

Financial Support Services Review

Governance, strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Wednesday 30 July 2025

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In scope Services

- Welfare Rights
- Support and Inclusion Team (SIT)
- Warm Homes
- Local Welfare Provision
- Citizens Advice Oldham
- Helpline
- Credit Union

Problem Statement

- Multiple front doors creating confusion for residents, staff, partners and elected members.
- Lack of clarity, transparency and understanding of the financial support model and practice – lack of purposeful pathways means lack of consistency and varying outcomes (potentially presenting risk).
- Providing multiple support options e.g. Warm Homes, CAO, SIT and Welfare Rights to the same resident – ineffective use of resources.
- Duplication of activity at a cost to the council e.g. SIT and CAO both providing income and expenditure and budgeting support.
- Fragmented structures across multiple teams not working with clear focus and purpose – lack of joined up model.
- Lack of clarity around the benefits delivered by the SIT and its core purpose.
- Welfare Rights Team struggling to manage demand due to picking up non-core activity that should be managed elsewhere.
- Have become largely crisis focussed due to Household Support Funding.
- Lack of strategic and preventative approach.

A new approach will focus on:

- **Early Intervention and Prevention** – “I know where to go to get financial support and can access the tools to support myself wherever possible”.
- **1 front door for residents.** We hide the wiring round residents needing to know the name of different teams - “I know where to go to get financial support at the earliest opportunity”.
- **Self-help and self-serve is easy to access** “I can check my eligibility and understand the support available to me online”.
- **Specialist teams focus on core, value added activity to maximise income and increase council tax collection** e.g. Welfare Rights.
- **We remove duplication and waste and improve the customer journey**
- **Intelligence and data led focus maximising investment in systems, tools and technology to drive targeted activity** e.g. LIFT.
- **Clearly defined customer journeys leading to consistent prioritisation and support.**
- **Place Based approach and embedding Live Well with appointments available at key locations across the borough.**
- **Partnership working across the public sector with a campaign focus** e.g. pension credit and attendance allowance

Project Phases

Discover

Best Practice
Review

Data & Insight
Gathering &
Analysis

Stakeholder
Engagement

Jun - Aug

Define

Present Summary
Findings

Evaluate & Adapt

Root Cause
Analysis

Aug - Sep

Develop

Develop Financial
Support Vision and
Operating Model

Develop and agree
Delivery Plan

Sep - Oct

Deliver

Approve delivery
plan within
governance
structures

Implementation of
Delivery Plan

Nov - Mar

Next Steps – Discovery Phase

Scope	Milestones/Actions	Stakeholders	Timescales
1. Understanding the current offer and approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Mapping • Volume data • Outcome mapping • Cost of Delivery • Current Design Review • SWOT Analysis • Output summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare Rights • SIT • Warm Homes • Helpline • Local Welfare Provision • Citizens Advice • Oldham Foodbank • Oldham Credit Union • Wider Stakeholder Group 	June-August
2. Resident, staff and elected member Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Oldham Positive Action Network (OPAN) to jointly develop insight gathering approach. OPAN to deliver workshops with staff and service users. • Overview and Scrutiny • Comms to staff • Trade Union Engagement • Staff feedback session • Member feedback session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oldham Positive Action Network (OPAN) • Staff & volunteers within in-scope services • Staff who refer and navigate financial support services • Elected Members 	August – September
3. Understanding Best Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with other Councils • Literature Review • Learning from Partners 	Citizen's Advice Other Councils	July-August

Questions and Discussion