

Sam Al-Hamdani
Leader, Oldham Liberal Democrats Council Group
Councillor, Saddleworth West and Lees



Keir Starmer
Prime Minister
10 Downing St
London SW1A 2AA

20 May 2026

CSE investigations

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you in my role as a Councillor on Oldham Council, with regards to the national investigation into CSE and grooming gangs.

There are a number of factors which are of great concern in ensuring that this investigation proceeds and concludes promptly and effectively.

Political instability. With the resignation of Jess Phillips as Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, there is a concern that this could have an impact on the investigations despite, I am sure, the absolute commitment of her successor to their success. I would appreciate your written commitment to ensuring there will be no impact from this and any other changes.

Similarly, there is currently political instability at the top of Oldham Council, with no party being able to get even close to a majority on the Council.

I have already written to the Chief Executive of the Council to ensure that whatever instability there is, it can prove no bar to our participation in any investigations, as soon as they are able to progress.

While I am only the leader of a minority group on the Council, you have my absolute commitment to the ongoing investigation, and confirmation that I would not be prepared to support any administration which did not share the same commitment to absolute transparency on this issue.

Funding. I have seen and welcome the Government's commitment to funding work to expose and crackdown on grooming gangs and abuse yesterday. I understand that a total of an extra £100 million committed across a number of areas, such as Operation Beaconport, the Undercover Child Abuse Network, and the NCA's work on the highest-risk offenders. I do see this as the commitment that is needed. I would appreciate your future commitment to continue to ensure that funding is never the block that stops essential work to expose and stop this critical work.

Inertia. The resignation of Jess Phillips citing inertia on critical initiatives from the Government is deeply concerning. In it, she specified the failure to introduce legislation to block children from being able to take pictures of themselves.

I would also draw your attention to the failure to progress the Hillsborough Law (Public Office (Accountability) Bill). Despite repeated commitments from the Government on the date by which this law would be introduced, we are again in the position where we are looking for this to be progressed in the next session of Parliament.

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This is, sadly, suggestive of a Government where effective Government is being overwhelmed by inertia, and critical initiatives are not being delivered as a result.

People need to know that their critical concerns are being addressed. Spending so much time failing to achieve progress – whatever the intent behind the delays – is sending people the wrong message.

It is essential for towns like Oldham, and for the survivors of abuse, that we see not just positive words, but effective Government. That we see initiatives that are delivered, not delayed by attempts to try and foresee every possible problem, which ends up with nothing happening. That starts with a commitment at the very top to delivery – yours.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Sam Al-Hamdani
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