The last five years has seen a significant programme of change for Oldham Council and a lot of work has gone into transforming how public services are delivered in the borough.

Our aim is to ensure that residents are getting the best value for money and also receiving the best possible service. This work could not be delivered without our workforce.

We have a fantastic team which work together with one aim in mind – delivering co-operative services.

Being a co-operative council means we are committed to developing a co-operative future; one where residents, partners and staff work together to improve the borough and create a confident and ambitious place.

A co-operative borough is about everybody doing their bit and everybody benefitting.

Becoming part of the council at this exciting time is a really good opportunity for you to contribute to the transformation of Oldham as a place and as an authority.

We aim for the best and encourage our people to share their ideas and to be part of the bigger team.

Working at Oldham Council provides a fantastic opportunity for anyone who has the determination and ambition to make a real difference.

The information in this pack is designed to provide you with information on Social Work in Oldham.

You can find out more at www.oldham.gov.uk and your council jobs pages.
We're building a co-operative borough – one where the council works alongside partners, businesses and residents to realise our ambitions for Oldham.

Our aspiration for Oldham is central to this. We want to create a more vibrant, revitalised borough that plays a key role in Greater Manchester.

We want to capitalise on our current offer – our excellent location, convenient transport links and our history and heritage to build the Oldham of the future.

There are a wealth of opportunities for residents and families and we want to work alongside people who are equally committed to these ambitions.

It is against this background and at a time when we are undertaking a major journey of regeneration to refresh our town to adapt to a changing world, that you consider Oldham Council as your next employer.

To achieve that regeneration and maintain excellence during one of the most financially challenging periods in the history of local government is no small task.

Our ambition is: “To deliver a co-operative future where everyone does their bit to create a confident and ambitious borough.”

That’s why it’s vital we have a strong plan, a clear vision and a strong set of values and behaviours in place to guide us.

I would encourage you to take some time to read and understand those values and behaviours, and to use the information in this pack to support your decision to apply for a role here in Oldham.

Dr Carolyn Wilkins OBE, Chief Executive

Councillor Jean Stretton, Leader of Oldham Council

We have a clear set of values that outline how we do business. We share these borough-wide with our residents, partners and businesses.
Our structure – Health and Wellbeing

Oldham Council has four directorates.
- Chief Executives
- Corporate and Commercial Services
- Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods,
- Health and Wellbeing

Each directorate is responsible for multiple different work streams and all work towards the same co-operative goal of making Oldham a better place to live and work.

Social work sits within the Health and Wellbeing directorate. Read more about our dedicated team below.

**Maggie Kufeldt (Executive Director)**

Maggie joined Oldham Council in 2010 from Stockport Council where she held the role of Head of Integrated Commissioning.

Originally an Assistant Executive Director for Joint Commissioning she led the joint working programme across the council and Oldham Primary Care Trust (now the Clinical Commissioning Group).

Recently Maggie has taken the lead role for adult services and developed a programme that will focus on supporting people to be as independent as possible and integrating services with health partners.

**Alan Higgins (Director of Public Health)**

Alan has been the Director of Public Health for Oldham since 2002 and was an executive director on The Primary Care Trust Board.

He is also the vice chair of the Greater Manchester Public Health Network and leads on alcohol, tuberculosis and social determinants of health for the network. He has led the work to establish Greater Manchester as a front runner in the promotion of minimum price per unit of alcohol, which aims to reduce the widespread harm and cost of excessive alcohol consumption.

He is leading the development of council-led public health in Oldham, with particular interests in cultural change and health and community development as a core public health tool, in addition to statutory responsibilities.

**Jill Beaumont (Director of Children’s Social Care and Early Help)**

Jill has a wealth of experience in children’s services, starting her career as a registered children’s nurse before moving on to health visiting.

Following this she became manager of disability services and then the NHS’ Assistant Director for Children’s Clinical Services.

She has held a number of director level posts in children’s services and most recently has led our strong approach to the MASH and Early Help.

Jill has responsibility for the delivery of children’s social care services, early help and MASH.

**Mark Warren (Director of Adults)**

Mark is a qualified social worker and has worked for five local authorities.

He took up the role of Director of Adult Social Care in Oldham in October 2015 developing integrated services and asset based models to help people to be active members of their local communities.

Prior to taking up this post he spent 12 years in Stockport working in a range of roles including Safeguarding Adult Manager, Service Manager and Head of Service for Adult Social Care. He previously worked in Bolton as Community Resources Manager with responsibility for managing provider services such as care homes.

**Ed Francis (Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Partnerships)**

Ed is a registered social worker who was previously a Head of Commissioning, overseeing amongst other things the setting up of the Adolescent Support Unit and redesign of 0 to five services.

