| From / Date | To | Question | Proposed Response |
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| Cllr Angela Cosgrove | Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | Can Cllr Taylor provide an update on the actions the Council has taken at Arncliffe Rise on Moorside in St James ward? | The Council has already taken a number of actions under the Town and Country Planning Act and the ASB, Crime and Policing Act, which includes the service of warnings and legal notices and the removal of caravans from the site following non-compliance with a Community Protection Notice. We have met with residents and are in regular contact with them, including the setting up of a dedicated mailbox. We are now reviewing all of the available evidence that residents and Officers have provided to determine the next steps and the most appropriate courses of action to achieve a long-term solution. The Council must of course act in accordance with the law and within legal procedural rules and unfortunately the Council does not have any influence over timings of Court listings, which we are aware are a frustration for residents. |
| Cllr Nadeem Iqbal | Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | What is the Council doing about properties that have been abandoned and are causing issues for neighbours and is there anything we can do to make this process simpler for residents who are at the receiving end of this? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>We recognise the impact of such properties on local communities. However, bringing such properties back into use can be a complex issue, often involving significant investigative work, in order to ascertain ownership, make contact with the owner, and support them to identify the best way to bring their property up to standard and being lived in.<br><br>Having looked at best practice from elsewhere, we have been working with GMCA on options to work more closely with the owners of empty properties, to ensure that these houses are more quickly made available for people in Oldham. I am delighted to announce that we have recently secured funding to develop a trial approach from 2026/27 onward, allowing us to start to address these issues in a longer-term fashion. As this develops, I will be able to bring more news on our approach.<br><br>Where the property is causing a nuisance / property damage, this can be investigated by Council departments and necessary action |

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| | | | taken, if the owner will not or cannot complete the necessary works. Similarly, Council departments also have powers under planning law to take action but the benchmark for action is high. I would advise any residents who have concerns about empty properties to report this to the council and all matters will be investigated. |
| Cllr Josh Charters | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability | What is the Council doing to remain financially stable given the pressures ours and Council's across the country face? | Thank you, Cllr Charters, for your question.<br><br>Like councils across the country, Oldham is facing real financial pressures driven by rising demand, greater complexity of need and unprecedented cost increases in children's and adults' social care. These are national challenges, not failures of local management, and Oldham is far from alone in dealing with them.<br><br>But unlike the previous Government, which allowed the cost of essential care to spiral while removing billions from local government, this administration has put in place strong and proactive financial controls to protect our position. We have already tightened expenditure approvals, introduced a recruitment freeze for all but essential roles, and strengthened oversight of agency staffing. These actions are beginning to have an impact, and we expect future monitoring reports to show the benefits of those decisions.<br><br>However, we must also be honest about the national context. For more than a decade, the funding system systematically shifted resources away from towns like Oldham and towards more affluent areas in the South. That was a political choice, and its consequences are plain to see in local government finances across the country.<br><br>The difference now is that we finally have a Government that understands that fairness in funding is not optional. The Labour Government has been clear that the multi-year settlement and the Fair Funding Review must recognise actual levels of need, not political preference. That matters enormously for places like |

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| | | | Oldham, where demand for statutory services is high and where communities depend on properly funded public services.<br><br>We will continue to take responsible decisions locally, managing the budget with discipline, protecting our reserves and prioritising essential services. But long-term financial sustainability depends on a national funding system that recognises need and invests in the councils that deliver for the most vulnerable. For the first time in years, we have a Government committed to that principle, and Oldham will be making our case clearly and confidently in the weeks ahead as the provisional settlement is announced. |
| Cllr Umar Nasheen | Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | We welcome the return of Don't Trash Oldham - a programme that makes a huge difference to the communities and environment in Oldham. Can the portfolio holder please explain how this programme will look to sustain the great work being done and what engagement is taking place with local residents and businesses to avoid a return to litter and fly tip in the areas targeted and wider communities. | Thank you for your question, Cllr Nasheen.<br><br>The administration recognises the importance of a clean and welcoming environment for all residents in the borough and we have and continue to strive to deliver this through the first two iterations of the DTO programme, the boroughwide cleansing and fly tip removal that takes place routinely, and we continue this through this DTO programme.<br><br>It is no secret that in some areas, improvements have not been sustained. However, it's also clear, as demonstrated by the winner of the recently introduced 'Clean Alleyway Award', there are residents who take great pride in their local environment, including alleyways, and do great work in keeping them clean and well maintained for local residents. In some areas, this has been the case for a number of years and the work is supported by Council enforcement teams who deal with those caught fly tipping.<br><br>As part of this programme, in addition to the proactive work being done by council teams, there is also significant engagement with local residents, including volunteer groups, to support them in sustaining the work moving forward. This will be done through organised litter picks, waste clearance and by engaging with and educating residents to correctly and legally remove waste. |

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| | | | We recognise that this is a challenging area of work, but we are committed to improving local environments for all residents. As the programme expands to other wards in the borough, there will be engagement with elected members to understand their local priorities and officers will work with them to determine a plan of works which will then be completed. This will go beyond simple waste clearance and aim to address local priorities, recognising that the environmental challenge differs for wards across the borough. |
| Cllr Dave Arnott | Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | Subject: Royton Precinct | Thank you for your question Cllr Arnott – however as we've discussed before this doesn't really sit in my portfolio. However, given our conversations, I have spoken to officers on your behalf and can advise that discussions are ongoing with the owners of Royton precinct, and the Council is hoping to see a series of improvement works take place at the precinct. We understand these improvements would not only improve the fabric and the appearance of the precinct itself but would also complement the wider regeneration of Royton District Centre.<br><br>At a time when businesses are really stretched financially, the Council is keen to ensure that these improvement works would not result in increased rents for occupants.<br><br>We will work with the precinct owners to that effect and will update ward members and local businesses as soon as more information is available. |
| Cllr Christine Adams | Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing | Subject: Loneliness at Christmas | Thank you for your question Cllr Adams.<br><br>Christmas for many of our residents is a special time to share with our loved ones. However, we know that is can also be one of the loneliest and most isolating times of the year too. Please know that for any residents who are worried about feeling lonely – you are not on your own. |

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| | | | There are many events taking place across our communities during the festive period – visit www.whatsonoldham.gov.uk for more information.<br><br>Oldham Athletic are opening its doors on Christmas Day. From 1pm until 3.30pm any residents (Latics supporter or not!) are invited to come together for a festive meal, drinks and a friendly chat. Booking is available at www.oldhamathletic.co.uk or by calling the Ticket Office on 0161 785 5150.<br><br>Miocare are calling all users of the Helpline service on the run up to Christmas to complete a Winter Welfare Check and to ensure that service users know that the Helpline service remains open over the festive period.<br><br>Our social prescribing team are on hand for residents experiencing loneliness and isolation. They can be contacted on 0161 339 2345. Opening hours from 27th – 31st December are 9am – 4pm and again on 2nd January.<br><br>The Council's Helpline Team can offer financial support and are available on 0161 770 7007. The service is open on the 29th, 30th and 31st December 10am-2pm.<br><br>My message to residents is clear and simple- please know that you are not on your own this Christmas time. Come forward for support if you feel worried or isolated. |
| Cllr Abdul Malik | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability | We know that some pensioners in Oldham are missing out on Pension Credit they're entitled to, what steps are we taking to make sure older residents are aware of the support they're entitled to and helped to apply for it? | Thank you for your question Cllr Malik.<br><br>This autumn we delivered our Pension Credit campaign. We wrote to 251 residents who may be eligible during October. We followed up with phone calls and text messages to encourage pensions to check their eligibility and support them to make an application if help was needed. We also ran a communications |

