

Oldham Borough Council



Council Meeting 10th December 2025 Public Questions & Answers

OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

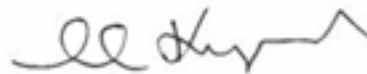
**To: ALL MEMBERS OF OLDHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL, JR CLYNES BUILDING,
CULTURAL QUARTER, GREAVES STREET, OLDHAM, OL1 1AL**

Supplement – Public Questions

Item No

8 Public Questions (Pages 1 - 6)

Public questions submitted with answers.



**Shelley Kipling
Chief Executive**

Public Questions Full Council – 10th December

#	From / Date	To	Question	Proposed Response
1	Hannah Roberts Wed 12/11/2025 13:48	Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability	I welcome the Labour Government's proposals to implement sweeping reforms to strengthen standards and rebuild confidence in local government and share the widespread support expressed in the consultation for a mandatory code of conduct. Local authorities will get powers to suspend councillors and mayors for serious misconduct and to withhold allowances where behaviour falls short. The Coalition Government removed all effective sanctions which has helped to undermine confidence in local councils. Could the Leader comment further and does she have any information about how soon these overdue reforms will be in place?	<p>Thank you for raising this important issue. I agree that strong ethical standards and robust accountability are essential to maintaining public trust in local government. The current proposals to introduce a mandatory code of conduct and restore meaningful sanctions represent a significant and welcome step towards rebuilding that confidence, particularly following the weakening of the standards framework under the previous Coalition Government.</p> <p>The ability for local authorities to suspend councillors for serious misconduct, and to withhold allowances where behaviour falls short of expected standards, will provide much-needed tools to address unacceptable conduct and reinforce the principle that elected representatives must meet the highest standards of behaviour.</p> <p>While the Government has made clear its commitment to these reforms and the consultation response demonstrates strong support, we are still awaiting detailed implementation guidance and a confirmed timetable. However, indications are that the necessary legislation will be brought forward as a priority, and we will ensure that we are prepared to implement the new framework effectively and consistently.</p> <p>We will keep members updated as further information becomes available, and we will engage fully with the process to ensure these long-overdue reforms deliver the strengthened standards and accountability that our communities rightly expect.</p>
2	Matthew Broadbent	Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member	In April, planning permission was refused for a Battery Energy Storage System in Failsworth's Green Belt. In October, the decision was overturned by the Planning	Firstly, Planning sits within my portfolio this is not a matter for the Leader.

	Thu 13/11/2025 06:21	for Neighbourhoods	<p>Inspectorate on the back of the Council not meeting the deadline to submit the necessary paperwork to defend the decision. In addition, the Inspectorate awarded substantial costs against the Council for “unreasonable behaviour”, which Oldham ratepayers will now have to foot the bill for. Does the Leader take responsibility for the Council dropping the ball, and what actions will the Council take to ensure that such negligence never happens again?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Broadbent and for bringing this matter to my attention – Mr Mayor I am still investigating why the relevant paperwork was not submitted in time for the appeal case to the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>Whilst I’m sure delays in submitting the paperwork to the Inspectorate were one factor in the Inspector’s decision to award costs against the council, the reason for the costs awarded have been stated in the appeal decision notice – quote <i>“that the reason for refusal is a vague and generalised assertion about the proposal’s impact, unsupported by any objective analysis”</i>.</p> <p>Mr Mayor – I need to continue with investigations into this particular case, and I will reply with more detail to Mr Broadbent outside this meeting. However, as a reminder for planning committee members, you need to ensure that at the time of your decision, the reasons for refusal are planning considerations and that they are reasonable and fully explained and justified.</p>
3	Karen Moore Thu 13/11/2025 09:30	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	<p>I reported sinking pavement on 9/10/25 on Livingstone Street, Springhead.</p> <p>Council please explain the Council’s response that the street was unadopted and repairs were the responsibility of the houses fronting the street.</p> <p>The information links provided in the Council’s email clearly indicated the street to be firstly, maintained at public expense by Oldham and secondly, adopted; as listed in Oldham Council Street Index.</p> <p>Given these facts could the Council please advise therefore, when the maintenance will begin to repair the pavement to stop the sinking, before an accident happens to the</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>This area was inspected as a matter of planned routine just two weeks prior to the particular query was received, with no defects evident on Livingstone Street in this vicinity – the resident is correct that Livingstone Street is adopted, and therefore maintainable at the public expense, and will continue to be inspected.</p> <p>However, the flagged area in the grass verge where the movement may have occurred is not adopted as highway, or within Council ownership – so the matter would be for the private landowner to resolve.</p> <p>The part of the flagged area that is within the Council’s responsibility has no defects currently that require any action. As stated above, the area will be subject to regular inspections and</p>

