inspections, when combined with ad hoc inspections because of member / public enquiries directly results in constant and ongoing repairs to the highway to ensure the continued safety of our communities. The data from these inspections, together with annual condition inspections, speed and traffic volume surveys, inform the capital programme process, leading to targeted use of resources to improve the highway condition, and introduce effective safety engineering schemes. We will review your request to provide better visibility of this data as part of the ongoing review of performance reporting.
Cllr Colin McLaren	Cllr Elaine Taylor Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for	Given the reach of Operation Vulcan beyond Derker, are similar targeted enforcement and community rebuild strategies being considered for other high-need areas?	Thank you for your question Councillor Operation Vulcan in Derker includes significant additional resources provided by GMP on a temporary basis. Whilst predominantly focussed in Derker, it does extend into other high-need areas where there is linked criminality and this work is in parallel to existing neighbourhood policing and partnership problem-solving, which includes consideration of the environment, community capacity building and confidence.

	Neighbourhoods		We are keen to work with GMP with regards to the lessons learned from this important joint initiative to help replicate / resolve concerns in other areas across the borough.
Cllr Josh Charters	Cllr Abdul Jabbar Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability	Given the continued pressures in Social Care and Temporary Accommodation, how is the Council planning to strengthen financial resilience in those areas for 2025/26?	Thank you for your question Cllr Charters Our aim is to reduce financial pressures in these areas by both improving how we work and working in a more preventative way, in order to reduce demand. In terms of Temporary Accommodation (TA), for example, we have worked to reduce the number of households in TA by almost a quarter since numbers peaked, and will continue to build on this work to ensure as many families as possible are able to stay in their current homes, or find an alternative as quickly as possible. At the same time, we are working with housing partners to identify ways to reduce cost by using different models of procuring TA (for example by leasing housing), and also to improve supply of move-on accommodation to get people out of TA more quickly. The Council is working proactively to address the rising demand across Social Care services. For example, we are building internal capacity in Children's Services to avoid using costly external placements outside of the borough. We are working with partners on the enablement offer to residents in Adult Social Care and looking at using new technology and building capacity in Borough as part of the Transformation agenda. As approved at Budget Council in March 2025, the demand growth in these areas was £18m and the Council will continue to robustly monitor and review the delivery of approved savings in these areas. Updates will be included in the Budget Monitoring reported to Cabinet.
Cllr Junaid Hussain	Cllr Abdul Jabbar	With increased demand on Council Tax Reduction assessments, how is the service	Thank you for your question, we have seen a rise in the number of changes in circumstances for Council Tax reduction claims, mainly due to the Department for Works and Pensions updating Universal Credit claims. Every time there's a

Deputy
Leader &
Cabinet
Member for
Finance,
Corporate
Services and
Sustainability

ensuring timely processing for
vulnerable residents?

change in someone's Universal Credit, it can lead to a change in their Council Tax Reduction and that's added to the overall workload.

Even with this extra demand, we continue to take steps to support those who need it most:

- We prioritise claims from vulnerable residents, especially when we've been told by support services or where someone is clearly struggling.
- We've improved the way we work, using automation where possible.
- We continue to support residents directly, especially those who might need help applying or are at risk if their claim is delayed.

We're committed to helping residents get the support they're entitled to, and we are monitoring the caseload closely to assess whether additional staffing resources may be required.

Cllr Naz Islam	Cllr Abdul Jabbar Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability	What steps is the Council taking to support local and smaller suppliers to access Council contracts under the procurement framework?	Thank you for your question. In addition to ensuring the Council is driving internal compliance with the Procurement Act 23 which seeks to promote transparency and opportunity for smaller businesses, the Head of CPU is currently working directly on a project with The Oldham Trading Platform (OTP) and the Growth Hub (GH). OTP reached out to Oldham Commercial Procurement Unit (CPU) to request that we used the OTP to access local businesses for our tender opportunities. OTP is in its infancy with not enough suppliers registered for the Councils needs and so the Head of CPU suggested forming a collaboration with OTP and GH to come together and provide a wider offering of: a) where suppliers can seek general guidance on how to approach public procurement (GH supported by Oldham Council delivering presentations on public procurement) b) where to provide details of the supplier and the services they offer by registering and being taken through formal due diligence (OTP) c) Oldham Council then having access to a live database of local suppliers for appropriate opportunities (Oldham Council) d) Promote the offering of the collaboration (All) A structured approach to this roll out is being taken to ensure it gains the right traction and is fully prepared to support local suppliers. In the meantime, there is at least one procurement being run by Oldham's CPU which is trialling the OTP which can be used as a future example of how the OTP can be used.
Cllr Abdul Malik	Cllr Shaïd Mushtaq	Can the Cabinet Member confirm how residents can find out about and join in with HAF activities this summer? What kind of activities	Thank you for your question Cllr Malik

	Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	will be on offer and who will be eligible?	I can confirm that the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is running again this summer, and it's a fantastic way for children and young people to stay active, healthy, and connected during the school holidays. The programme is free for families eligible for benefits-related free school meals, and there's a wide range of activities on offer—everything from sports, drama, and dance to outdoor adventures, arts, crafts, and cooking. A healthy meal is provided each day too. Families can find out more and book places online through the Council's website or by searching "Oldham HAF". Information is also being shared through schools, children's centres, and community partners, so keep an eye out locally. Places are going quickly, so we're encouraging eligible families to get involved and make the most of what's on offer this summer.
Cllr Josh Charters	Cllr Shaid Mushtaq Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	The Castleshaw Air bnb looks to be a brilliant scheme that allows the council to make money from one of its best assets - how are we ensuring that Castleshaw remains primarily a facility for young people in the borough?	Thank you for your question. The focus of the work done at Castleshaw will absolutely remain young people focused with the majority of the adventurous activity continuing to be led by the team. Over 8,000 young people use the centre each year for all types of activity including walking, hill scrambling, climbing, camping, kayaking and more recently paddleboarding to name a few activities. The centre is also available for team building and as you mention when there is down time is taking bookings for Air bnb stays.
Cllr Ken Rustidge	Cllr Shaid Mushtaq Cabinet Member for Children &	The report says 597 children are in the care of the local authority – how many of these children are in in house foster care? And can the Cabinet Member explain what a Mockingbird Hub is and how it can help to support Oldham's Foster Carers?	<i>54% of children looked after are placed within internal foster care. This is a number that is comparatively higher than our statistical neighbours.</i> <i>Mockingbird is a well-established evidence-based initiative designed to support foster carers providing advice and respite from an experienced 'hub' carer who links with up to eight other foster carer placements. The initiative is designed to support foster carers and provides an extra layer of support to prevent placement breakdowns.</i>

	Young People		<i>Oldham is progressing well with their Mockingbird project, with two 'hub' carers established and supporting foster families, with a third recently recruited.</i>
Cllr Pete Davis	Cllr Barbara Brownridge Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing	It's excellent that Oldham does not have a waiting list for care at home services - how will the Council maintain or improve that record during the transition to the new commissioning framework?	<i>We are proud that Oldham currently has no waiting list for care at home services. This achievement reflects the strength of the commissioning model introduced in 2019, the dedication of our Adult Social Care teams, and the commitment of our local care providers.</i> <i>It's important that we do need to re-tender the services, not only as the contract is due to expire in March 2026, but also as it provides an excellent opportunity for us to approach the local market. As we move into the new commissioning framework, we will be retaining the same core model, because it works. It has proven effective in supporting timely, high-quality care, and we are determined to maintain this success.</i> <i>The new framework will build on this strong foundation, with improvements that include:</i> <i>• Sustaining close partnerships with providers, ensuring continuity of care during the transition.</i> <i>• Retaining our commitment to the Real Living Wage, and having this as a contractual requirement, which supports recruitment and retention by valuing care workers fairly.</i> <i>• Maintaining flexibility in our commissioning model, allowing us to respond quickly to changing needs and demands.</i> <i>• Strengthening monitoring and oversight, so we can intervene early if pressures emerge (for example, hospital discharges).</i> <i>• Ensuring social value and benefit to Oldham is realised in communities across the borough, maximising positive social, economical, and environmental impacts on residents and the local area.</i> <i>• Continuing to develop care at home services alongside health commissioners, that are able to meet complex needs.</i>