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| | | | campaign on social media alongside the DWP campaign with the aim of increasing awareness and reducing any stigma in applying.<br><br>DWP have a target processing time of 50 working days once a Pension Credit application is received. We would hope therefore to have the information and data we need to understand the positive impact of our campaign during the Spring.<br><br>For any resident who needs support with pension credit – please don't hesitate to call our Helpline Team on 0161 700 7007. Please come forward for support. |
| Cllr Abdul Malik | Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills | The numbers of NEET young people remains stubbornly high across England including in Oldham. The level of young people dropping out of college because the funded courses are not at the right level is a problem. What can the Council do to support the development of provision that acts as a bridge between school and college or training? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>First, it is important to say that Oldham is not starting from a weak position. Our most recent figures place us in the top 20 percent of councils nationally for NEET performance. That shows the hard work of our schools, colleges and youth services is making a real difference for young people.<br><br>But we know there is more to do, especially for those who need extra support to make the step between school and college or training. Too many young people drop out because the course is not at the right level for them or because they need more help to settle into post 16 learning. That is exactly why we are reshaping our approach.<br><br>We are working closely with local colleges and training providers through our new Employment and Skills Strategy to make sure Oldham has the right courses at the right level in the right places. The post 16 leaders group is focusing on how we support young people better during that transition period, combining pastoral support with the right academic offer.<br><br>We also have a NEET Action Plan in place which is already bringing results. This includes summer schools, extra engagement and mentoring through Empower Oldham, and |

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| | | | enhanced enrolment support with Positive Steps so young people do not fall through the gaps.<br><br>On top of that, we continue to look for new opportunities to expand local provision. We have recently attracted YMCA and North Lancs Training back into Oldham, increasing choice for young people. New initiatives such as Sports Town will also create fresh routes into education, skills and careers.<br><br>The message is simple. We want every young person in Oldham to move smoothly from school into college, training or work, and we will keep working with our partners to build the right pathways, the right support and the right opportunities for all of them. |
| Cllr Naz Islam | Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills | The recent Careers Event connected every school with employers and included a quiet session for SEND and NEET learners. What feedback have we received from students and employers, and how will this shape future careers provision in Oldham? | Thank you for your question. I am very pleased to report that the Future Ready careers event was a significant success with excellent feedback from the young people, employers and training providers that attended. It is crucial that we have high ambitions for our young people. I made a personal commitment to make this event meaningful for the young people by securing businesses from across Greater Manchester, including Muse, IN4 Group, Ultimate Products, IBM and Northern Care Alliance. We had representation from all of the seven employer gateways that encompass the GM Mayoral commitment to MBacc.<br><br>Employers quote;<br><br>‘A really excellent event, the organisation of the day was brilliant, and it was great to see so many students at the event, asking questions and showing genuine interest’<br><br>Young people quote;<br><br>‘I absolutely loved this event it was so useful and enjoyable. All the employers were lovely and there was an excellent range of fields and opportunities for students or inquisitive people to explore or learn more about. Only note that I have is that there |

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| | | | was no music-specific employer or company. Other than that 10/10!' |
| Cllr Graham Shuttleworth | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | Tis the season to be jolly, but it's also the season when focus turns to pot holes, as the media are now starting to show.<br><br>Recent reports submitted are showing some pot holes as 'low priority'. While accepting that more serious defects need to be actioned first, how long would we have to wait for 'low priority' repairs, or do we wait until they become a priority? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>It is certainly the season when the media rediscover potholes, but our teams deal with them every single day of the year, not just when the headlines appear. I want to put on record my thanks to our highways staff who work in all weathers, day and night, to keep more than 800 kilometres of Oldham's roads safe.<br><br>Let me be absolutely clear about how we prioritise repairs. Every part of our highway network is inspected regularly on a risk assessed cycle – some routes monthly, others quarterly or annually depending on use. When a defect is found, it is assessed on the spot and given a priority rating based on how severe it is and the level of risk it presents to road users.<br><br>Serious defects are repaired quickly because they pose the greatest safety risk. Lower priority defects are still monitored closely and will be repaired either when they deteriorate to the point of needing intervention or when programmed works in that area make the repair efficient and cost effective. That is the right and responsible way to manage public money while keeping people safe.<br><br>So no, we do not simply "wait" until a pothole becomes a problem. We operate a proactive system of inspection and risk management, backed by a dedicated workforce that is out every week keeping Oldham moving.<br><br>And it is also worth saying that after more than a decade of national cuts to local government capital funding, councils like ours have had to stretch road repair budgets further than ever before. The new Government has already committed to changing that, and we will be making a strong case for long term, fair investment so we can continue improving road surfaces across the borough. |

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| | | | In the meantime, our approach is simple: deal with the most urgent issues quickly, monitor everything else, and keep residents safe. And that is exactly what we will continue to do. |
| Cllr Naseem Aslam | Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People | Can the Cabinet Member explain what Family First Partnerships are intended to achieve and what difference this new way of working will make for families in Oldham? | Thank you, Cllr Aslam, for your question.<br><br>Families First Partnerships are part of a new national approach to improving support for children, young people and families, and Oldham is implementing this locally in a way that fully aligns with our ambition to be a genuinely resident focused council. It is about making the system work with families rather than expecting families to navigate a complicated system on their own.<br><br>The idea is simple. Instead of different agencies doing different things in isolation, we bring professionals together, schools, health, early help, police, social care and the voluntary sector, so families get one coordinated offer, not lots of disconnected ones. Families will tell their story once, have one clear plan, and build a strong relationship with a trusted lead professional who helps everything fit together.<br><br>So in Oldham;<br><br>It will make access to support simpler. Families will no longer have to knock on several doors to get help. There will be one coordinated plan bringing everything together.<br><br>It will mean earlier support. When any professional spots concerns; a school, a GP, a youth worker, we can act earlier and prevent problems escalating into crisis.<br><br>It will create a single team around the family. Services will communicate better, reduce duplication and focus on what really matters for the child or young person.<br><br>It will help more children stay safely within their family networks. With earlier, more coordinated support, families get the right help before situations become unmanageable. |

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| | | | And importantly, families will feel heard. This is a strengths based approach that starts with what families can do, not just what they find difficult.<br><br>Families First is a national shift, but here in Oldham it reinforces the way we want to work; putting families at the centre, designing support around their real lives and building a system that is proactive, joined up and humane.<br><br>This programme will make a real difference to children and families in Oldham, and we are committed to delivering it well and making sure it reflects the needs, strengths and voices of our communities. |
| Cllr Junaid Hussain | Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing | The level of potential gambling harm is shocking. A lot of work has been done to understand the scale of the problem and bring professionals together. Could the Council do more, for example in limiting betting shops and lobbying for better on-line controls on advertising and sponsorship? | Thank you for your question Cllr Hussain.<br><br>Unfortunately, the Council can't currently control the numbers of gambling premises. The Government has given a commitment to bring forward legislation to reform gambling licensing to include cumulative impact assessments whereby local assessments as to the impact of a gambling premise can be assessed.<br><br>The only tools available currently for concerns to be raised are via the public consultation period for new applications, or to review existing premises licences where the licensing objectives are not being upheld.<br><br>The Public Health team have recently reviewed and updated the Council's Gambling Policy earlier this year with more focus and specific resources on gambling related harms.<br><br>The Council is unable to regulate online gambling – this is an area of regulation controlled by central Government. We will work with Greater Manchester and Public Health colleagues to lobby central government for further controls on this.<br><br>If residents are currently experiencing issues with gambling, in the first instance they may speak to their GP for support. They can also seek support from the Gambler's Anonymous chapter in |

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| | | | Oldham or self-refer to the NHS Gambling Harms clinic which offers both in-person and online support.<br><br>In Oldham, we have trained health, social care and other frontline professionals to support residents experiencing gambling harms. As harms are wide ranging, we have targeted professionals working in housing, welfare rights, debt support, mental health services and community organisations.<br><br>It is important to raise awareness of gambling harms due to high levels of stigma and shame associated with it, to encourage residents to seek help. Tackling gambling harms requires a multi-disciplinary, systems approach. The Public Health team are working in partnership with licensing, planning colleagues and other services through the Oldham Gambling harms Alliance. |
| Cllr Ken Rustidge | Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing | The improvements in NHS delivery outlines in the report shows that Labour's investment in the NHS is delivering results, There is still some way to go before the neglect of the last 14 years of Liberal Democrat and Tory Government is overcome. What are the priorities for NHS Greater Manchester to further improve health services in Oldham? | Thank you for your question Cllr Rustidge. At a national level, the Government has published a new planning framework that formalises a broad and ambitious agenda that all NHS systems need to deliver on. That includes: performance recovery, structural reform, digital transformation, workforce/culture, quality. It will be for local systems to determine what to tackle first.<br><br>For Greater Manchester: the region is aiming not just to clear backlogs and restore services, but to build a more integrated, prevention-oriented, community-rooted, and sustainable health & care system. The combination of social, economic, environmental and medical priorities is ambitious. |
| Cllr Ken Rustidge | Cllr Peter Dean – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure | Can Cllr Dean run us through the various programmes and events we're putting on for families this Christmas? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Rustidge.<br><br>I am really proud of what we are offering for families in Oldham this Christmas. At a time when many councils across the country are cutting back on community events because of financial pressures, Oldham has made a deliberate choice to keep putting on free, inclusive activities that every family can enjoy, whatever their background, their faith or the colour of their skin. Supporting families through the cost of living crisis matters to this |

