

YOUNG PEOPLE MET OVER 1 WEEK

Discussions and workshops
on the environment, mental
health and knife crime.



OVER TO YOUTH

*Summit to
talk about*



ALL TO INFORM DECISION MAKERS
AND CELEBRATE YOUNG PEOPLE

OVER TO YOUTH SUMMIT 2020




CLIMATE CHANGE
Summit to talk about

- 52** Young People
- 3** Decision Makers
- 5** Climate change speeches
- 1** Town centre protest march



MENTAL HEALTH
Summit to talk about

- 177** Young People
- 17** Schools
- 12** Workshops
- 1** Ex-Rugby League player



Tackling
KNIFE CRIME
Summit to talk about

- 55** Young People
- 16** Decision Makers
- 4** Discussion tables
- 1** Goal to end knife crime



**OLDHAM YOUTH
MAYOR'S BALL**
Summit to talk about



VALENTINE'S DAY 2020
Over 320 guests of the Youth Mayor came together to celebrate young people

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Introduction

Every year Oldham Youth Service and Oldham Youth Council deliver the annual 'Make Your Mark' ballot, that enables young people aged 11 – 18 to vote on issues they feel are the highest priority for young people in Oldham. The results of this ballot inform the work plans of the Youth Council for the following year, as well as contributing to the national priorities of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.

The priority issues identified for Oldham young people via Make Your Mark 2019 are:

- Protect the environment
- Put an end to knife crime

The Youth Service, Youth Council and other partners also identified via a series of consultations, a third priority

- Mental health

To ensure that Decision Makers are responding to the issues identified, further engagement work with children and young people was planned. The Youth Service, in consultation and partnership with the Youth Voice Family (Oldham Youth Council, Barrier Breakers and Children in Care Council) developed and delivered Over to Youth. This was the next stage of that conversation and provided a platform for delving deeper into the causes of these issues.

Over to Youth - Summit to Talk About was a week of youth voice action through four events and public messaging, highlighting Oldham young people's priority issues to Decision Makers and having meaningful dialogue. It was supported with funding from Oldham Council and the Oldham Opportunity Area.

The events included:

- Climate Change – The Environment Festival
- Mental Health – Schools Mental Health conferences
- Knife Crime – Say No to Knives event – a partnership workshop
- Oldham Youth Mayor's Ball – the concluding event and an inspirational evening of celebrating Oldham's young people

This summit was an opportunity for the Youth Service to provide a range of opportunities for young people to have a voice, and for our Youth Councillors to deliver on their remit of representation given the edict by young people to work on two major topics and try to deliver change on their behalf.

The following recommendations, where made as part of last year's Make Your Mark report:

"Youth Council to host a Youth Summit. This should include a question and answer session with influential decision makers from the Council, GMP and MPs to discuss youth violence and find solutions to reduce fears of as well as actual knife crime. The

Youth Summit should also tackle environmental issues by hosting a festival to disseminate information about how young people, and their families, can reduce their energy usage and live more environmentally sustainable lives. This festival will also give young people the opportunity to have their say to Government through an organised parade.” ([Make Your Mark Report, 2019](#))

Aim and Objectives of Over to Youth

- To provide an opportunity for key Decision Makers and children and young people to engage in meaningful dialogue.
- To provide a platform for all children and young people to explore their priority issues.
- As part of the Council’s commitment to Voice of the Child, these events provide a voice for children and young people who don’t engage with the Oldham Youth Voice Family.
- To deliver a programme of solution focused youth engagement to help shape and influence policies, plans and services in Oldham and influence nationally.
- To celebrate inspirational young people and their contributions to Oldham.



Key Messages

The following key messages underpinned the Youth Summit:

- Oldham’s young people are making their voices heard and shouting out about what’s important to them.
- In Oldham, the voices of children and young people are integral in how services are improved now, and in the future.
- We must put children and young people at the heart of everything we do to enable them to thrive in Oldham.



CLIMATE CHANGE

Summit to talk about

Environment Festival

8th FEBRUARY 2020

Aim

The environment has become an increasing issue of concern to young people over the past few years with role models, such as Greta Thunberg, in the media and with others protesting in the climate strikes. Young people are becoming more and more engaged in the work to protect the environment. In the Make Your Mark - Oldham ballot, this was the top priority receiving 4515 votes. The Youth Council, as part of the Pioneers of Sustainable Hope (POSH) project, decided to host a festival to raise awareness of what is being done in Oldham and what more can be done to reduce, and ultimately reverse climate change.

Objectives for the event were:

- For children and young people to come together to understand how they can contribute to saving the planet.
- For children and young people's voices to be heard around their issues relating to climate change, through banners and pledge cards.
- To raise awareness of tips and tricks for families to be more environmentally friendly.
- Feedback to be collated and disseminated locally and nationally to inform policy.