He has responsibility for the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding functions including the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO’s), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Local Safeguarding Children’s Board management.

Ed manages our contracts with children’s centres, the health visiting service, family nurse partnership and school nursing and leads work across the partnership through the Best Start in Life Board.
Being a social worker in Oldham

Working for Oldham Council is satisfying and rewarding in many ways.
As well as making a positive contribution to the community, you will also enjoy a range of benefits including flexible working, on the job training opportunities and a generous holiday allowance. More importantly though, we’re confident that you will experience one of the best environments for social workers in the region. Here’s what you can expect as a member of our team.

Induction
In Oldham we understand the importance of a good induction.

If you choose to join us you will be warmly welcomed and provided with a well-structured, carefully planned induction both on a corporate level and from the team. The process will take place over 10 weeks and includes:

- An introduction to Oldham’s practice standards.
- Establishing relationships with your immediate team and supervisor.
- Time to build relationships with those who will support your practice both within and outside of the organisation.
- Clarifying role and responsibilities and identifying resources to support you in your role.

Our ‘Children in Care Council’ co-deliver a number of the induction sessions.

Learning, development and career progression
We offer on the job training as well as more formal training programmes.

We work in partnership with local universities to provide on-going, accredited professional development through the ASYE programme up to and including level 3 progression.

We offer great career opportunities, for our experienced workers, including Practice Learning Mentors and Advanced Practitioners posts. Our experienced workers will be supported to develop and take on new responsibilities and be accountable for the practice of others and mentoring newly qualified social workers.

If you are newly qualified, Oldham will provide intensive support and guidance. Our Practice Learning Mentors, working with the Principal Social Worker, will take you through your first year and help you develop your social work practice.

Critically Reflective Supervision
We understand that regular, planned and competent supervision is a right and a requirement for all of our team. In addition though, we believe Critically Reflective Supervision (CRS) is an excellent way of ensuring continued professional development-related to social work standards, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) expectations and the overall regulation of professional practice.

As such we’ve invested in CRS training for all managers and senior practitioners to ensure they have the skills they need.

This, in turn, helps our frontline social care staff to understand why it is important to consider and review their own work. Evidence based social work and critically reflective supervision are integral to supporting social work practice through:

- Enhancing skills
- Highlighting different and more effective ways of working
- Learning about themselves, their practice and the service user.
Caseload reviews

We know that having a manageable caseload is one of the top priorities for many people when they make a decision on their next job. Here in Oldham we are currently undertaking a whole service review, evaluating our staff caseloads and ensuring they are set at the right levels. It is our aim that newly qualified social workers and ASYE’s will have protected caseloads and additional support with the most complex cases. More experienced workers will also have larger but manageable caseloads to ensure they have the time to also focus on their professional development.

Technology

We will ensure you have the tools you need to do the job from mobile devices to appropriate software and provide the relevant training.

Practice standards

Our ambition is not just to be the best borough for children and young people but to be the best borough for the staff and services that work with them. Oldham has recently produced a comprehensive set of practice standards. The manual has been developed by our team and sets out standards that relate to good practice in Oldham. Adherence to the standards will play a vital role in making Oldham a ‘child friendly borough’. The standards in the manual are designed to improve consistency in practice across the authority and to drive up the quality of the service provided to the vulnerable children and young people of Oldham and their families.

Principal Social Worker role

The core aim of the Principal Social Worker is to ensure strategic direction and decision making is informed by the realities of social work practice by being an authentic voice for frontline staff.

The Principal Social Worker role will:

- Influence strategic planning to help improve the quality of frontline social work practice
- Champion good practice and challenge others to improve
- Bring reflective processes into supervision practice and to support the delivery of the quality assurance framework for children services by leading aspects of audit activities and supporting this with learning activities.
- Provide scrutiny, challenge, advice, guidance and support to all members of the team.

Social Worker Forum

The Principal Social Worker has created a ‘social work forum’ where you will be able to meet up with colleagues to raise the issues that impact on how we deliver services. The Principal Social Worker will report regularly on the effectiveness of the whole social work system to the Director of Children Service.

People Performance Framework (PPF)

You will have an annual appraisal guided by our People Performance Framework (PPF) as well as a mid-year review and more regular, less formal supervision with your line manager.

We will discuss your individual performance as well as your development needs should you aspire to progress.

Management development

Ensuring a clear focus on the development of all our managers has contributed to significant performance improvements. Whether you join us in a first line management role or in a more senior position, we’ll encourage you to take up a range of development opportunities, put your learning into practice and share knowledge and experiences with your peers to ensure continuous improvement.