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| | | | administration, and you can see that clearly in our Christmas programme.<br><br>We started the season with an incredible Christmas Lights Switch On, which brought more than ten thousand people into the town centre. It was a brilliant example of Oldham at its best – diverse, lively and full of community spirit.<br><br>Across four themed Winter Weekends, from late November to mid December, the town centre is being transformed every Saturday into something magical. Families can expect Victorian performers, festive food, wintry characters, and of course appearances from Ollie, Millie and Rodney the Reindeer. All of this is free and designed to bring people together at a time when every penny counts.<br><br>Our cultural offer is just as strong. Oldham Theatre Workshop's production of Hansel and Gretel is running at Oldham Library throughout December and has been so popular that tickets are already close to selling out. The library service is also hosting free family activities, including Merry Mindfulness craft sessions, to give children a chance to relax and be creative.<br><br>And I am pleased that, even without a permanent theatre building, Oldham Coliseum continues to bring high quality Christmas theatre to our borough. Their production of A Christmas Fair at Chadderton Town Hall is another great option for families.<br><br>So yes, we are facing financial challenges, like every council. But we are still choosing to invest in events that lift spirits, bring communities together and give families free and inclusive things to enjoy at Christmas. That is the Oldham way, and it is something this administration is determined to protect. |
| Cllr Graham Shuttleworth | Councillor Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | The recent housing Inspection into Oldham's PFI housing stock identified several areas which need to be strengthened. In order for the Council to | Thank you for your question, Cllr Shuttleworth.<br><br>We take the outcome of the recent Housing Regulator inspection very seriously, and plans are already being put in place to ensure |

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| | | ensure it is fulfilling its obligations as the landlord, could the Cabinet Member please outline what steps the Council is taking to uphold its obligations to residents residing in these properties. | that our monitoring and reporting meet the standards expected of us.<br><br>Firstly, it is crucial to assure residents that the judgement relates to our processes, and not to the standard or safety of their properties. Indeed, as many Members will be aware from knowing the PFI housing in their own Wards, the quality of provision delivered under these contracts is very high. That is why I have asked that every tenant in one of these properties is written to, to explain the outcome of the inspection, and to offer these reassurances.<br><br>Given the new requirements placed on us by the recent updates to regulations, we have also committed to grow the number of staff within the team, to ensure that there is appropriate capacity to meet the enhanced expectations, and provide more intensive monitoring of our delivery partners. To ensure better alignment with our wider housing functions, the team has also now moved into the Communities Directorate.<br><br>We are in the process of drawing up an action plan, building on work that was already in place prior to the inspection, and the team are meeting with the regulator next week to test these plans, and ensure that delivery of them will provide the regulator with the assurance they are seeking. This will be followed by monthly meetings from January onwards.<br><br>Our delivery partners have been engaged, and are extremely supportive of the need to change the way that the contract is monitored. Collectively, we are determined that we will put in place the necessary measures in order to improve our grading. |
| Cllr Saj Hussain | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | Can Cllr Goodwin give an update on the improvements the Bee Network has brought to Oldham buses since franchising in March 2024 | Thanks for your question Cllr Hussain<br><br>Oldham's franchised bus services have seen major improvements in punctuality, patronage, fleet quality, and passenger experience since March 2024. With depot electrification, zero-emission expansion, and staff investment. |

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| | | | Service Performance Punctuality on key routes (84, 181, 182, 409) improved by 23–29 percentage points.<br><br>Patronage growth recorded on 3 of 4 routes (up to +17% YoY).<br><br>Passenger Growth Overall, Bee Network patronage in Oldham (Tranche 2) grew 15% year-on-year.<br><br>Fleet & Depot 85 zero-emission buses now in service (up from 50). Oldham depot partially electrified, more chargers added. Middleton depot electrification (Dec 2025) will cascade newer vehicles into Oldham.<br><br>All buses to meet Bee Network standards by early 2026.<br><br>Staffing & Training - 120 new drivers recruited since March 2024. Dedicated 'Oldham Safe Driving' training course rolled out, 100 staff trained so far.<br><br>Facilities & Operations<br><br>Two new bus washes operational.<br><br>Depot upgrades ongoing, with further staff facility improvements planned for 2026.<br><br>Passenger Experience - Contactless Tap & Go and Bee Network Hopper fare introduced. Modern low-emission buses with low-floor access, better seating, and real-time info screens.<br><br>In short: Oldham's franchised bus services are now more reliable, greener, better staffed, and more passenger-friendly, with strong growth in usage and further upgrades planned through 2026. |
| Cllr Saj Hussain | Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise | The 15% growth in employment over the past decade is welcome. What are the types of employment that people have | Thank you for your question. I am pleased to report that Oldham has seen the number of jobs increase by 15.9% over the last decade creating over 12,620 more jobs. |

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| | | moved into and what are the current trends in new areas of work in Oldham? | The growth in jobs has included 9,000 new jobs in health related activities group, which relates to nurses, doctors, techncians, therapists etc. There has also been growth in education and construction.<br><br>The Council is working with GMCA to push forward with our growth plans which will see new jobs being created across Oldham and with key locations such as Stakehill. We are confident that we will continue to grow the job opportunities in Oldham. |
| Cllr Aftab Hussain | Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise | What benefits will businesses receive from being part of the Oldham Trading Platform? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>The Oldham Trading Platform is a key part of our commitment to strengthening Oldham's local business community and making sure Oldham firms have the best possible access to opportunities right here in the borough. We want more of our public spend, private spend and supply chain activity to stay in Oldham, supporting local jobs and helping our businesses grow.<br><br>Being part of the Trading Platform gives businesses several important benefits.<br><br>First, it opens the door to local supply chain opportunities. When contracts, commissions or partnership projects arise across the borough, businesses registered on the platform are visible and easy to find. It helps smaller firms in particular get a fairer shot at work that previously may have gone to companies outside Oldham.<br><br>Second, the platform acts as a shop window. Businesses can promote their goods and services directly to other Oldham organisations, residents and partners, raising their profile and making it easier for people to buy local.<br><br>Third, it creates a stronger sense of business community. By networking, trading with each other and sharing opportunities, Oldham SMEs can build relationships that support resilience, |

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| | | | innovation and growth. It keeps more money circulating within our local economy.<br><br>And finally, it aligns with the Council's wider ambition to back Oldham businesses at every stage — from start ups to established firms. We want a thriving local economy where Oldham companies feel supported, valued and connected to the opportunities on their doorstep.<br><br>So the Trading Platform is more than a directory. It is a tool to help Oldham businesses win more work, raise their profile, collaborate with each other and contribute to a stronger and more inclusive local economy. That is exactly the type of business environment this administration is committed to building. |
| Cllr Pete Davis | Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People | I was contacted by concerned parents about the potential closure of the Autism Youth Club, this is really important provision for children and young people with Autism, can I ask Cllr Mushtaq what's happening? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Davis.<br><br>There are no plans to close the Autism Youth Club. The Autism Youth Club is under review to ensure the service delivery reaches as many children as possible, especially given the year on year increase of children with SEND across Oldham. By increasing the universal offer in the local community, we are working towards improved engagement, accessibility, positive outcomes and increased social inclusion for SEND young people.<br><br>The consultation process for the AYC has engaged staff and parent / carers and a resolution is nearing whereby our fantastic Youth Service will take over operational responsibility whilst also ensuring that as many children as possible continue to benefit from the Autism Youth Club. Officers are ensuring that there will be the least amount of disruption for children and families through an extended transition period at the start of the year. |
| Cllr Pete Davis | Cllr Peter Dean – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure | The report says the Oldham Chronicle Archive is being made available - what other resources are available through the wider Archives? What kind of help can | Thank you for your question, Cllr Davis.<br><br>The Oldham Chronicle Archive is a fantastic resource for our borough, but it is only one part of a much wider collection that tells the story of Oldham and its people. Our new Archive and Local Studies service gives residents access to an extraordinary range |

