

**Public Questions - Full Council: Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

	<b>From / Date</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	Dilber Shabir  Tue 15/07/2025 16:19	Councillor Elaine Taylor, Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods	What is Oldham Councils plan for protecting the rights for the people and families living in a HMO?	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>Oldham Council has a dedicated Housing Options Service which includes a Tenancy Relations Service.</p> <p>Any resident or household which needs help, advice and/or support in relation to their housing circumstances can contact the service who would be happy to help. We can offer advice in person or via the telephone whichever is best for the resident.</p> <p>The resident will be made aware of their statutory rights in terms of tenancy sustainment and should a landlord be acting inappropriately or unlawfully the team can take the necessary action.</p> <p>This can range from ensuring the landlord is aware of their responsibilities and obligations through to undertaking enforcement action where needed.</p>
2	Syed Maruf Ali	Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing	I would like to ask the Council what steps it is taking, in partnership with local NHS and public health bodies, to address health inequalities affecting British South Asian communities in Oldham. National NHS data	<p>Thank you for your question Maruf.</p> <p>South Asian communities in Oldham experience notable health inequalities, including higher rates of Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD), and face barriers to accessing care. CVD risk factors emerge earlier and at</p>

	<p>Mon 21/07/2025 11:07</p>		<p>shows only 57% of Bangladeshi/South Asian patients start treatment within 18 weeks, with delays even worse in deprived areas like ours. Many face barriers to access, digital exclusion, and a lack of culturally appropriate care. What targeted work is being done to reduce waiting times, improve access, and ensure fairer outcomes for Bangladeshi/South Asian residents?</p>	<p>lower weights in this population, and local services are under pressure. We are prioritising prevention and early identification to address these disparities.</p> <p>We work through our <b>Community Health Champions network</b>, supported by <b>Action Together</b>, to engage anchor organisations and trusted community leaders. This empowers South Asian residents with knowledge about their health and how to access care.</p> <p><b>Physical activity</b> is a key focus. We co-develop culturally appropriate opportunities with community groups, embedding activity into daily life and reducing inequalities.</p> <p>To prevent CVD and diabetes, we support residents to quit smoking and alternative tobacco use, and maintain a healthy weight. <b>Your Health Oldham</b> provides tailored weight management and cessation services, including work with the <b>Women's Chai Project</b>.</p> <p>The <b>ICB</b> and <b>Oldham Community Leisure</b> are collaborating on CVD prevention, with culturally aware education and train-the-trainer sessions to build community capacity.</p> <p>The <b>NHS Health Checks</b> programme identifies early signs of CVD. Uptake among South Asian residents has doubled in the past year. We continue to improve reach and quality.</p>
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3	<p>Lewis Farnworth</p> <p>Wed 23/07/2025 19:18</p>	<p>Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Due to the rise inflation of 3.9 what support will you give to the lowest paid households for example UNPAID CARERS and pensioners as food price continues to rise and the essentials becoming more unaffordable??</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Farnworth.</p> <p>The cost of living crisis is sadly affecting households across the country.</p> <p>We launched our 'We Can Help' campaign to ensure we are doing our bit to help here in Oldham. We can support residents to access food including emergency food parcels and vouchers including accessing day to day essentials. We can also support through our Warm Homes Odham team to keep their homes warm and also offer advice to save on energy bills.</p> <p>Advice is also on hand on claiming benefits and with personal budgeting. Further information is available by visiting the Council Website, by calling the Helpline service on 0161 770 7007 or by visiting one of our Libraries or the</p>