			Continue to work with health partners to develop and expand the 'blended role' service offer in the borough. <i>Through this approach, we are confident that Oldham will continue to deliver responsive, person-centred care at home, with no to little waiting list and a strong, supported care workforce.</i>
Cllr Abdul Malik	Cllr Mohon Ali Cabinet Member for Education & Skills	I know there is a big demand for SEND places and support across the borough so its good to read about the SEND Capital Investment & Programme Expansion. Can the Cabinet Member tell us more about what kind of support this will deliver and when we can expect the places to be available?	Thank you for that question—you're absolutely right that demand for SEND places and support continues to grow, and that's why this investment is so vital. We're delivering over 250 new specialist school places across Oldham through a mix of major and smaller capital schemes. The three largest projects—at Woodlands Primary, North Chadderton, and Werneth Primary—will together create 55 new places, with work already underway and expected to complete in phases from early 2026. These schools are being expanded or adapted to support children with a range of additional needs, including Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), speech and language difficulties, and moderate learning difficulties. In addition, we've approved smaller schemes at Lyndhurst, St Thomas CE, and Coppice Primary, which will deliver targeted places and resource provision more quickly, with some becoming available within the next academic year. But we know that capital investment alone isn't enough. That's why we've also secured an additional year of DfE grant funding to strengthen early intervention, particularly through the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme. This is now running in 10 of our local primary schools, helping to improve speech and language outcomes early on—before more intensive support is needed later. We're taking a whole-system approach: investing in specialist places, improving access to early support, and making sure families feel listened to. It's about building capacity now and into the future, and I'll continue to push for more resources to meet the growing demand in our borough.
Cllr Saj Hussain	Cllr Fida Hussain	The feedback from people who have used Get Oldham Working is powerful and shows the impact	We're incredibly proud of the feedback we receive from individuals who've been supported by Get Oldham Working (GOW), especially those who've

	Cabinet Member for Enterprise	that the council has on people's lives when dealing with difficult circumstances. Is there any way we can get feedback from employers to see how Get Oldham Working has supported them too?	overcome significant personal challenges to move into training or employment. But you're right—employers are a vital part of that success story, and their feedback is just as important, and alongside the positive feedback from residents, we've also had strong feedback from local employers about the impact of Get Oldham Working. We provide free recruitment support, host sector-based training academies, and run bespoke jobs fairs to help employers find job-ready candidates. One care home manager told us, <i>"We hired 10 people in a month thanks to GOW."</i> We supported Cygnnet Kenney House to fill over 135 roles and continue to help employers with staff retention, wellbeing, and wraparound support like therapy and coaching. We're also working with schools, the NHS, and exploring 700 new jobs through Iceland's relocation. Our approach was praised during our recent Matrix reaccreditation, where the assessor highlighted the strength of our employer partnerships. We also welcome any suggestions or ideas on how we can further enhance our feedback processes — including gathering more insights from employers to continue improving our offer.
Cllr Naseem Aslam	Cllr Chris Goodwin Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	The new EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy is a welcome development, but how will you ensure equitable access across wards, particularly in areas without off-street parking?	Thank you for your question and positive response to the EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy Cllr Aslam. The council is acutely aware of the challenges that we face in parts of Oldham regarding pavement parking, limited off-street parking and EV charging facilities. We are working with GMCA colleagues and other district areas who are facing similar issues to help find solutions and work this through.