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| | | the new Archive service give to people researching their family tree? | of records, photographs, books and personal histories that span generations.<br><br>People can explore everything from school log books and hospital records to business archives, maps, photographs, council minutes and local organisation records. These collections help us understand how Oldham has changed, how communities have grown and how everyday life has shaped the town we know today.<br><br>For anyone researching their family tree, the service is a real asset. We have dedicated family history support available every Monday and Wednesday, where experienced staff and volunteers can help residents trace ancestors, search birth and marriage records, explore electoral registers or unlock details from old newspapers. For many people, this is the first time they are able to piece together the story of their family in Oldham.<br><br>What the new service really offers is guidance, expertise and time, not just a room full of documents. Whether someone is looking for a photograph of their street from 100 years ago, trying to understand a relative's wartime service or simply curious about the history of their neighbourhood, the team is on hand to help them navigate the collections and bring those stories to life.<br><br>The investment we are making in our archive service means our history is not locked away. It is open, accessible and actively supporting residents to explore their heritage and build a sense of identity and belonging in Oldham. |
| Cllr Nadeem Iqbal | Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills | The Council is investing over £1 million into Spring Brook Special School to expand specialist places. How many additional places will this create, and how will this investment reduce pressure on out-of-borough placements and improve | Thank you for your question, Cllr.<br><br>The Council's investment of over one million pounds into Spring Brook Special School will create 36 new specialist places for children and young people with complex social, emotional and mental health needs. This is a significant expansion and reflects our commitment to increasing high-quality SEND provision within Oldham. |

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| | | outcomes for children with complex needs? | This forms part of our wider SEND Sufficiency Strategy, which is focused on making sure every child who needs extra support can access the right provision, at the right time, as close to home as possible. We know how important it is to give children with additional needs the stability, specialist teaching and therapeutic support that enables them to thrive.<br><br>By expanding Spring Brook, we are reducing our reliance on costly out of borough placements, which can take children away from their communities and create long travel times that place extra strain on families. Keeping young people in Oldham strengthens family relationships, supports continuity of care and helps them stay connected to the places and people they know best.<br><br>Most importantly, this investment ensures that children with the most complex needs can access tailored support that improves their emotional wellbeing, builds confidence and leads to better long-term outcomes.<br><br>At its heart, this is about standing by those who need extra support and making sure specialist education is available here in Oldham, not miles away. It is an investment in better outcomes, better value for money and better lives for the children who need it most. |
| Cllr Howard Sykes | Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth | The most recent government modelling for deprivation – refreshed since 2019 – lists Oldham Borough as having moved from being the 17th most deprived local authority to the 10th. A shameful statistic. Does the Leader accept that boasts of 'economic growth' and 'regeneration' will ring hollow in this borough so long as Oldham keeps getting poorer on Labour's watch? | Thank you for your question, Councillor Sykes.<br><br>The statistic is stark and I will never pretend otherwise. But I absolutely reject the idea that deprivation in Oldham has risen "on Labour's watch".<br><br>Oldham has got poorer because for fourteen years communities like ours were hit hardest by national austerity – cuts to children's services, skills, housing, welfare, public health, and to councils themselves. These were choices made by the Conservative Government and supported by the Liberal Democrats. The IMD figures simply reflect the consequences of that era. |

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| | | | So let us be clear: deprivation has risen because Westminster took away the very tools that help people out of poverty, not because this Council failed to act.<br><br>What would truly ring hollow is pretending that regeneration hasn't made a difference. Without the tens of millions secured for our town centre, new homes, jobs, and public services, Oldham would be in an even worse position.<br><br>The difference now is that we finally have a national Government willing to work with places like Oldham: raising the minimum wage, funding local services properly, and scrapping the punitive two-child limit that pushed thousands of Oldham children into hardship.<br><br>So yes, the challenge is real. But the responsibility for how we got here lies firmly with the last Government. And under my leadership we will continue driving growth, opportunity and investment, because that is how we reduce deprivation and improve lives in this borough. |
| Cllr Alicia Marland | Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth | Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham has announced funding of more than £35 million for the development of Prince's Gate.<br><br>The investment relates to just 256 homes, yet developments in Salford and Manchester are delivering more homes for a fraction of the cost. Can the Leader explain exactly what Oldham is getting out of such a large sum of capital investment? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Martland.<br><br>Let me start by saying very clearly: this level of investment in Oldham simply would not have happened without us being part of Greater Manchester and without this administration fighting relentlessly for our town. Other places talk about levelling up – this is what it actually looks like when a Mayor backs a borough like Oldham with serious capital funding.<br><br>It is absolutely true that developments in Manchester City Centre or Central Salford need far less public subsidy. But that is because their land values and residential sales values are among the highest in the North. Developers can make schemes stack up commercially without much public support.<br><br>Oldham is in a different position. For decades, underinvestment and structural inequality, caused in large part by national policy choices, have kept values lower here. That makes regeneration |

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| | | | harder, and it means genuinely transformational schemes need public investment to get off the ground.<br><br>That is exactly what this £35 million is doing. It is closing the viability gap so that a flagship town centre housing scheme can actually happen. Without this funding, nothing would be built on that site – certainly nothing of the quality or scale that Prince's Gate will deliver.<br><br>And let me be clear: this is not money being thrown into a black hole. A significant proportion of the funding is an investment that will generate a return over time through rental income and the long-term value of the development. That return goes back into the Good Growth Fund and will support further housing schemes across Greater Manchester, including right here in Oldham.<br><br>What we are getting is not just 256 homes. We are getting a catalyst for restarting the housing market in our town centre, attracting new residents, supporting local shops and businesses, increasing footfall and spending, and helping us reshape Oldham as a place where people choose to live, not just pass through.<br><br>This is the first major scheme in our partnership with Muse, and it sends a powerful signal that Oldham is open for investment. It gives us momentum and credibility as we bring forward the next stages of our regeneration.<br><br>So yes, this is a large sum of money. But it is a smart, strategic, long-term investment in Oldham's future. And it is exactly the kind of backing we need and deserve after years of being overlooked by national government. This administration will continue to make the case for Oldham at every level of the system, and this £35 million shows what can be achieved when we do. |
| Cllr Sam Al-Hamdani | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, | The new regulator of social housing has raised serious concerns over the lack of accountability demonstrated by this council in its duties as a landlord. The | Thank you for your question.<br><br>Let me start by addressing the claim you have made. The Leader did not and hasn't ever suggested "scrutiny isn't needed" That is a |

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| | Corporate Services & Sustainability | Liberal Democrats have consistently called for deeper scrutiny and oversight, in line with the ruling now set out by the regulator. At the last council meeting, the Leader of the Council suggested she didn't understand why scrutiny was needed. Does the regulator's ruling make the need for scrutiny clear? And what steps is the council taking to address the serious concerns raised by the ombudsman. | complete misrepresentation. Indeed Cllr Shah is often scrutinised by members of this chamber. You cant have it both ways.<br><br>This administration has consistently championed transparency and accountability, and we have strengthened performance reporting across the organisation.<br><br>If the Liberal Democrat group genuinely believes scrutiny is important, then it would be helpful if they used the many opportunities available to them to do it. We have four scrutiny panels which regularly consider performance, and Cabinet meetings where decisions and reports can be examined in detail. Those forums exist for a reason. What we see far too often instead is political point-scoring in this chamber rather than serious engagement with the real issues residents face.<br><br>On the regulator's findings, let me reassure residents that we take our landlord responsibilities extremely seriously. The judgement relates to processes, not the safety or quality of people's homes. We have already increased staffing, strengthened monitoring, reshaped the governance arrangements and begun implementing a detailed action plan. Work with the regulator is underway and will continue with monthly meetings from January to demonstrate progress.<br><br>So yes, scrutiny matters. But it only works when people approach it with seriousness and a genuine desire to improve services, not to twist comments or manufacture political theatre.<br><br>Residents deserve better than that. And frankly, so does this chamber.<br><br>If the Liberal Democrats want to contribute meaningfully, then it is time to move away from misrepresentation and sarcasm, and start engaging in grown-up politics that focuses on helping Oldham improve. |