			general public or the adjacent properties are damaged?	should defects exist that require maintenance, then this will be programmed and completed.
4	Stephen Ingham Thu 13/11/2025 13:21 Thu 13/11/2025 16:27 - resubmitted	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	<p>Parking is an ongoing problem in Oldham especially outside schools at dropping off and, more particularly, picking up time. The council has had time to assess the effectiveness of the School Street scheme and it is time to roll it out on a wider scale. I realise it will take time but the residents around Leesbrook Academy need help now. There are times when it is chaos, people late for appointments, late getting children to nursery and primary school because of the gridlock around the school.</p> <p>What can the council and the police do to sort matters out?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>We are extremely proud of Oldham's award-winning School Streets programme, which has already reduced traffic and improved safety outside several schools. In line with the TfGM Active Transport Commissioner's vision, we are committed to expanding the programme further across Oldham. While we must balance time and resources to ensure the right schemes are delivered in the right places, we want residents to know that Leesbrook Academy is a priority. We are working closely with all stakeholders, and community partners to deliver a solution that eases congestion, supports safer journeys, and strengthens our community. We are currently working through the details and will share these in due course.</p>
5	Amy Wrigley Fri 14/11/2025 00:23	Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise	<p>Oldham has been highlighted as having a large proportion of women who are unemployed. Based on the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics website, it gives us a figure that's more than double the national average for female unemployment.</p> <p>What is Oldham Council doing to support and encourage women specifically into employment aside from Jobcentre initiatives?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The latest Office for National Statistics data reports that 6% of women are claiming universal credit vs 7.7% of men. However, when reviewing economic inactivity there is a significant difference whereby 73.9% men are economically active compared to 66.1% of women.</p> <p>The Government's Get Britain Working White Paper sets out a commitment to reduce unemployment and tackle economic inactivity, for which the latter has been largely ignored over the last 14 years.</p> <p>The Council, through the Get Oldham Working service delivers a person-centred and responsive service to residents with services redeveloped in recent years to reduce barriers to work —</p>

				<p>including confidence, health, digital skills, caring responsibilities and progression access. Support offers include flexible appointments, confidence-building employability activity, digital readiness support, health-linked employment pathways. This has led to an increased take up of support by women which includes 63% of Vanguard clients being women (Restart -57.6%; Support to Succeed 56.5%, National Careers Service 53.6%)</p> <p>The Council in partnership with Action Together and OCL have recently launched the Trailblazer programme which is targeting economically inactive residents, and this will therefore target a range of people including women.</p>
6	<p>Jane Macdonald</p> <p>Sat 15/11/2025 17:56</p> <p>Resubmitted Mon 17/11/2025 13:53</p>	<p>Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways</p>	<p>Can the council please explain what they are doing about flooding issues in Well-I-hole Road Greenfield. The road floods each time there is heavy rainfall. The situation has got worse since the installation of traffic lights at the junction by the Royal George.</p> <p>A culvert by bungalows on the Manchester Road is blocked. This overflows and the drains on the Manchester Road are inadequate to cope with the volume of water. The water pours over the dropped curb at the lights, down Well-I-hole Road and into the yard of Well-I-hole Farm and the driveway of West View.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The Council understands resident concerns regarding surface water and standing water at locations across the borough.</p> <p>The Council is carrying out a proactive exercise to clean and clear all 47,500 gullies across the borough. Teams are over halfway through this process across the 20 wards and in addition, where there were initial obstructions such as parked cars or the gullies were solidly blocked, we are carrying out a parallel additional visit to try to clear those issues too.</p> <p>However, it is often the case that the issue with the drainage capacity of gullies can be due to restrictions or blockages in third party drainage infrastructure, for example United Utilities pipework, and that can be problematic and time-consuming to resolve.</p> <p>With respect to the specific locations mentioned, the matter is being investigated. We are committed to identifying the cause and location, and once established, if necessary, to working with the landowner to address the issues which are leading to the problems identified.</p>