			We are also awaiting an announcement later this week from the Department of Transport which may assist us with new solutions to these concerns, as the announcement is expected to include £25 million funding support to allow cross-pavement charging solutions. This is a huge development in the nationally agreed highway standards and will allow residents without driveways to safely run cables beneath pavements for home charging access. There's also the promise of modernised EV signage on major roads, grants for depot charging, and support for NHS fleet electrification, all as part of a broader £63 million investment to accelerate EV infrastructure nationwide.
Cllr Junaid Hussain	Cllr Mohon Ali Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	The MegaHub is clearly a bold and exciting investment, placing Oldham at the forefront of digital skills development. But with tech opportunities often concentrated in urban centres like Manchester or London, how will you ensure that this programme translates into real, long-term career pathways for Oldham's young people—especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds who may face additional barriers to entering the tech sector?	Thank you for that important question. You're absolutely right—while the early rollout of the National Breakfast Club to seven schools in Oldham is a really positive step, it's only the beginning. These initial schools were chosen strategically to test delivery models and measure impact, and what we're already seeing is very encouraging. Schools are reporting improved punctuality, calmer starts to the day, and better engagement in morning lessons. For some families, the savings of up to £450 a year are also making a real difference in the cost-of-living crisis. But we're not stopping there. Our ambition is to scale this across the borough, prioritising areas with the highest levels of deprivation and where the need is greatest. We're already working with headteachers, governors, and our partners in Public Health to identify next-phase schools and ensure we have the infrastructure in place to support them. In terms of Universal Free School Meals for families on Universal Credit from 2026, we're preparing now to ensure a smooth rollout—working closely with schools, catering providers, and community partners to make sure no child misses out. This is about more than food—it's about dignity, equality, and giving every child the best possible start. Oldham is proud to be at the forefront of this national initiative, and we'll keep pushing to ensure no child in our borough starts the day hungry.

Cllr L Hamblett	Cllr Barbara Brownridge - Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Recently the Labour government unveiled its plans to cut personal independence payments and carers allowance, a prospect which put many Crompton residents and those across borough in a terrifying position. Can the Cabinet Member point to where in the Labour Party manifesto these cuts to PIP were promised?	No obviously I can't as he well knows. Governments of all parties inevitably do things that weren't in their manifestos. However, this is a bit like me turning around to him and asking where the bedroom tax was in the Lib Dem manifesto in 2010? Or where the line on increasing tuition fees to £9000 a year was in his party's manifesto? What about the 2012 NHS reorganisation that's caused no end of problems for patients and staff alike? Or what about Vince Cable selling off Royal Mail, where was that in the manifesto? Or perhaps the brutal austerity his party helped inflict on his residents in Crompton between 2010 and 2015? It would be ridiculous to expect him to answer those questions, and I'm disappointed he chose to waste everybody's time here with this instead of actually asking a question about the services I'm responsible for delivering here in Oldham for some of our Borough's most vulnerable adults and older people. On the issue itself, we all know the welfare system is in need of reform and that those who are able to work should work. However, the government itself has said it listened to the feedback so that it gets any reforms right and that those who are in need of support will continue to receive it. We
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			should all welcome the Timms review which will examine this complex area with compassion and genuine engagement with relevant groups.
Cllr A Marland	Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth	Could the cabinet member please give an update on the work being done to progress getting Diggle clock tower and loom works back into use? Local councillors had an update some time ago, but we have not heard anything recently. This community asset had funding ring fenced to eventually bring this back into future use as part of the Saddleworth School moving to the Diggle site. Can you confirm that all this funding is still available for the eventual future use of this listed building?	Thanks for your question Cllr Marland. Can I just start by saying that I absolutely love this building, and I'm also constantly asking for updates on where we're up to during portfolio meetings because I think it deserves a proper use. What I can say is that a programme of works has been undertaken to stabilise the fabric of the building. Refurbishment proposals are still under consideration and engagement with the school is on-going as to any future potential use of building. Obviously given the close proximity to the Saddleworth School there are safeguarding issues that need to be taken into account with regard to future uses.
Cllr Harkness	Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills	As a leader of a Resourced Provision, I welcome the introduction of a Resourced Provision, SEND unit and alternative provision. The cost to this project appears to exceed what I have experienced with similar schemes in Manchester. Can you provide a breakdown of costs? Is the plan to build new extensions rather than regeneration of the existing buildings? What will be the criteria for these provisions? Will students require an EHCP and will places be available for young	Thank you for your question and for your ongoing support for the development of Resourced Provision in Oldham. These new developments are an important part of our strategy to expand inclusive education and improve outcomes for children and young people with additional needs. We have an extensive capital programme of which the three projects you have enquired about form part. 1. Breakdown of Costs The costs for the development of these provisions vary by site, reflecting differences in building condition, required adaptations, and scale of provision. We will provide you with a more detailed site-specific breakdown in writing for all three projects agreed at Cabinet on 9 June. 2. New Extensions vs Regeneration

