

Report to OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Youth Offer

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Moores, Cabinet Member for Children and young people]

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Purpose of the Report

To provide an update from the previous report (October 2019) regarding the District youth work offer and provide information and update on the current youth offer

Recommendations

The Board is requested to note the update to the Youth Offer.

The Oldham Youth Offer

1 Background

- 1.1 Following a motion regarding knife crime from Oldham Youth Council (July 2019) a resolution was passed to undertake scrutiny of the current youth offer in Oldham. To ensure there was a broad range of high-quality activities available to all young people that are accessible regardless of where they live in the borough. Following this resolution, the council announced that there would be additional investment into the youth services to develop a district youth offer. An update regarding the district youth offer was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board in October 2019, that provided an overview of the current Oldham approach to weapon related youth violence and the development a district youth work team.

The Youth Service received funding from the Community Safety Funds and from Oldham Council to invest into the creation of District youth teams.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The District Youth Team is now established and operational. The team were appointed between January and April 2020. The aim of the team is to deliver additional and targeted youth work sessions and interventions across the districts of Oldham. The overarching objectives of the team are:

- To map and promote the youth work offer across Oldham – working in partnership with organisations and services from across the youth sector in Oldham to ensure a diverse, accessible and well communicated youth offer.
- To deliver a range of targeted youth work programs across the Oldham districts that will improve outcomes for young people and address key issues
- To undertake consistent engagement work with young people and youth work providers to identify and report on key themes and issues facing young people within Oldham.

The District youth work team are currently fix term funded until December 2021 with plans to extend for at further year subject to funding approvals.

- 2.2 Alongside the District Youth team the Youth service also includes:

- The Detached/response team. A team of 2 full time and 4 part time youth workers who deliver community-based work with a particular focus on response work.
- The Empowerment and participation team – a team of 2 full time and 3 part time workers who deliver the Youth Voice family work, as well as specialist programmes such as Children’s champions scheme, Cohesion projects and external funded projects.

- 2.3 Impact of Covid - Oldham Youth Service – the impact of the current Covid 19 Pandemic from April 2020 on the Youth offer has been significant. In the first Lock down staffing from the youth service were redeployed to support the wider emergency response work in Oldham – leaving reduced staffing to undertake youth work using online platforms as well as some limited outreach work in the communities which aimed at supporting young people to be safe. As the restrictions changed, we adapted and increased the offer – this included outreach and

detached youth work across the Oldham Districts, a comprehensive online offer as well as welfare and support visits to young people, in particular those deemed most vulnerable.

2.4 The delivery of our Covid safe youth work offer is informed by guidance from the National Youth Agency who provide comprehensive guidelines and what can be delivered in line with the Government restrictions and guidelines.

2.5 Despite the impact on Covid on how youth work can be delivered, as a youth service, we have continued to deliver a comprehensive youth offer. Including:

- An intensive and varied summer programme.
- We are currently delivering approx. 45 youth work sessions per week across Oldham and online.
- Engagement with some schools to deliver targeted work
- Supporting the wider system to help with Covid 19 engagement – in particular with young people.
- Consistent delivery of the Youth Voice Family activities and meetings.
- Wellbeing and welfare support to vulnerable young people

2.6 Impact of Covid – wider youth offer. The wider youth providers have also been impacted by the current pandemic. Many have had to close venues and adapt their offer to online and outreach methods. Some smaller organisations have been unable to continue to deliver their youth offer and have adapted what they do to include outreach and other forms of community support.

2.7 We are in the process of developing Youth partnerships (One strategic partnership and one placed based in each district). The Partnerships will form the basis for a strategic and district approach to the planning and delivery of youth work/activity in Oldham, that contributes to shared aims for young people. They will provide a collaborative network that works to ensure the provision of effective youth work and youth activity work in Oldham by voluntary and statutory sector partners that increases young people's opportunities to thrive, achieve and have positive outcomes. The Partnerships will be launched by the end of this year.

2.8 We will continue to engage and consult with young people across Oldham to inform the youth work offer. Mark Your Mark 2020 is now live. This is a large-scale consultation ballot with young people across Oldham (and is part of a UK wide Ballot of young people). The ballot provides us with the top priority issues identified by young people and informs and shapes the annual work programme for the service and the Youth Council. Make your Mark also informs the content of our Over to Youth Summit – (the report from 2020 is attached.) We are currently running the Make Your Mark ballot and are in the process of planning the Over to Youth Summit for 2021.

2.8 The Youth service will continue to flex and adapt to navigate the changing situation to ensure a continued youth work offer to Oldham's young people.

3 Key Issues for Overview and Scrutiny to Discuss

3.1 How will the Covid 19 Pandemic have a longer-term impact on the Youth Offer in Oldham and how can we support youth work providers to ensure the offer is resilient and sustained as we recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

4 Key Questions for Overview and Scrutiny to Consider

4.1 How can the board support and contribute to the mapping and development of the Youth offer and support a longer-term solution to securing a consistent, accessible and high-quality youth offer.

5. **Links to Corporate Outcomes**

5.1 The Youth Offer supports all the Corporate Objectives:

- An inclusive economy: youth work supports young people to develop and gain skills and participate in opportunities that help them to be work ready, social mobile and thrive economically.
- Thriving communities: The Youth Offer provides young people with opportunities to be empowered and active members of their communities, and works with young people to support their holistic health and wellbeing, providing support at the right time in the right places so young people can thrive. The work also supports our ambitions to have safe and strong communities providing trusted adults to support young people, positive activities and interventions that address community issues.
- Co-operative services: providing structured and supported opportunities for young people to have a voice and influence to help us shape the delivery of public services, supporting us to ensure we have the right outcomes for young people

6 **Additional Supporting Information**

6.1 N/A

7 **Consultation**

7.1 [N/A]

8 **Appendices**

8.1 attached – Make your Mark report for 2019 and the Over to Youth Summit report 2020