Method

Youth Councillors wanted a festival vibe rather than protest rally, offering a positive outlook of young people involved in social change. The plan for the event was to host the festival in Parliament Square, Oldham Town Centre on Saturday 8th February between 10am and 1pm to capture the most foot traffic. There would be fun, interactive activities interspersed with stalls offering information on four themes;

- reducing energy usage,
- reducing water usage,
- reducing food waste,
- reducing plastic use.

Organisations, including Northern Roots, Oldham Community Power, Oldham Council and Dovestone Hydro-station, were invited to host a stall to offer information about who they are and what they do in Oldham.

There was an overall theme of recycling which was driven home by bringing in youth organisations, such as Mahdlo and the Incredible Plastic Band, to run the fun activities and promote the green projects that they were delivering. The Incredible Plastic Band provided music from their recycled plastic instruments. The event would also see speeches, from selected guest speakers, to inform and inspire attendees.

Finally, the festival would close with a protest march around the town centre's shopping area, allowing young people to show that they wanted change, and they wanted it now! The hope was that it would be this that would be media coverage of the day and would allow residents of Oldham to know that young people wanted a different future than the one they are facing, as well as raising awareness of the issues and inspiring others into positive action.

Implementation

The event was opened by the Worshipful, the Mayor of Oldham; followed by key note speeches from Samah Khalil, Youth Mayor of Oldham, who talked about the youth movement and the environment; Cllr Jabbar, as Cabinet Lead for the environment, who talked about Oldham's New Green Deal; YCllr Heather Price gave her TED Talk on how commercialism is preventing us reversing climate change; and Alan Price talked about the work already happening in Oldham that supports the town to be more eco-friendly.

The Youth Council ran the banner making activity and the Incredible Plastic Band ran the recycled plastic instruments activity.

All young people then took to the streets and marched around the town centre to get their message across to Oldham's residents. The front of the procession included a large banner of key messages, whilst those behind displayed the banners they had made, all chanting positive messages to inspire change. The Incredible Plastic Band played music in the march to get as much attention as possible.

All banners created at the festival were either kept and taken home by young people or used by a local community group in their vegetable patches for suppressing weeds.

Outcomes

- 52 Young people attended the festival
- 22 Young people received at least one AQA
- 3 Decision Makers showed their support and contributed to the event and dialogue
- Young people were inspired to make positive actions and make a change in their own lives, their communities and wider society
- Awareness and education of how to be more environmentally friendly was shared with young people and adults within Oldham
- Social Media impact – from 7 tweets to the @OldhamYC twitter on the day of the festival:
 - Total Impressions (times that people saw the tweets) – 8,891
 - Total Engagement (time people interacted with tweets) - 429

Evaluation

Overall, the festival was a success. In feedback from young people, the weather forecast played a huge part in low attendance and lack of attendance from other youth organisations. However, for the young people that did attend, the five speeches were positively received and welcomed. Feedback was that it was 'good' to hear the views of young people not just the Decision Makers of Oldham, and that what was said was 'not just the same arguments about climate change'. With a range of perspectives, ideas and views being shared.

Youth Councillors were disappointed that they were unable to consult on their charter and distribute information and the resources that had developed. Youth Councillors have decided that this will be picked up at future events.

The march around the town centre was well received by the public, taking photos and video footage of the event and lots of positive comments from the public on the day.

We would like to thank all Councillors and Council staff who supported the event. We would also like to thank the Incredible Plastic Band who were able to run workshops in Parliament Square and created an almost carnival feel with their music during the march.

Recommendations

1. To encourage other organisations to deliver more town centre based open access events that address climate change.
2. POSH Ambassadors to host further events to hand out information that could not be distributed due to the weather.
3. To work with schools and other youth organisations to consult and develop the Environmental Youth Charter.
4. Schools / colleges should be further encouraged to support students into positive action around climate change and environmental issues.
5. Youth Council to continue work with key Decision Makers in Oldham and the North West to address the environment, in particular, the Green Conference with the GM Youth Combined Authority.
6. To continue to work with the POSH Ambassador programme across the North West and share the work widely across Oldham.



MENTAL HEALTH

Summit to talk about

Mental Health Conference

11th FEBRUARY 2020

Aim

Year on year young people tell the Youth Council, through the Make Your Mark ballot, that mental health is still an issue of concern. This is echoed in engagements and interactions with a range of youth organisations, providers and services. The Our Minds, Our Voices consultation, delivered as part of the Oldham Opportunity Area programme, has also evidenced this and has taken a deeper dive into the issues young people face within school and educational settings. This is also a priority issue for engagement identified by the Oldham Children's Safeguarding Partnership.

The aim of the conference was to allow children and young people to discuss the consultation, to share good practice already embedded in Oldham schools, and to provide a platform for children and young people to share ideas and solutions around improving mental health and wellbeing.