				<p>Customer Service Centre at Spindles. We encourage this resident to share their contact details and we will arrange a call back from the Helpline Team at a convenient time.</p> <p>In addition, for those unpaid carers requiring support, our Oldham Carers' Service (led by Adult Social Care) offers a range of free services for unpaid carers across Oldham.</p> <p>If you are having difficulties caring for a partner, family member or friend who could not manage without your help, then you are a carer.</p> <p>Oldham's Carers' Service can assist with information and advice about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health issues</li> <li>• Entitlement to benefits</li> <li>• Equipment and assistive technologies</li> <li>• Carers rights</li> <li>• Carers employment issues</li> <li>• One-to-One Practical and Emotional Support</li> <li>• Carers Assessments</li> <li>• Carers Personal Budgets (subject to eligibility)</li> <li>• Signposting / Referrals to Social Services and Other Providers</li> <li>• Oldham Carers Emergency Support Scheme</li> <li>• Access to Carers Support Groups and Networks</li> </ul> <p>I won't read the contact details out but I'll ensure constitutional services publish them so you can get in touch with the ASC Carers Team if need be.</p> <p>By phoning 0161 770 7777 option 2, via email to</p>
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4	Richard Lowe-Jackson  Sat 26/07/2025 13:06	Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways	<p>"Given the new EVCI strategy relies on commercially priced on-street chargers, what specific steps will the council take to mitigate the significant financial penalty imposed on the 60% of residents without driveways, many of whom have lower incomes, to ensure the transition to EVs is fair and equitable for all?"</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>Oldham Council is making several investments in Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure across the borough, which is targeted at residents who do not have the potential to install their own chargers at home.</p> <p>As portfolio lead, I have asked officers working on the various projects to ensure that costs to residents are kept as low as possible, so the new charging infrastructure will generally be standard speed chargers so that residents are not paying a premium for rapid chargers.</p> <p>I will also be writing to the government in the near future, requesting that more support is provided, including funding, lowering VAT rates for public chargers to match the VAT rate for domestic electricity supplies, and to require chargepoint operators to pass on off-peak savings on electricity costs to their customers.</p>
5	Jeff Garner  Wed 20/08/2025 14:50	Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways	<p>Please could Oldham Council support the residents of Friezland, Greenfield, who lost the 356 bus service immediately after the Bee Network took over in April? This cut off the community by diverting the service elsewhere, due to having</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>We are acutely aware of the impact this matter has had on local residents. Officers have been supporting myself and Cllr Charters as Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways &amp; Transport Portfolio in raising this issue with TfGM on a number of occasions.</p>

			<p>insufficient suitable vehicles to negotiate narrow roads. The service previously ran successfully.</p> <p>I am asking <b>the relevant person at the council</b> to request the Mayor of Greater Manchester to insist that suitable vehicles are found immediately. Then local residents, in particular the disabled and those without cars, can resume using public transport for essential shopping and medical appointments. Five months on and they are still waiting.</p>	<p>The most recent response to the Council from TfGM was on 4 September 2025, stating that new vehicles have been introduced and testing is ongoing – it is anticipated that once the vehicle transfers are complete, the 356 service will become operational – at this moment, it is expected to come online week commencing 22 September. TfGM have stated that they will confirm the exact date closure to the time.</p> <p>The Council will continue to follow-up on this issue on behalf of residents of Oldham, as buses remain a key and important part of our transport network in Oldham.</p>
6	<p>Michael Powell</p> <p>Thu 21/08/2025 17:33</p>	<p>Councillor Jabbar, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Sustainability</p>	<p>To ensure good governance and accountability, this Council's leadership must be subject to effective scrutiny. At the previous meeting, just one opposition group leader was able to question the Leader. The other two main opposition leaders could not, and no other councillors were able to directly challenge the Leader either. Scrutiny was also limited when questioning cabinet members, as they appeared to</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>eputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Sustainability</p>

			<p>read the reports throughout question time.</p> <p>Will the Leader of the Council commit to upholding democratic principles by allowing all opposition leaders and councillors to scrutinise her and cabinet members at every Council meeting?</p>	
7	<p>Matthew Broadbent</p> <p>Fri 22/08/2025 08:05</p>	<p>Councillor Taylor Statutory Deputy leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>The Beal Valley-Broadbent Moss PFE allocation, covering the wards of Shaw, south Royton, and St. James', will see 1,600 houses built. Places for Everyone requires development to be in accordance with a masterplan agreed by the council. Approval of the masterplan will apparently be solely at the discretion of the cabinet. Given that no party in the chamber has a clear electoral mandate from the people of Oldham to govern and the impacted wards are excluded from cabinet representation, does the Leadership agree that it would be more democratic to let full council decide approval of the masterplan?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>To clarify – the Masterplan, if agreed by the Council, would be an informal planning policy document used to inform consideration of future planning applications. Such planning policy documentation is an executive function under national legislation and the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>Section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000, any decision-making powers that aren't specifically listed in government regulations as being the responsibility of the full council are automatically the responsibility of the council's Cabinet.</p> <p>The Local Authorities Regulations 2000 list which functions must be handled by the full council and not by the Cabinet. These include major decisions like setting the budget or approving the council's overall strategy.</p> <p>In this regard, the Cabinet acts for the whole borough, as planning decisions, particularly those related to the provision of housing and employment land, have impacts beyond local</p>