We’re acutely aware that management development often takes managers away from their jobs which can be a problem, Oldham has responded positively to this gap by creating a managers rota system, which works to ensure that social workers will always have a manager available.

SMART planning

We’ve recently invested in training all social workers in SMART planning. SMART stands for Specific, Measureable, Assignable, Realistic, Time-based and ensures all plans are created to fulfil those five aims – a consistent approach. Additionally all of our teams have practitioners who are “Change Champions”. They are responsible for ensuring this new method is embedded into practice. All new workers at Oldham Council will have opportunities to meet with a champion to receive guidance and support.
Fit for Oldham is Oldham Council’s staff health and wellbeing strategy designed to ensure our team is in the best possible shape, both physically and mentally, to serve the people of the town. Fit for Oldham offers sessions in partnership with Oldham Community Leisure, Therapy Matters, Meditation Services and MIND.

They include:
- Discounted exercise classes
- Guided walks
- Beginners bike ride club
- Running clubs
- Creative activities
- Meditation and mindfulness
- Nutritional and weight loss programmes
- In-house choir and music lessons

Counselling and advice
The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is an independent, confidential telephone counselling, help, advice and support service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

It offers cover for the employee and their immediate family members (via telephone only) who reside at the same address, children in full-time education and dependents living away from home studying at university.

The service provides access to:
- A stress helpline
- Structured telephone counselling
- Referral to face-to-face counselling
- Referral to serious illness and accident support
- Tax advice
- Legal advice (apart from employment law advice)
- Elder care
- Child care
- Medical information

Physiotherapy service
Staff members are entitled to physiotherapy to treat acute injuries (e.g. back pain, sciatica, whiplash, sports injuries, muscle and ligament strains and joint pain).

You can have up to six treatments including assessment.

Referrals are made through your line manager.

Occupational Health
Our Occupational Health Service is run by Health Management Limited is the largest occupational health provider in the UK.

Their team of professional consultants provide advice and support on medical health issues which affect your work with the aim of keeping you well and ensuring you are “Fit for Oldham”.

Lifestyle
As well as a generous annual leave entitlement (up to 31 days) we recognise that traditional 9am – 5pm working patterns are not ideal for everyone and that enjoying the very best work/life balance increases your job satisfaction and your ability to do your job well. We’re also well aware of the many different life commitments our people have to work around, and that’s why we’ve put together a range of working options to suit all lifestyle needs.

Here’s what could be on offer for you:
- Flexi-time scheme – available to many of our office-based jobs and operates with no core hours. You may be able to take up to one flexi-day per month
- Part-time working – depending on your role, you might be able to work one of our range of options including part day, part week or even part year
- Job share – we can often offer this option across a range of jobs
- Compressed days – the chance to work four days instead of five, or nine days instead of ten
- The option for term time only working – giving you the school holidays to spend time with your family depending on the needs of the service
- Averaged/annualised hours – vary your working hours over the year to fit in with personal commitments
- Staggered hours – the chance to vary your start and finish times as part of a team
- The ability to work at home on occasion in line with service needs. We’ll provide all the health and safety advice and guidance you need to ensure a safe home working environment.
- Maternity/adoption leave – you will be entitled to up to 52 weeks’ leave of absence, with pay for a specified period
- Parental leave – you may take up to four weeks’ unpaid leave per year (up to a maximum of 18 weeks) until the child reaches the age of 18
- Paternity leave – up to two consecutive weeks leave after the birth of the child
- Option for shared maternity leave between parents

Other benefits like free library membership and discounted gym membership are available, while our staff discount card offers a range of savings at leading high street shops and restaurants.
Staff benefits

Recognition
We could offer you all the benefits in the world but if no one says “well done” when you do something well, it’s difficult to feel recognised in your job. As well as looking to embed a culture of positive recognition throughout the organisation, we also run an annual awards ceremony which recognises staff who have gone beyond the call of duty. We also reward staff for long service at key milestones.

Childcare Vouchers
If you are the parent of a child under 15 then you can save more than £900 a year by claiming childcare vouchers. You can use them for lots of different types of childcare from nurseries to after hour school clubs and holiday schemes.

It pays to work for Oldham
There are a range of offers, deals and discounts through the Oldham Staff Discount Scheme.

Savings on things such as, shopping, travel, leisure, health and wellbeing, home living, motoring, professional services, days out and more.

Access to specially negotiated discounts from local suppliers closer to home

As part of the council’s salary sacrifice scheme there are options that allow you to purchase directly from your salary giving you a saving on your National Insurance and tax deductions.

We also offer a ‘hire-to-own’ bike scheme, which allows you to purchase a bicycle and accessories tax free and pay for them monthly out of your salary over 12 months.

Personal development
We want all team members to have the opportunity to learn and enhance their skills.