The objectives for the event were:

- For children, young people and teachers to hear the outcomes of the Opportunity Area consultation undertaken in 2019
- To participate in a series of interactive workshops exploring mental health and wellbeing
- For children and young people to feedback on what is working and what the gaps are to support them around their mental health / emotional wellbeing in schools
- To raise awareness of mental health support available in Oldham for schools
- To provide networking opportunities and enable the sharing of good practice across Oldham schools

Method

The Mental Health conference took place on Tuesday 11th February 2020, in the Chadderton Suite of the Civic Centre and the main room in the QE Hall. To facilitate the wide age range, the conference was split into two (2½ hour sessions). The morning session was for primary school pupils and the afternoon session for secondary school pupils. To engage the young people the whole day was facilitated by Luke Ambler, a former professional rugby player, award-winning mental health campaigner and motivational speaker.

Each session was opened by the Youth Mayor, Samah Khalil, who then handed over to Luke Ambler. Luke energised the group with movement and mental health exercises and then disseminated the findings of the Our Minds, Our Voices consultation in the form of a quiz to make it more engaging. After this, using table discussions, pupils looked at the recommendations to see if they agree with the ideas or not and if they already do them in their school.

For the morning session, after the discussions young people were split into groups with pupils from different schools and moved into the QE Hall. In the hall were nine workstations looking at various aspects of mental health and what can be done to improve it. The workshops ran as a carousel with young people rotating after 20 minutes and were able to complete four of the nine workshops. The workstations were:

Workshop	Content
Kooth.com	Interactive quiz about Mental Health and information regarding the Kooth.com Service
Luke Ambler	To learn about documenting how you feel. Each young person who attended received a Bee You Journal from Luke, which they could take back to their school to use and make their own.
Mahdlo	Creating Chatter Boxes around emotions. Activity was around mindfulness and opening conversations through arts.
Oldham Libraries	Storytelling workshop through puppetry and props
Oldham Sports Development	Mini active challenges in teams.
Oldham Youth Service	Bill of Rights – to create Bill of Rights with young people based on their needs in their schools
Oldham Youth Service	Creative Writing – using visual prompts and an alternative method than just ‘writing’
Oldham Youth Service	Drama workshop – using storytelling and drama games
St Mary’s Wellbeing Ambassadors	Using the 5 ways to wellbeing, the young ambassadors hosted a range of creative activities (questionnaires, jigsaws, flag making) linked to mental health.

The afternoon session varied slightly as after the discussions, Luke talked about his background and the struggles that he faced as a young person, how his own mental health impacted his career and why he set up Andy’s Man Club after his brother-in-law took his own life. After this the pupils moved on to the workshops as in the morning but only completing two of the nine stations.

During registration and breaks delegates could also raise their awareness of the services involved with the workshops as well as other organisations including Healthy Young Minds, Oldham Athletic Community Trust, Healthwatch Oldham, Bridgewater NHS School Nursing Team and the Oldham Pledge.

While young people were in the workshop carousel, the teachers supporting them also had workshops. These included a review of the Opportunity Area findings and training on looking after their own mental health.

To close both sessions the groups came back together for the closing plenary and were asked to write a pledge on a post card about what they could do to improve their own mental health or the mental health of their school friends. These post cards would be sent to the schools at a later date to see if they had been able to fulfil their pledge.

Implementation

The schools that attended were:

- Morning session - Higher Failsworth Primary School; Knowsley Junior School; Littlemoor Primary School; Oasis Academy Clarksfield; Oasis Academy Limeside; Royton Hall Primary School; St Edward's RC Primary School; St Margaret's Primary School; St. Mary's Primary School, Failsworth; Woodlands Primary School; Willowpark Primary School.
- Afternoon session - Crompton House CofE School; Oldham Hulme Grammar School; Spring Brook Upper School; The Hathershaw College; The Oldham Academy North; Waterhead Academy.

Young people participated in the workshops outlined above.

Outcomes

- 177 young people attended the conference: 122 primary pupils and 55 secondary pupils.
- 17 schools represented: 11 primary schools and 6 secondary schools.
- 10 organisations represented to deliver workshop and raise awareness.

Evaluation

The conference was well received by pupils, teachers and organisations involved in the day. Feedback from how the event ran was very positive, with young people enjoying the delivery from Luke Ambler and how he had been open and honest about his own mental health.

All young people enjoyed the workshops, and everyone took part. The mixing of schools within the groups seemed to work well and the smaller groups allowed for young people to add their views.

There didn't seem to be too many pupils or teachers surprised by the findings of the Our Mind, Our Voice consultation. During the teachers workshop they often agreed with the recommendations but were worried that there wasn't the time or opportunity to implement them effectively. Some teachers discussed how their school had already implemented some and had used the Wellbeing Ambassadors programme to do this. Those teachers networked with others to pass on information and share good practice.

What children and young people told us (overarching findings from the conference)

Children and young people said:

- Mental health and wellbeing IS an important issue and is something that they feel is a priority and a concern.
- They want to use creative ways to explore and learn about positive mental health and wellbeing, including using drama, storytelling, creative art and creative writing to provide accessible opportunities to talk about feelings and positive emotions.
- They are open to and willing to talk about mental health and wellbeing and want more opportunities to explore, learn and gain knowledge of this issue.