				wards and are necessary to ensure all development and infrastructure needs are met across the borough.
8	Pat Cliffe  Sun 24/08/2025 20:51	Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways	<p>"20mph zones are established in most Saddleworth villages but in Diggle, having Secondary, Primary, and Nursery Schools on the main road, there is, apparently, no progress, despite discussions with councillors, and speeds measured. Proposals are mooted for a scheme at the Secondary School, but not the whole village, where speeding cars are concerning residents, and where there have been two recent significant accidents - one near the Primary School, the other causing the main road to close due to injuries and police investigations.</p> <p>Please could the cabinet member update on residents' consultation, and commit to a scheme covering the whole village?"</p>	<p>Thank you for your question – the Council recognise and supports the need to improve road safety for all the boroughs residents and has been at the forefront of introducing 20mph schemes.</p> <p>A 20mph speed limit scheme for Diggle, with traffic calming measures in the vicinity of the new school has been developed. The proposals have been discussed with the Ward Members and the Statutory Processes required to consult on and introduce the measures is underway.</p> <p>The traffic calming measures are funded via a Section 278 agreement with Redrow which is attached to the Planning Consent for the new residential development. At present, there is no funding available for traffic calming features on a larger area. However, the whole village area of Huddersfield Road and residential side roads are included in the 20mph speed limit order. Once the limit has been in place for a couple of months, the Council will carry out speed surveys. If the sign only scheme hasn't achieved the desired reduction in speeds, we will look to install target traffic calming measures which will be consulted upon - these measures will be funded from 2026 Highways Capital Works budget. The public will be able to comment on the proposals when the Legal Orders and Notices are advertised in the next couple of months.</p>



9	<p>Rita Ireland</p> <p>Tues</p> <p>26/8/25</p> <p>16:48</p>	<p>Councillor Shah, Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Who decided on the name change for Oldham Library and did all councillors vote on this?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>Naming buildings, property, parks, does not require a decision or vote by all councillors.</p> <p>The fact that members of this chamber have claimed they have not heard of John Robert Clynes says more about them. A man who worked in an Oldham cotton mill at ten years old, self-educated, who wrote passionately about the abhorrent conditions of child labour in the textile industry he toiled in.</p> <p>He championed social reforms, including a plan for benefits for widows, orphans, and the elderly, which was later enacted by the Conservative government in 1925. He improved working conditions for miners, settled strikes, improved pay for labourers, deplored fascism and committed his life to making sure the working class were represented.</p> <p>The fact he worked his way up from his humble beginnings to eventually become Home Secretary in 1929 is extraordinary, and we should all be proud of him, a truly great Oldhamer.</p>
10	<p>Dawn Bardsley</p> <p>Wed</p> <p>27/08/2025</p> <p>17:45</p>	<p>Councillor Taylor</p> <p>Statutory Deputy leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>As a resident of Shaw, I speak for residents with regards to the planning application of the 20-bedroom HMO at the former health centre, High Street, Shaw.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The Council recognises resident concerns regarding HMOs - however, consideration of a planning application by the council as local planning authority is governed by national</p>

			<p>Why were residents not given a fair opportunity to sign the official ePetition on OMBC website, which ran without a functioning signature option? • Will the council commit to reopening the petition so that genuine community opposition can be registered and considered? This application is fundamentally flawed, and these questions demand clear answers before any decision is made. Anything less would be a failure of due process and a disregard for Shaw residents.</p>	<p>legislation, and planning applications must be considered on the planning matters relevant to the particular application.</p> <p>As a result, the comments on planning matters made within a petition are considered alongside the comments made directly on the planning application by residents when assessing the application, regardless of how many signatures are on the petition.</p> <p>I am aware that a petition was received containing over 776 signatures opposing the HMO. As this is part of the planning process, it has been shared with officers in planning. There was also an online ePetition and I am sorry to hear that there might have been an issue with this.</p> <p>I have asked the Assistant Director of Governance to review the petitions process, and an update will be provided to the Group Leaders.</p>
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