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| Cllr Alicia Marland | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability | The committees of this Council are how we drive forward the business and actions for the residents we serve but too frequently these meetings are cancelled. Often, the reason given is that the Officers reports were not ready. Six of the last eight Standards Committee meetings have been cancelled. Five in the last twelve Charitable Trusts Committee have been cancelled.<br><br>Can the Cabinet Member explain what this Council intends to do to prevent further cancellations and ensure Officers have the time and resources to prepare | There are various reasons why meetings are cancelled. For example, if there is no specific business that needs addressing at the time, then it would be inefficient to meet without any need.<br><br>The last meeting of Standards for example, was cancelled as we'd just had the Standards Sub-Committee hearing to consider the allegations related to one of the Liberal Democrat Councillors secretly recording internal meetings, and having spent the full day hearing this, it only ended in an apology, so it shows how serious (or not) some members take standards issues if that's the only outcome of such a serious matter.<br><br>The work of the Charitable Trust Committee doesn't just happen in those meetings. Much of the work takes place outside of meetings, and we're not aware of any matters that aren't already being progressed. |
| Councillor Al-Hamdani | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability | At the November council meeting, I asked the Leader if a Constitutional Working Group could be convened with a view to complete a set of recommendations in time for this meeting. The Leader agreed that a working group would be formed but nothing has happened since. Can the Leader or a member of the Cabinet please give a clear date by which the Constitutional Working Group will have met | The Leader did not agree to completing a set of recommendations in time for this council meeting, but she did give a commitment to convening the group.<br><br>Given the complexity and importance of the constitutional work ahead, it would have been unrealistic to expect the group to undertake the necessary work and bring forward substantive recommendations within such a short period, having only met 4 weeks ago.<br><br>As Councillor Al-Hamdani should be aware, the changes to the political balance made at the November meeting, has meant that we need to re-look at the membership of the Constitution Working Group, because as it's currently set up, Reform UK would not have a place on this group, which I am sure would have been challenged as being undemocratic, so we need to follow protocol, and take this back to Group Leaders next week to agree the changes to the membership. |

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| | | | Dates for the meeting have been issued, and we remain committed to progressing this work in a thorough and transparent way. |
| Councillor Al-Hamdani | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | Oldham's spending on planning per head of population has fallen from £47.09 per year (2023/24), to £33.05 per year (2024/25), to nearly one third of the average across England of £78.50. This is considerably lower than it has been this decade – even before allowing for inflation. In the first quarter of 2025/26 it decided 80% of major planning applications on time, compared to 100% in the year previous, and 83% of non-major planning applications on time, compared to over 90% in the year previous. In the last two quarters, 100% of appeals have been allowed, compared to around 10% in the same two quarters a year ago. Is it still the administration's contention that this cut in spending has had no impact on performance? And if so, how do they explain this significant underperformance? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>It would be helpful to understand the source of the statistics being quoted here, as they do not reflect the national KPIs that the council publishes.<br><br>The claim that 100% of appeals have been allowed in the last two quarters is certainly not correct, as reflected in the Planning Appeals update which is published with the papers at each Planning Committee.<br><br>The facts of the matter are that the council continues to perform well against the national KPIs, exceeding the targets in those KPIs for the determination of planning applications and appeal decisions.<br><br>In relation to spend on Planning, the Development Management service, which processes and assesses all planning applications submitted to the Council, is primarily funded through application fees and pre-application advice charges, and so costs the council revenue budget very little.<br><br>As such, the spend per year on planning will depend on the number, type and size of planning applications we receive, and the amount of income the service generates through pre-application advice. |
| Cllr Alicia Marland | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member | Many locations were impacted by the devastating outcome following storm Claudia and I would like to thank the Arborist Officers for the tireless work and | Thank you, Cllr Marland, for your question. |

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| | for Neighbourhoods | prompt responses to so many fallen trees that needed to be triaged and removed. I would like to ask the Cabinet Member if the Council automatically replace any fallen trees with new saplings in a nearby location to maintain the number of trees within that footprint? If it is a question of funding replacements, then I know there are over 100 new trees that were wrongly planted at Clayton Playing Fields which are due to be removed. | The total cost of replacing every tree lost in Storm Claudia will be in the region of £425,000 (based on 1000 trees at £425.00 each).<br><br>This will take at least two, probably three planting seasons and we have already started replacing these trees. We have a programme of 400 trees this year, and provided the external funding remains available, we will continue with a similar sized programme next planting season.<br><br>In addition to the 400 trees this year, we are planting 3 hectares of new woodland (7,500 saplings)<br><br>Future programmes will target areas and sites that were most affected by Storm Claudia.<br><br>Although Storm Claudia impacted our aim to increase tree cover from 11.9% to 15% within a generation, but we are still on target to achieve that goal.<br><br>Following the Charity Committee recommendations, we are reviewing opportunities for the trees to be replanted from Clayton Playing Fields – this will be considered in conjunction with the planned response to damage caused by Storm Claudia. |
| Cllr Garth Harknes s | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | Wards have waited considerable time to get gullies cleaned. In many areas some gullies have clearly not been cleared for a number of years and need digging out. In my ward I see that some of the easier gullies have been cleaned but many are on the “too hard for now pile”. This increases the risk of flooding and the need for repeated pothole filling. This is a false economy. When will the council come up with a plan to deal with the more challenging gullies? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>The gully cleansing programme commenced late September 2024 to progressively work through all 47,500 gullies in the borough using two gully wagons, one being brought in additionally just for the task.<br><br>After just over a year, out of the 20 wards in the borough, the programme has visited over half of these, currently progressing in the 11th ward, achieving an initial clearance rate of between 70 & 80% on average. |

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| | | | The aim of the programme is to clear as many gullies as possible as quickly as possible. This reduces any overall risk considerably across the wider borough.<br><br>Gullies that have been found to be either more solidly blocked or inaccessible are now being dealt with, with one team currently going through the first wards on the programme again. Some gullies need digging out, others repairing, and some accessed by removal of parked cars – this process is happening in parallel.<br><br>Members are helping operatives where possible to ensure cars are moved in advance. Teams will inform ward members when a revisit to the ward is made.<br><br>In accordance with the Council's stated policy on the website, ad hoc visits to clear gullies where there is a significant risk of internal flooding or highway safety will take place as part of the routine reactive highways maintenance service.<br><br>The approach outlined above, coupled with the financial investment is clearly delivering on the commitment we made to the residents. We will continue to work on this programme, ensuring every gulley on the adopted network is cleared or repaired – this includes those that are blocked or need a 'dig-out'. This has been stated previously and this position remains unchanged. |
| Cllr Bishop | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | Does the Cabinet Member support the principle of two stopping trains per hour throughout the day to Manchester from Greenfield Station? | Thank you for your question Cllr Bishop.<br><br>Yes, in principle we support anything that makes things better for the people of Oldham. Reliable, frequent, and accessible transport links are central to improving opportunities, strengthening connectivity, and enhancing quality of life across the borough. We will continue to work closely with rail operators to make this possible, and we recognise the importance of Greenfield Station as a vital gateway for local residents and businesses |

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| Cllr Murphy | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highway | Oldham Council announced plans to improve road safety and help improve traffic flow in four locations by introducing average speed cameras. However, the initial draft scheme has had to be reworked as it was planned to have speed cameras on streetlighting poles, which is not allowed under our contract with EON, who maintain the borough's streetlighting. Why was this not checked before the plans were drawn up? How much extra has it cost to draw up the plans twice and who will foot the bill? And given that these sites were due to be up and running this year, how much longer is this going to be delayed? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>The safety camera replacement scheme, including the Average Speed Camera sites is a project wholly designed, managed and funded by TfGM.<br><br>Their initial scheme designs utilised existing Lamp Columns to accommodate enforcement equipment. However, upon discussion with Eon, our street lighting partner, it was discovered that the contract specifically prohibits speed enforcement cameras being mounted on lighting columns.<br><br>TfGM's design partner is currently redesigning the schemes, at no cost to Oldham Council, that will use standalone camera posts that will have minimum impact on the streetscape.<br><br>TfGM have confirmed that implementation of the Oldham ASC schemes will be in 2026, with a detailed programme to be shared once confirmed. |
| Cllr Kenyon | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | In February 2023, Oldham's Cabinet progressed a decision on the adoption of powers to enforce yellow box markings in the borough. Subsequently plans were brought forward to introduce camera enforcement at two sites, at the M60/A62 junction in Hollinwood, and the Lees Road/Glodwick Road junction at Oldham Mumps. However, due to a lack of funding, the sites are still not operating. Given the clear need for enforcement, following the consultation which led to the adoption of enforcement powers, and the sheer frustration of drivers who regularly get stuck in traffic at these locations, do you think the Council will be able to introduce these measures to help tackle the congestion and improve the situation | Thank you for your question.<br><br>Although powers to enforce Moving Traffic Offences (MTO) such as yellow box markings have existed for some time, the necessary funding to deliver the schemes has not.<br><br>The only funding that has so far been identified and utilised to implement enforcement using camera technology was for the Medlock Way School Street. Other School Streets with camera enforcement are in the pipeline and details will be shared in due course.<br><br>Given the extent of the ask, further external funding will be sought for the 26/27 Highways Capital Budget to expand the roll-out of camera based enforcement for MTOs. |