- That teachers and adults don't always know how to talk about mental health and that they need to engage more with young people to develop their approach to this.
- There should be more extra-curricular clubs available at lunch times and after school to support mental health and wellbeing through creativity and physical activity.
- That there should be designated and protected spaces in school, accessible at all times, for young people to use when struggling with mental and emotional wellbeing.
- Bullying has a huge impact on emotional wellbeing and there is more work to be done to ensure bullying is dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
- They want to be listened to and have a say on how mental health and wellbeing is dealt with in schools. They have ideas and they want to share them with school leaders.
- They want to know what help is available, who can help them and how to access help. Many young people knew they could talk to someone in school about worries but were unaware if there was a designated mental health lead and they were unaware of services specifically aimed at supporting their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- They want to learn more about mental health and wellbeing – they would like to know how to support their own wellbeing but would also like to know how they can best support others when they are struggling.
- They understand the link with physical activity and mental health but would like a wider variety of physical activity opportunities – not just the 'usual' sports.
- That want to be able to feel a range of emotions without being judged and feel that it is ok to be upset – many young people articulated that they were scared to tell people how they were feeling in case they were judged or laughed at.

Recommendations

1. To launch a School's Mental Health and Wellbeing 'Bill of Rights' based on the work undertaken at the conference – this will provide an accessible set of expectations that support young people's mental health and wellbeing, consistently across all education settings in Oldham. All schools and educational settings should be encouraged to sign up to the Bill of Rights. (The Bill of rights created can be found in Appendix 1.)
2. To build on the work of the Opportunity Area - Wellbeing Ambassadors programme, to develop resources for extra-curricular clubs that can be shared with all schools.
3. That schools are supported to develop creative ways of using drama and physical activity within a classroom setting to help young people's mental health in school.
4. That schools ensure young people are at the heart of developing strategies and policies supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
5. That there are more opportunities for schools to come together and share good practice around supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.



Tackling
KNIFE CRIME
Summit to talk about

Tackling Knife Crime Discussion Event

13th FEBRUARY 2020

Aim

Thousands of young people in Oldham have spoken in the national Make Your Mark ballot, where 'putting an end to knife crime' came out on top as a priority issue both nationally and in the borough, with 4,199 votes.

During the summer of 2019, Oldham Youth Council produced a Knife Crime 10 Forward report. The youth Service in partnership with the Youth Voice Family Oldham Youth Voice Family wanted to dig deeper into the issue by consulting with young people to find out why they feel knife crime is an issue and what can be done to reduce it. The aim of this workshop was to provide meaningful dialogue with a range of Decision Makers and a diverse group of young people from across Oldham - identifying key concerns from young people and an opportunity for them to engage with Decision Makers across Oldham about creating solutions and have meaningful conversations.

The objectives for the event were:

- To identify key concerns from young people with decision makers around the table.
- To strengthen young people's perception of safety.
- For young people, across Oldham, to have meaningful dialogue with decision makers in Oldham who can potentially influence local, regional and national policy.
- As part of Oldham's Voice of the Child commitment, young people will be at the heart of everything we do and are not only listened to, but positive action is taken with them.

Method

For this event, to try and put young people at ease, we wanted to create discussion groups facilitated by young people. We felt that this would allow the young people, who are perhaps not used to talking with Decision Makers, to have the confidence to give their opinions. It was decided that we would use four table discussions with four different conversation themes. The young people facilitating the conversations and the Decision Makers would stay with the table and theme, while participants would move round the room visiting each theme.

The event was not opened to the public, but instead invitations were sent to youth organisations, such as Mahdlo, Positive Steps and Oldham College, who may have worked with those involved with weapon related crime. Invitations were also sent to bodies and Council teams that deal with violent and weapon related crime as well Councillors and Cabinet Members with remit for working with young people and community safety.

The four themes chosen were:

- Being safe in our communities.
- Things to do and places to go.
- Working with the Police.
- Raising awareness and education.

For each theme young people were asked:

- What is already working well in Oldham?
- What more needs to be done?
- What impact does this have on weapon related crime?

Implementation

The invitations were taken up by a diverse group of young people, with groups coming from Mahdlo and Positive Steps, as well as young people identified by Oldham Youth Service's Detached and Empowerment teams. Adults in the room represented various stakeholders and organisations:

- PC Damien Hartley Pickles -GMP
- PC Zid Iqbal – GMP
- Lorraine Kenny – Oldham Council – Violence Reduction Unit
- Phil Bonsworth – Oldham Council - Community Safety Team
- Cllr Arooj Shah – Oldham Council – Deputy Leader Oldham Council
- Claire, Suzanne and Harley – Positive Steps, Youth Justice Team
- Leo and Lucy – Mahdlo Youth Zone
- Kate Shethwood – GM Violence Reduction Unit
- Paul Axon – Positive Steps Oldham
- Katrina Stephens – Oldham Council – Director of Public Health
- Neil Consterdine – Oldham Council – Assistant Director Youth, Leisure and Communities
- Cllr Amanda Chadderton – Oldham Council – Cabinet Member for children and young people
- Cllr S Williams – Oldham Council – Elected Member

All the young people had the opportunity to participate and contribute in each of the four tabletop discussions. Their views, comments and suggestions were recorded and are collated into the findings attached to this report.