A comprehensive range of training and personal development options are available for staff members in addition to the core training you will need to do your job. There are also a number of mandatory training courses which all staff members must complete.

Our Study Support Policy sets out the support we offer to employees who are looking to pursue a formal qualification linked to their role and are looking for either financial support or flexible working to assist them.

Volunteering
We recognise that volunteering is vital to society. Therefore our Employer Supported Volunteering programme offers staff the opportunity to volunteer with a range of organisations in Oldham for up to three working days a year on full pay. This can be spread out over a period of time or done all in one go. From army reservists and mountain rescuers to school governors and much more, a myriad of opportunities are available to suit all skill sets.

Pension and finance
All staff are eligible for the Local Government Pension Scheme and new starters will all receive a letter directly to their home to introduce the scheme. There is also a dedicated website which provides more information.

We’re also proud to work in partnership with the Credit Union, a community based business, owned and run by local people, providing fair and straightforward financial services. They also have a dedicated website where you can learn more - www.lgps.org.uk
Our behaviours

We've translated our values into five co-operative behaviours which outline the priority areas of focus for staff at all levels. By living our values and behaviours we will deliver the change we need to meet our vision of building a co-operative borough.

Our policies

Our values and behaviours are the basis for the policies which govern everything we do.

The Policy Centre is your one-stop-shop on the intranet for everything to do with developing policies and strategies across the Council.

There are three elements within it:

- **Strategic Framework** – a centre for all our main strategic plans
- **Resources and Intelligence** – a range of data and information which can help shape ideas and help us to understand Oldham effectively
- **Supporting Tools** – the practical tools you need to shape a new policy from forms and frameworks to spreadsheets and templates

Good policy development is well-evidenced, relevant and takes into account everything else that is going on across the council and the borough.
Getting around

Oldham has a good transport network and a wide range of public transport solutions as well as a variety of parking options.

We’re here to help too and there are a range of discounts in place through our partners which may help bring travel costs down.

There is also a car sharing scheme and car allowances for essential and casual car users.

Discount deals

First Buses
Daily ticket: £2.90
Returns: £2.90
Monthly: £40
Annual: £400

Stagecoach
Annual tickets are available.

System One
Annual passes are £680 (bus only) or £1,111 (bus and train).

Buy tickets from the TfGM Travelshop outside the Civic Centre.

You will need to take your ID badge or a recent payslip in order to buy these discounted tickets.

Interest free loans for annual tickets

Would you struggle to pay for an annual ticket up front?
Interest-free loans are available which can be paid back via our salary sacrifice scheme over ten months.
For Annual Passes you will need a System One photocard (available free from TfGM Travelshops or any mainline train station, and you will require a passport photo).

Allow four weeks from submitting application form for ticket delivery to your home address.
For more information and terms and conditions visit www.tfgm.com

Car parking

There are a range of public pay and display car parks in Oldham town centre.

They are on:
- Bow Street
- Bradshaw Street
- Civic Centre
- New Radcliffe Street
- Southgate Street
- Tommyfield Market
- Waterloo Street

The majority of social worker roles are given “essential car user” status. This means they receive a parking pass, paid for by their department and are awarded a monthly car allowance payment of £41.66 (£500 per year). Some other roles are designated as “casual car users”. For these roles, staff are required to contribute 50% of the cost of the annual value of the average parking pass. Both schemes are only applicable to certain car parks.

Car share scheme

Oldham Council is part of the Greater Manchester car sharing scheme, which is free to join.

Register at www.carsharegm.com
You will be matched up with suitable sharers in your area.

You can:
- Select journey times
- Whether you want to offer a lift, look for a lift (or both)
- Add personal preferences for your journey (e.g. female only)
Customer Service

Customer service is vital for any organisation.

Here at Oldham Council our approach is based on our ambition to become a co-operative borough.

Our values come to life in the way we behave towards our children and families, our partners and our colleagues. They affect the way we carry out our work and the way we share our knowledge and experiences.

By committing to the values we have set, we can make real progress for the benefit of everyone who needs our assistance and support putting children at the heart of everything we do.

As well as helping residents, we want to encourage them to help themselves by signposting and supporting them to allow them to make their own decisions.

We want to deliver efficient services whilst maintaining a focus which protects the borough’s children and young people.

Being polite, professional and courteous at all times is important too and a range of customer service training is available for those working directly with children.

Working with a resident focus

Linked to our customer service plans is our ambition to always put our resident first and we are working hard to meet that ambition.

We will:

• Always put the resident first
• Help residents to help themselves
• Use the voice of the resident to drive improvement
• Manage and meet expectations
• Proactively anticipate underlying needs
• Reduce transaction costs