		people across the borough or is it for the local catchment area of the individual schools?	Across the wider programme we are seeking to adapt and reconfigure existing school buildings. However, in several cases, extensions or modular builds are necessary due to: • Lack of suitable space within the existing footprint • Accessibility and safeguarding considerations • The need for purpose-built sensory or therapeutic spaces We are balancing cost-efficiency with delivering long-term, inclusive and high-quality learning environments. 3. Admission Criteria and EHCP Requirement • Children placed in these provisions will require an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and placements will be made via the local authority's SEND panel. 4. Access and Catchment Places in all provisions will be centrally commissioned and allocated via Oldham's SEND placement process. They are borough-wide provisions, not restricted to local school catchment areas. This ensures equitable access based on assessed need rather than postcode.
Cllr D Murphy	Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Given the state of our drains, parks and roads and a rising number of missed bin collections – and given the fact that weeds seem to be going untreated, with no suitable maintenance arrangement in place for well over a year now. What does the Cabinet Member propose to do to demonstrate to residents that the council can get a grip of the basics. And will confirm that	Thank you for your question. Given the range of issues you have raised, I am happy to talk through each issue in turn Mr Mayor or I can provide a quick summary and then provide more detail in writing after the meeting ... Quick summary – as the new portfolio lead for this area, I am working with the various services to develop a new performance framework to demonstrate the impact the vast amount of work that takes place in our communities on a daily basis. Demands continue to escalate for many service areas and there are various work programmes in flight to help with reporting and responding to queries raised. The legacy of essential savings in many services has resulted in less staff, but in some areas it has also seen a reduction in agency workers and

following the latest round of cuts we will be left with even fewer Environmental Services staff than we currently have?

innovation to support career development and training opportunities for teams and services.

~ ~ ~ ~ MORE DETAILS ~ ~ ~ ~

Drains – the Council started a new programme last year which will ensure the 48,000 gullies across the borough are inspected and cleaned. This programme is ongoing, and since Sep 2024, approximately 18,000 gullies have been cleaned. As part of this exercise, gullies which need to be repaired are being picked up and fixed to ensure they are operating correctly.

In addition, additional visits take place for gullies known to block frequently, either by soil run off or leaf fall – this is to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for highway safety and surface water management, and especially in locations where property flooding is a risk.

I'll update on Parks next – we all know that Oldham has some of the finest parks in the region and we are rightfully proud of our greenspaces. We continue to maintain all parks to an excellent standard, and this is something for which the Council continues to receive excellent feedback from residents and visitors on a regular basis.

For some time, the Council has recognised the importance of supporting an increase in biodiversity, a key aspect of the climate and nature emergencies by increasing flora and fauna and encouraging an environment that supports organisms such as bees and butterflies.

We remain are committed to ensuring excellent parks and greenspaces across the borough. *A financially prudent way of balancing the Council's responsibilities for maintenance with biodiversity was to withdraw from the previously significant management of private / unregistered open land areas. This is still being reviewed as some communities have raised concerns with this approach.*

With regards to the Council's approach to weed spraying - the council took the decision to insource the weed spraying contract last year after we were let down by a private contractor. Since that time, significant investment has been made in training, materials and equipment to ensure that the weed spraying part of the service was delivered safely and effectively.

At this moment in time, the whole borough has been subjected to one programme of weed spraying. Typically, the materials used take approximately 4 weeks to kill the weeds and to date, results have been positive, with weeds dying as expected. Due to the limited spraying in 2024, some weeds have become resistant to the herbicide being used. Where this happens, we are using specialist herbicides and undertaking additional spraying.

There are occasions where parked vehicles or other access issues mean that operatives are unable to spray the weeds as effectively as we would like. In such circumstances, hand spraying has been done, but in some instances, this has had limited effect due to parked cars.