Outcomes

- 55 Young people attended the event and had their voices heard
- Relationships were developed between Decision Makers and young people
- Adult stakeholders and Decision Makers were able to hear first-hand accounts from young people
- Young people felt valued and reported increased trust and confidence in adults
- Valuable learning and insight from young people were captured to help us inform future policies, plans and activities around reducing youth violence
- 16 Decision Makers showed their support and joined the conversations
- Social Media impact – from tweets to the @OldhamYC twitter on the day of the event:
 - Total Impressions (times that people saw the tweets) – 4,796
 - Total Engagement (time people interacted with tweets) – 175

Findings

Raising Awareness and Education

What is working well?

Young people agreed that the work in schools such as assemblies, PHSE lesson and Police visits are working. They felt that being told the consequences and the risks involved is a deterrent. Many had seen videos and watched performances that tackle the theme of knife crime which they said questioned their understanding of safety. Those young people who accessed youth provision also had experience of awareness courses but over a period of six weeks rather than one off sessions in schools. These were better as they got to explore the topic.

What more can be done?

Young people felt the education they had experienced on knife crime seemed too reactionary, only attending places where incidents had already taken place, and was aimed at the individual rather than changing a culture. The education received by young people was felt to be a 'one size fits all' delivery style. Participants felt that education should be more personal to the audience. They wanted a less 'talking at' delivery style with suggestions made such as sessions being more interactive, using videos or performance to show what happens and employing a better mix of facts and figures alongside testimonies and real-life stories. Young people wanted to see the effects knife crime can have on victims, families, as well as perpetrators.

To make sessions more relatable, and more personal, it was suggested that delivery of the session should be by people of similar ages to the audience or people from the same communities. Young people also would like to see reformed knife carriers delivering training but only if the focus was on their reformation. Also, rather than classroom sessions, those at greater risk could receive mentoring opportunities. With these changes it was felt that it could make the education more supportive rather than disciplinary which may not work on those more likely to be involved in weapon related crime.

Young people wanted a more proactive response to the education they receive. They would like sessions to be delivered to younger age groups from year 7 onwards or even primary school aged children. These sessions should tackle the stereotypes and image of people acting 'big' or creating fear in others. Young people would like to see the sessions talk about how not everyone carries a knife and to create 'opposing stereotypes' that you are more powerful not to carry knives. They would also like to see more powerful messaging about not carrying knives, that challenges what can be seen on social media, and in music. Participants also felt the training should be delivered to teachers and parents not just young people.

What impacts on weapon related crime?

For some, raising awareness and educating has no effect or the opposite effect as it can make young people feel less safe. The awareness scares young people and perpetuates the use of knives with more young people arming themselves to protect them from those already carrying bladed weapons. Youth culture was thought to have the biggest potential impact on knife crime with many suggesting social

media, music, celebrities and video games normalise the use of weapons. Weapons were also suggested to be image, reputation and confidence boosters, helping young people to look 'hard' while also used to protect them from a perceived lack of feeling safe in some communities.

Working with the Police

What is working well?

Young people talked about breaking down barriers with Police Officers. Being able to see Officers out of uniform, attending youth work sessions or residential, or taking part in football sessions allows them to build relationships. Combined with attending school sessions and having 'natural conversations' it was felt there was more respect between young people and the Police and allowed Officers to offer advice and share information.

Young people felt that this change made officers less intimidating, more friendly which allowed them to be able to confide in them and even report crime. They also felt that Police were starting to treat them equally and Officers are now less likely to assume a large group of young people equals trouble.

What more can be done?

While the young people felt advances had been made with building relationships with the Police, they wanted more consistency. Not all Police Officers have been friendly or respectful when dealing with young people and they have felt unfairly targeted. They wanted better communication especially around explaining stop and search and felt there needed to be an improved response when young people report crimes.

To build positive relationships young people want to get to know the Officers in their area and have a 'familiar face' they can trust and work with. To build these relationships there needs to be more opportunities such as the cadets and more places to go to engage in activities with the Police. Young people also suggested running training and shadowing opportunities to better understand the Police roles and perspectives.

What impacts on weapon related crime?

Over the conversation two main areas were considered to impact on knife crime. Firstly, it is felt there is a lack of understanding around youth culture and what that means for young people in their communities. Secondly, young people perceive that the Police are talking about knife crime all the time which may increase fear of knife crime taking place in the town.