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| | | at these locations before 2027 – which is after all a mere four years after the decision was taken? | |
| Cllr Bishop | Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills | Oldham has a higher proportion of religious schools than most of our neighbours and similar local authorities. What impact assessment has been carried out following the recent Supreme Court ruling in Northern Ireland relating to lawful provision of religious education in primary schools? | Thank you for this question. Whilst an impact assessment has not been undertaken, Council has received guidance from the Advisor to Oldham SACRE and this will be considered at the next meeting of this statutory committee.<br><br>In Northern Ireland, the law mandated a Christian-based RE syllabus and a daily act of Christian worship. The High Court ruled that this framework was unlawful because it failed to provide an objective, critical, and pluralistic approach to religion, as required by the European Convention on Human Rights. The judge also held that relying on the parental right to withdraw did not fix the lack of neutrality. The ruling required the Northern Irish Department of Education to review its RE and collective worship arrangements.<br><br>Though the ruling does not apply in England, it does send important signals.<br><br>RE should be non-confessional. RE must be balanced, pluralistic, and not promote one tradition. Both the Diocesan Syllabus and Oldham's Believing and Belonging syllabus already deliver this.<br><br>RE should ensure the inclusion of non-religious worldviews. Oldham's Believing and Belonging does this and was developed in consultation with Humanist members and reviewed by Sentientist representatives.<br><br>Parental withdrawal cannot compensate for imbalance. In Oldham, RE and worship is inclusive for all schools following the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the Diocesan Syllabus.<br><br>Collective worship in England may become more contestable. All schools must offer a daily act of worship that is "broadly Christian" usually through assemblies. Where schools feel this is not |

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| | | | appropriate, they may apply for a SACRE determination. The Northern Ireland ruling may prompt consideration of this law. |
| Cllr Williamson | Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People | The number of care leavers aged 19-21 in Oldham who are in education, employment or training is 12% lower than the North West average. What extra resources is the Administration making available to support care leavers into training, employment and further education? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Williamson<br><br>Enabling more care leavers to engage education, employment and training (EET)is a key priority for the Council. Benchmarking against the Northwest for Care Leavers in EET is a 12% gap for 2023/24 however this gap has narrowed significantly – 2024/25 it is 8% and improving still. It is very pleasing to see that more care leavers than in the past five years are in education, employment or training, with current performance 55% for young people aged 19-21.<br><br>The improvement activity has been achieved thanks to close partnership working in Children's Services with Get Oldham Working, the Department for Work and Pensions, Housing providers and Adult Social Care. In addition, supporting and monitoring young people's education and employment plans with the council's education service, Virtual School, SEND, local colleges and the apprenticeships department have also assisted more care leavers into EET. |
| Cllr Kenyon | Cllr Shaid Mushtaq – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People | The news about the possible closure of the Autism Youth Service has caused much worry and stress to parents and children across the borough. Will the Cabinet Member reconsider the closure and agree with me that the £65k annual budget for AYC is money very well spent? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Kenyon.<br><br>There are no plans to close the Autism Youth Club. The Autism Youth Club is under review to ensure the service delivery reaches as many children as possible, especially given the year on year increase of children with SEND across Oldham. By increasing the universal offer in the local community, we are working towards improved engagement, accessibility, positive outcomes and increased social inclusion for SEND young people.<br><br>The consultation process for the AYC has engaged staff and parent / carers and a resolution is nearing whereby our fantastic Youth Service will take over operational responsibility whilst also ensuring that as many children as possible continue to benefit from the Autism Youth Club. Officers are ensuring that there will |

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| | | | be the least amount of disruption for children and families through an extended transition period at the start of the year. The decision to review is not a financial one and the budget for the club will be retained as part of any transition, and work is underway to explore an expansion of the offer within the current budget. |
| Cllr Kenyon | Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbein | With reference to the recent report before cabinet on 17th Nov regarding the contract for Domestic Property Disability Adaptions Framework for the Provision of Level Access Showers and Shower over Baths, the report states that the overall contract spend to date exceeds spending controls (the council's contract procedure rules). The rules allow you to go over budget by 15% whereas actual overspend is 36% or £800,000.<br><br>I don't think anyone is denying the ethical good of providing help to modify peoples' homes, but what I'd like to know is why were the spending controls ignored? Who allowed the rules to be ignored and when did the cabinet member first become aware that the rules were being broken? The rules are there for a reason, especially whilst this council is facing a £20M blackhole, and if one department can ignore them then why not others? | Our vision for Adult Social Care in Oldham is to support individuals to live independently, healthy, safe and well. As you rightly point out this service enables for that to happen and works to our operating model in terms of prevention and enabling people to live as independently for as long as possible in their own homes.<br><br>This extension allows continuity of essential provision providing Officers time to continue monitoring the success of the framework in place and consider procurement options for future contractual arrangements. Consideration will be given and built into the procurement pipeline in terms of future contracting, including consideration of joint approaches with neighbouring authorities.<br><br>The spending controls have not been ignored through the lifetime of the contracts within this framework.<br><br>Please be aware, that as a statutory service the council is not in a position to decline an adaptation that someone has been assessed as requiring. In addition, the service continues to experience increasing costs for building works for these adaptations. Oldham, like many other localities are seeing a greater demand for adaptations for bathing. Additionally, there has been a rise in complex cases where households are assessed as requiring multiple adaptations. All of which often surpasses the maximum grant provided to Oldham.<br><br>The member will be aware that Oldham has a lower-than-average healthy life expectancy as well having an increasing number of children with disabilities. Whilst some of this is covered through Oldham's allocation of the Disabled Facilities Grant (£2.9m this |

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| | | | year) in the quarter of 2024/25 Oldham Council agreed to top up the budget by £1m from the capital budget due to the demand on the service and pressure on the budget. As Cabinet Member I receive regular updates on this services' activity and spend, with Cabinet ratifying this additional funding through the budget setting process for 2025/26. |
| Cllr Al-Hamdani | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | Although the number of households on the household waiting list in Oldham has fallen between 2023/24 and 2024/25, it is still significantly higher than at any point since 2019, where it was only 57.7 per 1000 households – it is now 80.9 per 1000 households. Is the Cabinet Member disappointed by the Council's failure to stop this figure getting to the current levels? | Thank you for the question.<br><br>Over the last few months, the Housing Options team have been carrying out a data-cleansing exercise, to ensure the information kept on the system is up to date and accurate. This is following on from the introduction of the new Housing I.T system last year. This has allowed us to further reduce the number of households on the register to the equivalent of 64.8 per 1,000 households in the Borough, by removing from the system duplicate and historic applications that are no longer required.<br><br>Our proposed new allocations policy, on which consultation has recently finished, will seek to further improve how we ensure that we make the best use of housing in the Borough to meet the challenges of the current national housing crisis.<br><br>Nevertheless, the availability of social housing is still a significant ongoing challenge, with on average only 64 social homes becoming available each month.<br><br>As colleagues will be aware, we therefore also have an ambitious programme of house-building lined up, with sites across the Borough being brought forward, in order to ease the strain in the local housing market. Current projections are that 2,700 new homes will be built in the Borough over the next 4 years, including 500 social homes. |
| Cllr Kenyon | Cllr Barbara Brownridge – Cabinet Member | Can the Cabinet Member comment on the recent estimate of 600 jobs at risk as a result of the new operating model to be introduced for Greater Manchester | In March the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced plans to abolition NHS England and merge its functions into the Department of Health and Social Care and at the same time to cut ICB running costs by 50%. It is not |