7	Shona Farnworth Mon 17/11/2025 21:03	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	Please can I ask why the tram station lifts are out of order at Free hold tram station as this vital for people like myself who is in a wheelchair require accessibility by using the lift. Please can you confirm when this will be operating along side all the lifts to trams in greater Manchester this makes it unfair for wheelchair users?	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>This is a matter for TfGM as they manage the Metrolink locations. The lift at Freehold tram stop has been reported as out of service since mid-November 2025.</p> <p>TfGM has acknowledged the issue and confirmed that step-free access is still possible via the Manchester-bound platform and track crossing, but this workaround is far from ideal for wheelchair users.</p> <p>No firm repair completion date has been published yet. Officers will once again speak to TfGM regarding this and get this resolved.</p>
8	Tom Penketh Tue 18/11/2025 14:04 Resubmitted Tue 18/11/2025 14:46	Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways	<p>I regularly walk around Oldham town centre whilst commuting to meetings and events, on the dark mornings and afternoons I choose to stay in well lit areas for personal safety and peace of mind like many others do.</p> <p>However there's several areas in the town centre including outside your Old Library building on union street that have no street lighting whatsoever. It's in these areas that I and others feel particularly vulnerable.</p> <p>All pedestrians should feel safe in our town so my question is how much longer before this Council gets the basics right and switches on the lights.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>We understand and share resident concerns regarding streetlights that are not working in the vicinity of tram locations.</p> <p>The responsibility for the repair and maintenance for all lighting columns on Metrolink sites sits with TFGM. The council repairs and maintains all lighting columns on Council land.</p> <p>This is a longstanding issue and has been raised with TFGM by the Councils streetlighting team on a number of occasions. Given the lack of action by TFGM, this issue has now been further escalated and we will provide an update in due course.</p>
9	Lynne Thompson	Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for	I am delighted to see that 'Don't Trash Oldham' is to be relaunched, though in truth I missed the announcement that it had been discontinued.	Thank you for your question and your support for the principles behind 'Don't Trash Oldham.' I want to reassure you that this relaunch represents a refinement of our strategy rather than a diversion of resources

	Wed 26/11/2025 14:45	Neighbourhoods	<p>What local people want day-to-day from council services is to get the basics right. That means keeping rubbish, weeds and potholes under control</p> <p>But as money is scarce, I must ask: where are the resources coming from? Are our parks teams, for example, downing their weed sprayers to pick up this job?</p>	<p>We can confirm that resources are not being diverted from our parks teams or other services. The 'Don't Trash Oldham' campaign is being delivered by our existing street cleansing staff. We have integrated these targeted clean-ups into their standard working patterns. This means the team is delivering the campaign's goals while performing their daily duties, ensuring a coordinated and efficient approach to keeping the borough clean.</p>
10	Abid Sardar Wed 03/12/2025 19:46	Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	<p>I have lived at 282 Frederick Street, Coppice for 23 years. We have seen the area deteriorate. We are seeing an increasing amount of rubbish being discarded in the area, particularly the rear alleyway. I have seen recent social media posts from local councillors arranging for alleyways to be cleaned. I have contacted my local councillors requesting a similar service, with limited responses. Can you please advise what criteria is being used to allocate these public resources to clean alleyways. Historically we had litter pickers go through the area weekly, can you please advise why this has stopped.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The Council continues to clear litter and remove fly tipping across the borough. Where an individual is identified, fines and penalties are issues.</p> <p>We are also working with residents and community groups to support litter picks and waste clearance in local areas. Our litter pickers continue routine litter picking across the borough.</p> <p>It is also correct that we are currently facing higher volumes of fly tipping borough-wide. Because of this increased demand, we have moved to a reactive system based on incoming reports. While we cannot guarantee weekly attendance, we are committed to addressing reports on Council-owned land within a timely response period.</p> <p>Waste on council owned land will be removed and we request that residents continue to report all instances of fly tipping and this will be scheduled for action/removal.</p>