Things to do and places to go

What is working well?

Young people felt that they did have some activities in their communities citing Oldham's Youth Service, Mahdlo and community spaces that 'keep people out of trouble'. They suggested that having youth work support, whether from Detached Youth Workers or Youth Workers delivering projects, was a good

way to bring people together positively. Using safe spaces was also considered effective places for young people to socialise.

What more can be done?

While there are some places to go it was felt more safe spaces were needed that appeal to all age groups. It was felt that youth centres can be territorial so more are needed, and young people don't just want youth centres as they can be for certain age groups and have a stigma attached to attending them. Other suggestions for facilities included more sports pitches and fun things to do such as a roller-skating place or a safe building with arcades, games and pool table all under one roof.

It was also considered that people need to feel safer to attend existing facilities available, such as going for food or to the cinema in Oldham town centre. To do this young people felt there needed to be a better understanding of why people fear going into the town centre especially in the evening.

Finally, better communication is needed to inform young people of what is already available. Youth facilities and provisions need to increase awareness of what they have on offer and advertise better. It was also felt that young people themselves need to help spread the word.

What impacts on weapon related crime?

Young people felt that feeling unsafe is the biggest impact, if communities or areas don't feel safe this will increase the likelihood of carrying a weapon, in particular, young people shared that the town centre does not feel like a safe space and may increase young people's likelihood to carry a weapon

Young people also explained that having positive things to do and places to go – reduces the likelihood of being involved in weapon related crime / activity as it provides different opportunities, and positive trusted adults in Youth Workers, who are role models, and help you make better choices.

Being safe in our communities

What is working well?

While mentioning aspects such as lighter nights and having a mobile phone, young people talked mainly about familiarity helping them to feel safe. Most agreed that where they lived, 'their own area', and having a sense of community help them to feel safe. They also discussed having trusted adults in those areas that they can access, citing Youth Workers, PCSOs, Police Officers and Community Leaders.

The young people also suggested that youth services are important as they give them a positive focus. They spoke of workshops around knife crime in Mahdlo, that while not for everyone, do help people to become less likely to carry knives, and the Dynamix project (working with new migrant communities) that brings together different people and breaks down stereotypes.

What more can be done?

Regarding the town centre. it was felt a reduction in people drinking and using drugs would make it feel much safer. Young people wanted to see more CCTV and better street lighting to create a more

welcoming environment that removes dark 'risky looking' areas such as alleyways. They would also like to see an increased Police presence on foot, in the town centre at night. Although they thought that more work around trust with the Police was needed as young people often feel targeted and as victims of crime feel that nothing gets done.

During conversations the need for more youth groups and centres came up again. They felt that organised activities give young people a focus and would help them to stop carrying weapons. They also felt that activities such as boxing clubs may help young people work out issues on 1 on 1 basis. Young people would also like to see schools used, provide activities in their communities and there was a request for more football pitches, multi-use games areas (MUGA) and teenage friendly parks with lighting so that they can be used at any time. As well as in local communities, young people would also like to see these facilities in the town centre.

It was felt there is a need for understanding and relationship building with young people from different areas as well as between young people and adults who may judge them. Young people wanted to see more community cohesion events to build on relationships within and between communities.

Finally, young people wanted more events like the summit to have their say and start discussions. They want more communication with 'change makers' like Councillors and high-ranking Police Officers to allow them to have their voices heard.

What impacts on weapon related crime?

Young people said that feeling safe is the biggest hurdle, and if people feel safe, they are less likely to carry knives. However, reports of knife crime incidents make people feel less safe; therefore, people are more likely to carry knives because they are scared; therefore, there are more chances of having knife crime incidents. Due to this cycle young people felt there is a perception that nothing can be done. It was felt that if people felt they would be caught carrying a knife by the Police they would be less likely to do so, however, young people knew of many ways to hide weapons so those using knives are more likely to do this.

Perception of safety and reassurances about how safe places are is a key factor.


Evaluation

Numbers at the event exceeded expectations which meant the room was slightly cramped. Not all young people wanted to evaluate the session but those that did felt that they had been listened to by the adults in the room and the majority felt positive that something might change to help lower incidents of weapon related crime. Some young people would have preferred to just speak with Council Officers rather than the Police, as they had had bad experiences with Officers who were in the room. However, support staff suggested letting them know who would be in the room prior to the events so they could prepare young people for who they will meet. As not all young people wanted to complete an evaluation, we sent an evaluation to all supporting staff and adults in attendance. This evaluation can be found in Appendix 2.

In verbal evaluations young people wanted more similar events like these and an opportunity to have their say in a safe environment. They liked the way that the table discussions worked, and that young people facilitated them. It was felt though that there were too many adults in the room and should be limited to two per table.