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| | for Adults, Health & Wellbeing | Integrated Care Board. Does she agree with Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham that the government's NHS England reforms present a risk to the Greater Manchester 'Live<br><br>Well' model for healthcare in the community? What kind of jobs are affected in Oldham? How many of these 600 jobs at risk are employees based in this borough? Will they confirm what they are doing to minimise job losses in Oldham? | appropriate to speculate on the number of people in Greater Manchester but the running costs will be reduced by £44m in the next financial year. Consultation on a new operating model is now underway and there are likely to be two rounds of voluntary redundancy offered to enable those reductions. However, should that be insufficient then it is likely compulsory redundancies will have to follow. I know officers are working hard to redesign ways of working so as to protect as much of the neighbourhood and preventative model as possible. If Member colleagues would like an outline of that then I am sure our Deputy Chief Executive for health and care will be more than happy to support Members. |
| Cllr Marland | Cllr Peter Dean – Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure | The number of children and adults in Oldham Borough who are classed as physically less active is 10% higher than the English average.<br><br>What strategies is the Cabinet Member delivering that will encourage healthy active lives for people of all ages across Oldham Borough? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Marland.<br><br>We recognise that Physical inactivity is a significant challenge in Oldham, and we are committed to reversing this trend by creating opportunities for our residents of all ages to lead healthy, happy, and active lives.<br><br>Our approach is based on various strategies, but I would like to highlight three today.<br><br>First, expanding access for our communities to Move More.<br><br>We are working with schools, community groups, and Oldham Active to ensure that affordable, and inclusive opportunities are available across the borough. This includes free or low-cost activities and spaces in our parks, community centres and leisure facilities, as well as targeted programmes or support for those who face the greatest barriers to activity.<br><br>Public Health Move More colleagues have also secured over £290k of external funding to improve the quality of 17 Tennis courts in our parks, and 5 Non-Turf Cricket Pitches across |

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| | | | Oldham. High quality facilities, which are hyper local in the heart of our communities will support more people to Move More.<br><br>Second, embedding physical activity into everyday lives, so that people Move More in a way that suits them.<br><br>Through initiatives such as Active Travel, School Streets, and the Place Partnership, we are encouraging walking, wheeling and cycling as part of daily routines across our borough.<br><br>We are also supporting workplace wellbeing programmes, and I'm pleased to say the introduction of the Oldham Active Corporate Membership for Oldham Council staff, many of who live in Oldham have been really well received, with close to 350 staff signing up in the first nine months.<br><br>Third, Campaigns and Partnerships.<br><br>We will continue to align with regional and national campaigns like the Greater Manchester Walking Festival, the National Fitness Day and School Sport Week. Delivering these campaigns and events locally support to raise awareness of the high number of benefits of being active.<br><br>Our partnerships with Public Health, local organisations, and various other council departments ensure that we are working alongside our communities to support them to Move More in a way that suits them. Our fantastic Community Health Champions have recently undergone some training around Physical Activity and the Great Oldham Outdoors, and they are now able to ensure that these important messages reach all communities, from trusted local champions.<br><br>These strategies are underpinned by our commitment to tackle inequalities and inactivity, so that everyone, regardless of age, ability, or background has the chance to enjoy the benefits of Moving More and Feeling Better. |

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| Cllr Sykes | Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise | This week it has been reported that Oldham is the second most difficult borough in Greater Manchester to find employment in. This follows the loss of more than 370 jobs at the closed Yodel site in Shaw. The situation is likely to worsen, given Oldham Borough's gap in post-16 education provision for entry level courses and apprenticeships. What is the administration doing to address Oldham's employment crisis and bring well-paid, secure and rewarding jobs to Oldham Borough? | Thank you Cllr Sykes for your question. The report you refer to uses vacancy data which is significantly unreliable. When we launched Get Oldham Working in 2013 it was on the back of a campaign that there were no jobs in Oldham but the team has proved that wrong. Since 2013 the Get Oldham Working team has sourced 21,600 opportunities and supported more than 16,500 residents into work. The Government's data shows that Oldham has seen a 15.9% increase in jobs since 2015.<br><br>However, we recognise we always strive to help residents find good jobs in Oldham and across the City Region, a region that has seen significant economic growth.<br><br>That is why the Council is working closely with GMCA, MIDAS and others to create Growth Location plans that will support job creation across Oldham and into key sites such as Atom Valley.<br><br>Finally the Council launched its new Employment and Skills strategy which sets out how the skills agenda will align with the future growth sectors to help more people access the qualifications they need to get good, well paid jobs which will be in construction, green technology, health, digital and manufacturing. We can demonstrate a position of strength and positive growth. |
| Cllr Shoab Aktar | Cllr Fida Hussain – Cabinet Member for Enterprise | At the last Council meeting in November you reported that 148 businesses were signed up and a further 180 were waiting to be onboarded on the Oldham Trading Platform. Does this list include MUSE, Wilmot Dixon, Rowan Ashworth and Casey's if not why not as they are one of the largest spenders of the Council's capital budget? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>As part of our commitment to social value it's really important for us to ensure that local businesses benefit from local spend and as such the Oldham Trading Platform is a vital enabler of this.<br><br>Discussions are ongoing with a number of the Council's main contractors to on-board them on to the platform, so that they can engage directly with Oldham's local businesses, and so that local businesses can benefit from the project / capital budgets available. |

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| | | Also, if these big spenders are on the list then what have they offered for local procurement? | In the interim, our partners and contractors have shared opportunities via the trading platform and held presentations, meetings and workshops in the Hive to provide more detailed briefings for local businesses on the opportunities they are involved in. These sessions also allowed local businesses to register an interest in supplying materials, providing services, equipment, and sub-contracting with the main contractors to ensure the same opportunities are realised ahead of fully using the Oldham Trading Platform directly.<br><br>There are many reports available which detail the local spend, local providers, local businesses who have benefitted from these local procurement opportunities. I will ask officers to ensure this information is made available and a future topic for Place Scrutiny Committee to review. |
| Cllr Shoab Aktar | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | Residents regularly complain about potholes and the perceived patchiness of repairs. You say capital resurfacing spend this year will be around £3m plus other surfacing works. Will you publish an accessible list and interactive map of all planned resurfacing and preventative works for 2026–27 so residents can see where their money is being spent? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>I note that your question relates to next financial year, 26-27, but I would first just like to indicate that this current financial year, 25-26, there is a list on the Council website indicating the current planned capital funded highways works and their locations – we have done this over the last few years - this will in fact be updated just after the Christmas break to include additional monies from central government via TfGM / GMCA, that Oldham Council has been awarded for highways maintenance works.<br><br>As for the next year, we will continue to provide a list once we are aware the level of our funding award. The works considered most necessary have been selected through a data /evidence led process, and it is approved at Cabinet – we can certainly look into the provision of a map / plan on the Council website, indicating the locations of these works across the highways network so these works are more visible to all. |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member | 1. The most recent announcement by the Leader of the Council on the TFGM and Oldham Council led changes to Rochdale | Thank you for your question, Cllr Quigg. |

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| | for Transport & Highways | Road, Royton are to put it mildly unpopular.<br><br>As the only Councillor from Royton to attend a call which announced the changes back in 2024 and through three subsequent meetings with the Council and TFGM since, I have been consistent in saying that the removal of the railings on Rochdale Road are unwanted and dangerous. No number of guidelines can take away from the growth in bars since the railings were put in, and the basic commonsense that they stop people crossing the most important road in Royton. It is the main arterial road for Royton and these changes are sadly set to make things worse.<br><br>The railings were put in because of a Coroner's report. Worse the narrowing of the road to install planting, the removal of the right turn off High Barn Street, the installation of a bus stop outside a local restaurant and bar will also be dangerous. The bus stop shelter will result in the exit of the upstairs bar being blocked by the bus stop, creating a hazard, and stopping traffic on Rochdale Road.<br><br>TFGM and Oldham Council in a site visit didn't even know that yards away at the side of the Railway pub picked up | Oldham Council and our delivery partners at Transport for Greater Manchester welcome your interest in the scheme and want to ensure the design proposals are informed by the views of the public and stakeholders, whilst also incorporating and meeting design standards and guidance throughout the scheme design.<br><br>To date, public feedback has been received through two rounds of engagement and a six-week consultation, which led to various changes in the scheme design.<br><br>We note your comments on the planned removal of sections of the guardrail within the Royton scheme design – others have also submitted the same concerns, especially with regards to the Coroners remarks. Public safety is a priority for any project and it continues to be a key element of the improvements in Royton.<br><br>The railings are under review and we will update ward members and other interested stakeholders as soon as we can given the level of concern on this matter. |