Another weed spray of the borough is planned and will commence in mid-August and will cover the whole borough once again. We are hopeful that any areas missed in the first round, will be completed as part of the second programme.

You also mentioned highway maintenance within your question -

Throughout the year, the Highways service proactively inspects the over 800km of adopted highways according to a planned, risk assessed and prioritised regime in accordance with national standards. In addition, Officers also inspect roads and footpaths in response to resident and Cllr concerns. Where repairs are needed, these are undertaken in line with national guidance and to agreed engineering standards.

In addition, the Council continues to delivery the capital delivery scheme – all schemes marked for delivery in 2024/25 were completed. The

			programme for the 25/26 year is being finalised, and once approved, will be delivered before the end of March 22026. Finally - Missed Bins – The Council's waste teams collect up to 200,000 bins each week. On occasion, due to operational reasons such as vehicle breakdowns, access issues due to parked cars or sometimes the increased quantity of waste which fills the wagons ahead of schedule, some rounds are not completed. Where this happens, residents and members are updated, and the Service collects the outstanding bins as quickly as possible. At the same time, the Service supports approximately 2,000 residents with assisted collections, ensuring a high level of service for those who need extra help. The need for additional bin rounds, vehicles and staffing resource is constantly reviewed – as we continue to support development of more properties, there will be a need for additional round resources, and this will be introduced as necessary.
Cllr L Hamblett	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet member for Transport & Highways	IX Wireless is currently under investigation by Ofcom. Rochdale Council have had poles installed by them removed, as have Bolton. While the Internet Service Providers Association has set out guidance for companies to follow when installing, IX Wireless are not a member. There have been health and safety issues with IX Wireless work in Oldham, and the company have refused to respond to concerns from residents and councillors. When	Thank you for your question. For some time now, the Council has fully recognised both resident and member concerns regarding IX wireless operations. From a Planning perspective, IX Wireless have generally followed proper process and applied for Prior Approval for their Masts before installing them. I understand this has not always been the case in Bolton and Rochdale, which led to some IX Wireless Masts being removed. However, the vast majority of IX Wireless infrastructure involves telegraph poles, which do not require planning permission, and so, Local Authorities cannot require their removal under Planning legislation. From a Highways Permit perspective, where issues were identified during their operations in Oldham that didn't comply with highway safety, Council

		will Oldham Council do the right thing, and support residents in stopping this company from having apparently free reign to do what they like on our streets?	Officers took prompt and effective action, resulting in the suspension of IX permits and operations until inspectors were satisfied that they were compliant with legal requirements. Operations were only allowed to restart once compliance was achieved. We continue to have meetings with IX on a regular basis, just as we do with other major utilities to encourage collaboration and lessons learnt. During all stages, members and residents were updated. We will continue to monitor the outcome of the Ofcom investigation for implications/learning from an Oldham perspective.
Cllr Sam Al-Hamdani	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet member for transport & Highways	The Government has put forward plans to invest in regional transport infrastructure, but as of yet there is no indication of any solid plans for high-speed infrastructure which connects Liverpool–Manchester section to the Hull–East Yorkshire section. What will Oldham Council be doing to ensure that plans do not reduce the number of trains running to already underserved stations in and around Oldham including Saddleworth?	Thank you for your question. I agree that national plans for high-speed rail have had fluctuating commitments, Oldham Council has been actively working to protect and enhance local transport links through its Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan. Oldham’s Transport Strategy aligns with Greater Manchester’s 2040 vision, aiming for connections that support sustainable growth and equitable access. So, while high-speed links between Liverpool and Hull may remain uncertain, Oldham Council is actively working to ensure that local stations like Greenfield are not left behind and, where possible, are better served in the future.
Cllr H Bishop	Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet member for Children & Young people	Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the latest developments regarding the local inquiry into historic child sexual exploitation in Oldham, which is to be led by Thomas Crowther KC? Additionally, is the Cabinet Member confident that the	The Home Office is currently working at pace to establish the national inquiry as recommended by Baroness Casey in her Audit, published on 16 June. The national inquiry will be established under the Inquiries Act 2005 and will comprise a national commission that will initiate local investigations with statutory powers. We are expecting the Home Office to announce further details of the national inquiry shortly, and will confirm then what that means for the next steps on a local investigation in Oldham.