Recommendations

1. Oldham Council and its partners should continue to work around mapping what provision there is for young people in Oldham and how this can be better communicated to young people.
2. To work with Community Safety team, GMP and schools to review the education used in schools to explore how ideas put forward by the young people can be incorporated into future education activity.
3. To hold a joint workshop with local Police and Community Safety representatives to look at how improvements can be made regarding reporting of crimes for young people and to build confidence in young people to report crimes.
4. To work with GM Police and Oldham Council to see what work can be done to build positive relationships between Officers and young people, building trust and respect – including developing workshops co-facilitated by young people around positive work with youth.
5. To work with youth providers and police to look at how we can create more opportunities for Police Officers and young people to participate in shared positive activities to help build relationships – these need to be carried out in local districts.
6. Produce a report and visual media to show young people the outcomes of this event and what has come of their ideas, looking at future events to report back on what was achieved (you said, we did).
7. To continue to ensure young people are involved in the work with partners to develop Oldham town centre, looking at how to reduce the perceived danger of visiting it in the evening.
8. Deliver more planned cohesion events for young people to enable positive relationships across different geographical and community groups.



OLDHAM YOUTH MAYOR'S BALL

Summit to talk about

Inaugural Oldham Youth Mayor's Ball

14th FEBRUARY 2020

Aim

To deliver a high profile, aspirational and inspirational event, hosted by Youth Mayor, Samah Khalil, celebrating the inspirational achievements of children and young people and youth organisations in Oldham. The ball would round off the Over to Youth Summit and raise the messages of what's been done, showcasing the events and raising awareness of the priority issues again. The event was also used as a focus for the Youth Mayor's chosen charity, raising money for youth homelessness and charity fund, Real Change Oldham.

Method

The inaugural Youth Mayor's Ball took place on Friday 14th February 2020 at the Eastern Pavilion in Oldham. Guests enjoyed a 5-course meal chosen by the Youth Mayor and the event had a photo booth for young people to take picture memories. The ball was split into three strands: awarding inspirational young people, showcasing talented young people and fund raising for Real Change.

The ball, funded by Oldham Council, did not charge for entry so as not to discriminate any young people and be truly accessible to all. To raise funds for Real Change, local businesses and were asked to pledge donations. During the event there was a blind raffle where guests, rather than buying raffle tickets for a set amount, would place any amount of money in an envelope which was placed in a bucket and anyone's envelope drawn out would win a prize. Also, as it was St Valentine's Day, roses were sold.

The running order for the evening saw the programme alternate between a course in the meal, videos of the other Over to Youth Events, young people performing and awards giving. Acts on the night included 3Bless singing original material, Seb Lowe singing original material, Oldham Theatre Workshop performing songs from their shows and two dancers from the Natraj Dance Academy who showcased traditional Indian dance. The inspirational awards were divided into three categories: Under 11, 11-16 and over 16. The applications were shortlisted into three nominations and one winner by the Youth Mayor and young people from The Blue Coat School.

Outcomes

- 320 guests attended the event
- 17 young people performed on stage
- 9 young people recognised for their extraordinary achievements
- £1,477.26 raised for Real Change
- Young people felt valued and respected
- The event raised aspirations and demonstrated positive young role models
- Provided a platform for Oldham's young talent
- Provided opportunities for youth organisations to network and build positive relationships with other organisations

Evaluation

The Youth Mayor’s Ball was a massive success, with over 320 guests, many of them young people, celebrating the achievements and talents of Oldham’s young people. The event demonstrated Oldham’s commitment to its young people.

Many young people attending the event had never been to a ball before and felt incredibly valued – raising their sense of worth and wellbeing.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the overall feel good factor and how well the event was organised, delivered and how smoothly it ran

The Youth Mayor was able to raise much needed monies for the Real Change Fund and shine a spotlight on a worthy charity and important issue.

There is a strong appetite to see the event become an annual occurrence.

Some examples of social media feedback:



You Retweeted
youngwochangemakers @youngwochangem1 · Feb 14
 Congratulations @FabihaChowdhur5 ! You are such an inspiration! We are so proud of you and @jenna_harrison2 Thank you @Youth_Mayor @OldhamYC Amazing performances @OTWOldham Natraj Dance, Seb Lowe, 3Bless #overtoyouth celebrating young changemakers of Oldham ! ❤️



🗨️ 5 🍷 20 📤

You Retweeted
Ishaa Asim @Ishaa_Asim · Feb 14
 At the #overtoyouth Oldham Youth Mayor's Ball tonight!
 Had a wonderful time celebrating the young people who have really made a difference in their community.

Thank you for inviting me! @Youth_Mayor @OldhamYC



Liam Joseph Harris
 🗨️ 1 🍷 5 🍷 21 📤

You Retweeted
Real Change Oldham @OldhamReal · Feb 15
 Replying to @OldhamCouncil
 Thankyou for inviting us, it was a wonderful evening. We are grateful for @Youth_Mayor @OldhamYC fundraising throughout the year and at the ball



Summary and Thanks

Overall, we are delighted with the outcomes and learning from the 2020 Summit.

