



Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Key Achievements at a Glance – 2025/26

Adult Social Care

- Maintained safe, statutory Adult Social Care services during a year of sustained demand, workforce pressure and national system stress.
- Strengthened performance oversight and assurance through clearer, more transparent reporting to Members.
- Led extensive preparation for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment, embedding a stronger culture of improvement and accountability.
- Stabilised services while progressing necessary transformation and financial sustainability work.

Public Health

- Delivered nationally recognised public health impact, including successful micro-elimination of Hepatitis C through local drug and alcohol services.
- Continued strong focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing health inequalities across the life course.
- Strengthened use of data, insight and evidence to target investment and maximise impact for residents.

Integrated Care Partnership with the NHS

- Further matured Oldham's Integrated Care Partnership, moving from shared ambition into clearer delivery and governance.
- Strengthened neighbourhood-based and integrated working with NHS partners.
- Provided consistent place-based leadership during a period of significant NHS reform and pressure.

Adult Social Care

The difficulty of providing a demand led service for Adult Social Care at a time of increased demand financial constraints and workforce pressures is a national crisis which has necessitated a national review by Louise Casey.

Oldham is obviously not immune from these pressures which is why it is fantastic that we can celebrate the fact that we are doing so well despite them. The main focus has been on managing demand by supporting our residents to help themselves to remain independent safe and well in their own homes and communities. This approach has been wholeheartedly adopted by the staff and is already bearing fruit in that we have not seen any big increase in the overall numbers of people going into care.

What is most important is that this approach has been fully endorsed by the inspection that has just been completed by the Care Quality Commission. The inspection involved a great deal of work lasting almost six months including the preparation of a huge suite of documents including most importantly a self-assessment of the service itself which presented a good opportunity to identify opportunities to improve practice.

The assessment looked at how the council supports adults who need care and support, including older people, adults with disabilities, people with mental health needs, and carers and considered four key themes – working with people; providing support; ensuring safety, leadership and learning.

The service was rated Good which is a real achievement and even better the overall assessment score, of 67, places Oldham in the top third of service provision based on the published assessment reports of over 100 local authorities in England.

The CQC praised Oldham for its strong leadership, positive culture, and person-centred approach, with most people telling assessors they had a good experience of local services. Assessors also highlighted the empathy, professionalism, and clear communication shown by ASC staff. Residents described the support they receive as “outstanding” and spoke highly of the advice they were given, including on safeguarding and financial matters.

Partnership working was also identified as a key strength, with Oldham commended for working closely with health services, care providers and community organisations to deliver joined up, coordinated support.

The CQC also praised Oldham’s safeguarding arrangements, noting strong leadership oversight, effective systems, and a well-coordinated multi-agency approach to keeping people safe.

In response to the report, ASC is working on plans that focus on both addressing areas of continuous improvement and building on the good work highlighted throughout the report.

The rating of Good is an excellent result for Oldham and a real credit to our staff and partners. ASC supports some of the most vulnerable people in our borough, helping older residents, people with disabilities and those with complex needs to live with independence, dignity and choice. It has raised our profile locally and nationally and will make a positive contribution to the recruitment and retention of staff.

This has only been possible however due to the staff that we already have. From management to the front line, they have embraced the new ways of working focussing on prevention and early intervention and through the inspection process demonstrated their commitment and enthusiasm and I am delighted to put on record my thanks for all that they have done and will continue to do.

Public Health

This service also focusses on early intervention and prevention and this is showing results although, as they often involve lifestyle changes, they do not happen overnight.

The weight management service in Oldham (Your Health Oldham) has faced significant challenges due to high demand, which resulted in long waiting times for Oldham residents. Your Health Oldham have been successful in reducing the waiting list by 50% over the last 6 months by implementing innovative new approaches. Among these approaches is a group ‘My Story’ initial assessment. As well as encouraging faster movement through the service from the point of referral, feedback shows that this approach has delivered a positive experience for service users.

January 2026 saw the launch of a new strategic approach to improving the health and wellbeing of Oldham residents ‘Creating Healthy Lives in Oldham’. This approach is informed by evidence that tells us that our physical and mental wellbeing is shaped by the environment in which we live, our access to nutritious food, and opportunities to move more. The Move More Alliance, Food Environments Alliance, and Healthy Weight Alliance, will drive this strategic approach by bringing together partners from across the system. The alliances will take a community-led and compassionate approach to improving health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities faced by Oldham residents.

Data and intelligence shared by OHID has demonstrated the disproportionate impact of tobacco for people who experience other addictions, such as with drugs or alcohol. National and regional evidence suggests that a more tailored approach to smoking cessation is needed for this group. Oldham public health team have responded to this intelligence by bringing Your Health Oldham smoking cessation service together with our adult substance misuse service, Turning Point. Tailored smoking cessation support, with the benefit of peer mentors, is now accessible from within Turning Point services.

There has been significant achievement in dealing with hepatitis C through the Oldham Drug and Alcohol Service which shows the effectiveness of targeted intervention for those at most risk.

NHS Greater Manchester:

Strengthening integration with the NHS through the Oldham Integrated Care Partnership is a key priority. Over the year the partnership had developed with clear governance and a shared understanding of common priorities with constructive discussions taking place at the regular meetings which are well attended by a wide range of partners.

Progress has also been made on neighbourhood based models of care supporting a change to services that are organised around people communities and prevention rather than administrative boundaries. The council has acted as a leader in this working with the NHS and the voluntary and community sector with the emphasis on practical collaboration in the context of our resident first focus.

The strength of local relationships has enabled more effective joint working and shared problem solving against a backdrop of national reform and financial constraints.

NHS 5 Year Commissioning Strategy NHS GM has now completed its medium-term plan, which was compliant to national standards and been submitted to NHS England. Overall, it is stretching but focussed on what was within the gift of the ICB, whilst also aligning with wider the GM Strategy. Our Oldham team will be working on ensuring that it is implemented accordingly across Oldham where necessary.

Anti-Racism Campaign NHS Greater Manchester is coming together to work on an Anti- Racism campaign which aims to tackle the worrying rise in racist and discriminatory behaviour being experienced by health and care staff across all settings in GM including within Oldham. The campaign, which is being spear-headed by the Greater Manchester Mayor aims to increase public awareness of what racist and discriminatory behaviours look like and the harm they cause and crucially reduce incidents by setting clearer public expectations of behaviour with a 'calling in' approach. The campaign will launch on 27th March with a 2-minute hard-hitting film shown through the eyes of day in the life of a health professional who experiences various forms racism as she goes throughout her day.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report.