		powers granted to the Crowther Inquiry are sufficient to fully implement the recommendations of the Casey Report? How is the Council ensuring that these recommendations will be effectively addressed through this process?	
Cllr Mark Kenyon	Cllr F Hussain – Cabinet member for enterprise	The Labour Government's belated U-turn on the Welfare Bill after significant political pressure is very welcome news. Does the Cabinet Member agree that it is regrettable the Government chose to target people on 'in-work' benefits rather than focus on energy giants, social media companies, or water company bosses? What steps is the Council taking to strengthen access to welfare for those who need it most, including pensioners and people living with disabilities?	While national policy decisions are ultimately for Government, here in Oldham we're focused on ensuring residents who need support — including those on low incomes, with disabilities, and older people — get practical help to thrive. Through Get Oldham Working, we provide wraparound support including skills training, therapy, and in-work progression. We're also working closely with Disability Employment Advisors at the Jobcentre, and developing new projects like the Trailblazer programme and MEA, which aims to relaunch subsidised jobs for people with disabilities. Our approach combines employment, health and welfare advice, so people can access the right support at the right time — including pensioners, carers, and those furthest from the labour market. The Council also offers support through the Welfare Rights team to make sure that residents are able to access the benefits that they are entitled to.
Cllr Sam Al-Hamdani	Cllr A Jabbar – Cabinet member for finance, corporate services & sustainability	The Government has said it will address the imbalance in local authorities funding, which currently makes for grim reading for underfunded Councils such as Oldham. However, with the majority of spending going on child and adult social care, is Oldham Council pressing the	The Council welcomes the recent Fair Funding Consultation that is currently open for comment and for which the Council will submit a response by the deadline. Early indications of the consultation are that funding will be redistributed focusing on low taxbase & high needs councils. This will hopefully benefit councils like Oldham, and we would encourage and welcome the change to the formula. As one of the councils that has been significantly underfunded for a significant period of time and has very little ability to generate the required income locally to support the services required by residents, we are continually lobbying all areas of

		Government to address social care funding, rather than kicking the can down the road for at least another two years?	Government to ensure the Council receives funding for not only Children's and Adult Social Care but for all directorates that deliver essential services for its residents. The Council is addressing its financial resilience and has set a budget for 2025/26 without the need to use reserves to support the position and has a policy to commence replenishing reserves over the next few years.
Cllr Dave Arnott	Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	Former Dog and Partridge Pub on Middleton Road Royton	This site was granted planning permission for the development of 14 apartments in 2021 and, whilst development commenced, the developer who owned the property was unable to complete the development. Unfortunately, this meant that the half-built apartments have remained in their current condition for some time. The property was sold to another developer and it is the council's understanding that they now intend to complete the development, including discharging the relevant conditions on the planning permission.
Cllr Christine Adams	Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	· Recent cases of measles in young children.	Measles is very infectious and can spread from person to person quickly. Little can be done to prevent measles spreading if people are unvaccinated. The MMR vaccination is the most effective way to control the spread of measles. We need 95% of the population to be vaccinated or immune to measles to stop the spread of the infection. Nationally, regionally and locally, we do not achieve this. There are outbreaks currently in other parts of the UK, including Liverpool. We had an outbreak recently which mainly involved young children in Oldham. We had seven cases in total. Public Health, UKHSA, NHS GM, and the NCA worked closely to manage the outbreak and stop the spread. We work closely with healthcare workers to ensure that they can recognise measles and respond appropriately. We have a strategic group in Oldham to improve vaccination rates. It is important for everyone of all ages to be fully vaccinated with two doses of MMR to fully protect everyone from measles.

Colour Code Chart	
Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth	#FFC9C9
Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	#FBE4D5
Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability	#DAD8F0
Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	#FFF2CC
Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills	#CEFEFD
Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	#DEEAF6
Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	#E2EFD9
Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise	#FECCEB
Cllr Peter Dean – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure	#D6BAF4

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