We would like to thank ALL the young people who participated in our first ever Youth Summit – your contributions, as always were amazing and will help shape, influence and improve Oldham for all its communities

We would like to thank all the partners who have been involved in making this such a success. To the organisations who provided resources, time, effort and energy to make sure the summit took place, the individual staff members who gave their time and experience to plan, organise and deliver the Over to Youth Summit - in partnership with our young people.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Bill of Rights

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

The young people of Oldham have...

A RIGHT TO BE SUPPORTED

To have friends, connect with others and our communities
 To have access to help when WE need it and when things are tough
 To ask for help and to know who we can go to and how to find help in and out of school
 To have access to high quality professional help like counsellors, mental health specialists, GPs and others with similar experience and expertise



A RIGHT TO BE LISTENED TO

To be able to talk about how we feel and express our feelings when needed and to be heard
 To be able to voice our opinions without judgement
 To have our opinions respected and taken seriously
 To make decisions about our own mental health and wellbeing without being patronised
 To be involved in shaping and influencing the schools policies and actions around mental health and wellbeing

A RIGHT TO BE SAFE

Access to a safe space when needed. A place of calm, a place to reflect, a place specifically designed to help soothe the young people
 Access to a trusted adult who makes us feel welcome and supported to talk about how we feel
 To know that when we talk to someone it will be confidential as long as no one is at risk of harm
 To be safe from all forms of bullying



A RIGHT TO BE EMOTIONAL

To be HAPPY and to have FUN and be PASSIONATE and ENJOY life
 To experience all of our feelings and to take notice of those feelings
 To not feel scared to talk to someone about how we feel
 To have our emotions taken seriously and not be mocked or judged

A RIGHT TO BE EDUCATED

To have a good quality educational experience
 To learn at school/college and also to have opportunities to educate ourselves on a range of subjects
 To learn about mental health and wellbeing
 To be empowered to look after our own well being
 To know how to support others who may be having a tough time



A RIGHT TO BE ACTIVE

To have access to and take part in a range of physical actives
 To access healthy choices at meal times
 To have access to and take part in a range of creative experiences
 To have opportunities to play and have fun

This Bill of Rights was created in consultation with young people from across Oldham's primary and secondary schools. Final design created by Oldham Youth Council and Oldham Opportunity Area Young Ambassadors

Appendix 2: Staff Evaluation from the Tackling Knife Crime Discussion Event

1. Thinking about the design and implementation of the event – what do you think worked well?

Staff felt that the evening was well organised, and it was good to have so many organisations coming together, especially as the young people that were supported were very representative of Oldham. The rotation of young people from table to table provided an opportunity for a clearer understanding of what young people see as priorities and allowed partners to understand in greater detail the current cultures and needs of the youth. It also allowed Councillors and Senior Decision Makers to hear first-hand the issues facing young people

2. Thinking about the design and implementation of the event what do you think could be improved?

Physically the room needed to be bigger and some felt that there were too many professionals in the room. The room also meant there could be only four discussion tables which meant some didn't have the opportunity to have their say. At future events maybe have a larger room with more tables so we can have smaller groups and professionals become more diluted.

Evaluations felt that the young people should have been mixed up more to get different opinions and ideas on each table. It was felt this may have sparked a bit of debate rather than one group sharing their opinion. Young people that attend open access youth provision regularly may say it's great whereas other may not feel positive about what the borough has to offer young people in their leisure time.

Although there was a good cross section of Oldham's communities it was felt there needed to be wider integration of children from deprived areas and from more challenging communities may be considered.

As mentioned earlier knowing that Police Officers were going to be there was a real stumbling block for some young people, one left and one felt he couldn't be honest as one of the Officers there had previously arrested him - he felt quite conscious in the room, despite the fact he is remorseful / fully engaged in his order, he felt that he was being judged.

3. What impact has participating in the event had on you – what new learning, insight, awareness did you gain?

Responses for new learning included:

We know that young people feel safe whilst at Mahdlo, however we weren't aware just how much young people don't feel safe on their way home – young people said they pretend / use their mobile phones as a deterrent when walking home alone in the dark.

It gave me the opportunity to listen to young people without any devices interrupting a conversation (both parties), I also felt that although the current cultures are slightly different from many years ago the same or similar issues still exist - wants, needs and expectations are still evident, and boredom or lack of facilities still remain a concern for young people.

Really good to gain other young people's perspective, not just those who we work with. Particularly thinking about young victims of crime, these were some of the discussions on our table and how we can increase our offer.

4. *As a result of the event are you planning to do anything differently, or are you using the event to influence and shape the work you are involved in?*

Professionals felt that they had learnt a lot about young people's opinions and that would inform their work and future planning. This included considering views of young people in targeted knife crime interventions and considering places and spaces used in a new pilot scheme.

One professional also suggested that they would like to include young victims of crime in any future events through our Victim / Restorative Justice Co-ordinator.