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| | | passengers from the 181/182 bus service as well as the 409.<br><br>Contractors have already been appointed and the works are set to commence next year.<br><br>It is important to remember that should any deaths occur then it will be on this Council and TFGM, for failing to listen.<br><br>The Council and TFGM need to listen, given the people of Royton know the area better than most and it seems they are simply being ignored. | |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | Provide an update on what action has been taken to either secure, prosecute or take enforcement action on Park Lane House, the Old Dog & Partridge Pub and Thornham Mill?<br><br>Can the relevant cabinet member please provide a pounds and pence cost of action taken? | Thank you for your question, Cllr Quigg – while I can provide you with an update on the actions taken, I cannot provide you with pounds and pence costs at this time, given much of the action to date involves officer time.<br><br><u>Thornham Mill -</u><br><br>Officers have dealt with a number of matters on this site, including fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, access concerns, and reports of broken glass effecting footpaths. These issues have all been investigated and resolved in conjunction with the owners of the site. Planning Enforcement officers have also visited the site to ensure compliance with S215 requirements. I can advise that no enforcement costs have been placed against the above works given the routine nature of the concerns raised, and the site owners compliance to provide a timely resolution to complete all the necessary works.<br><br><u>Dog & Partridge Pub -</u> |

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| | | | Site visits have been made following reports of caravans on site. Compliance work remains on going. To date, no costs have been incurred other than routine officer time.<br><br><u>Park Lane House –</u><br><br>Planning enforcement officers have visited the site in response to complaints about the condition of the property. A S215 notice was issued but it appears that the company owning the site is now in liquidation. As a result, the S215 notice was withdrawn. Conversations are taking place with the Crown Estate to determine their intentions with the building. In the meantime, Council officers continue to monitor the situation. To date, no costs have been incurred other than routine officer time. |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth | 3. Can the Council confirm what the costs have been to install and remove the three flag poles outside the JR Clynes building and why there are three flag-poles and why they were taken down? | Thank you for your question Cllr Quigg.<br><br>The flag poles cost £8,500 to install and there was no additional cost to them being taken down due to the unprecedented winds caused by Storm Claudia.<br><br>We hope to re-install them as soon as possible: this will also be done by the on-site contractor at no extra cost to the Council. |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | 4. Can the Council provide a total cost over the past year of clearing fly tipping on New Coin Street Royton and what preventative measures the Council intend to put in place to stop the criminal activity of fly tipping? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>The teams don't record fly tipped waste on a street-by-street basis, and therefore, we cannot provide an exact cost for this location.<br><br>Proactive steps to address fly tipping include signage and deployment of CCTV at suitable locations. Fine and conviction information is also shared to serve as a deterrence where evidence is found identifying those responsible for the waste.<br><br>Previous CCTV deployment in this area was subject to vandalism, but we continue to investigate all instances of fly tipping to identify those responsible. |

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| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Arooj Shah – Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth | 5. Does the now "award-winning" Council Leader think they are deserving of such and award given:<br><br>1. The failure to stop the overpayment of Councillors since 2022.<br><br>2. Is struggling to balance the books with a £20 million black hole increasing by a further £3 million since, whereby non-essential spending has now been paused including a recruitment freeze.<br><br>3. A 10-year-old boy ended up in hospital amid 'potentially life-threatening' neglect following a shocking 'oversight' by Oldham council, a report has found.<br><br>4. The damning report by the Regulator of Social Housing which raised serious concerns about the management of social housing in Oldham.<br><br>Does the Leader or Cabinet believe that the public reaction to this award was received in a less than positive light given the clear and present problems the Council and Borough faces? | Thank you for your question.<br><br>Yes I do think I deserve this award and more importantly I think it's a recognition of the hard work and commitment of all of our staff across all services.<br><br>It's easy to pick out the negatives in life but let me dwell more on the positives, the difference this council has made to the lives of the people of Oldham and in improving the borough.<br><br>A Children's Services showing continued improvement including a fantastic focused visit as a follow up to our ILAACs, visits to our Adolescent Support Unit and our residential homes.<br><br>The highest percentage of good and outstanding schools Oldham has ever had<br><br>Improving attainment and attendance across our schools<br><br>A council beating its target to build new, much needed houses for Oldham people<br><br>Seven new family hubs open to more and more families and providing vital preventative services in our communities<br><br>A welfare rights team that has helped put millions of pounds into the pockets of Oldham people<br><br>Bringing in millions of pounds of grant funding to deliver our ambitious regeneration programme including new town centre homes, a park, a new future for the Coliseum and bringing back to life a range of heritage buildings.<br><br>No organisation gets everything right but the measure of a good organisation is how it responds to those things. |

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| | | | I could go on and on with example after example of the amazing work our people do every day but I'll end by saying that I think its about time the people elected to improve this place started wanting what's best for it instead of tearing down every bit of progress or every bit of good news. |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Abdul Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability | 6. Can the Council confirm why it paid the former Deputy Chief Executive £97k, the former Managing Director of Children walked away with £23k, and the former Borough Solicitor £236k?<br>Confirm that there are no non-disclosure agreements in place? | Simply, because they were contractually entitled to those payments.<br><br>The issue with non-disclosure arrangements is that they are not disclosable. |
| Cllr Quigg | Cllr Elaine Taylor – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods | 7. Whether Councillors, campaigners and residents are safe following the car fire-bomb attack on a candidate from the Oldham Group? Can the Council also provide an update on whether they are working with Greater Manchester Police to find the perpetrators and whether this case and the previous case of the Leader of the Councils car firebomb attack in 2021 mean our streets are now unsafe? | Thank you for your question Cllr.<br><br>We are aware that there are noises being made online making allegations and implying this incident was politically motivated.<br><br>The police have confirmed that there is no evidence of any political motivation and there is no additional risk to elected members. Perhaps we should listen to them instead of online nonsense.<br><br>In relation to the council's involvement in the investigation into this and the arson attack on the Leaders car the simple answer is no, it would be entirely inappropriate for the council to be involved in the investigation of a crime. The police have an important job to do – it's about time they were allowed to do it without people politicising things. |
| Cllr Sheldon | Cllr Mohon Ali – Cabinet Member for Education & Skills | The joint Ofsted/CQC monitoring inspection recognised progress on SEND, but the formal report will set out remaining weaknesses. What are the top three areas where inspectors still expect significant improvement, and what | Thank you Cllr Sheldon for your question.<br><br>Following the Local Area SEND monitoring inspection, I want to emphasise that no areas of weakness were identified. The main areas for further development that the Local Area Partnership are committed to strengthening will be outlined when the report is published, which is currently embargoed. The current SEND and |

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| | | additional resources or reforms are you putting in place to address them? | Inclusion Improvement Plan will be reviewed to include the feedback received. |
| Cllr Sheldon | Cllr Chris Goodwin – Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways | I recently went on holiday with my wife diane to Formentara.<br><br>We flew from Manchester to Ibiza and return in September after the school holidays.<br><br>On both journeys, all passengers were boarded on time, only to be told there would be an hour delay before we had permission from air control to take off.<br><br>On our return journey the pilot used the hour delay to speak with passengers and I was able to have a conversation with him.<br><br>He informed me that these delays were becoming the norm due to the amount of air traffic flying over London air space, and his outlook was that the situation would only become worse as passenger numbers increased<br><br>As a stake holder in Manchester Airport, Can Oldham council ask how the airport plan to remedy this situation.<br><br>For Oldham residents who are fortunate enough to be flying on holiday next summer , we need assurance that long delays will not be the norm and this service to all travellers is improved. | Thanks for your questions Cllr Sheldon.<br><br>I'm sorry to hear about your experiences, delays while travelling abroad can be infuriating. However, I'm not sure that Manchester Airport has any jurisdiction over the use of airspace throughout the UK. You may want to direct your concerns to the appropriate body. |