

The Rt. Hon. Sir Keir Starmer MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Chief Executive
Oldham MBC
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street, Oldham OL1 1UG

Tel: 0161 770 4190
14th April 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

Council Motion 9th April 2025: Young People's Mental Health

The full Council at its meeting on 9th April 2025 approved the following Motion, that had been submitted by Oldham's Youth Council:

"Since 2012, young people have been telling the youth council that mental health is an issue that they face every day and that they need support now. Since this time we have only seen the need for mental health services increase, especially since the COVID pandemic, and although spending on Mental Health services has increased, it has not dented the need for support seen across Oldham and in the UK.

At the last election, Labour had several manifesto points to improve mental health support for children and young people and we would like to see these implemented as soon as possible.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Oldham Youth Council have made 'Mental Health' a priority issue, with it coming in the top 5 issues for Make Your Mark. The council also recognises that we have undertaken much work in this area to improve the experiences of Oldham's young people. This includes:

- Oldham Youth Council first commissioned Kooth.com, an online mental health counselling service, for Oldham's young people.
- 2013 motion to Council asking for an overview and scrutiny of mental health services.
- 2017 motion asking to ensure that adequate funding is made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention mental health services.
- 2021 motion asking to secure mental health funding for Oldham.
- Our work with Oldham Theatre Workshop, highlighting mental health and how professionals can work with young people called Standard Day.
- Our work with Oldham Theatre Workshop, highlighting self-harm, called Boy in the Black.

- Our campaign called SNAP that promoted Kooth.com and the support they provide for depression, stress/anxiety and eating disorders.
- Our campaign 'I Love Me', raising young people's self-esteem and confidence.

Council notes:

- That mental health issues have risen, with a 12% increase in cases since pre COVID.
- That consultation undertaken by the Youth Council would suggest schools and teachers are still not able to fully support young people's mental health.
- That according to several official sources the average waiting time to get an appointment for Mental Health assessments in Oldham is 16-18 weeks.
- That consultation undertaken by the Youth Council would suggest that while the average wait time is 16-18 weeks some young people could wait for up to 6 months for an initial assessment and that the wait for treatment could be over a year after that appointment.
- In 2022/23, just under £1B was spent on Children and Young People's mental health compared to the £12.8B on all mental health services. This was despite the understanding that 50% of mental health illnesses in adults start showing symptoms by the age of 14, and 75% experience symptoms before they are 24.
- Labour's manifesto said that in the first term they would invest in front line services recruiting 8,500 new staff to reduce waiting times.
- That the manifesto also said that labour's new Young Futures Hubs would have open access to mental health support for children and young people in every community

Therefore, we propose that **Council resolves** to complete an overview and scrutiny study of Mental Health service's waiting times (including CAMHS) and ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister and Secretary of state for Health to request an increase to children and young people's mental health services spending without reduction in spending on adult mental health; to again ask the Government to ensure that adequate funding and resources are made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention services; and for an update on their manifesto commitments."

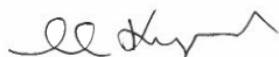
The Council resolved to:

1. Complete an overview and scrutiny study of Mental Health service's waiting times (including CAMHS).
2. That the Chief Executive be requested to write to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for Health to ask for an increase in children and young people's mental health services spending without any reduction in spending on adult mental health; to again ask the Government to ensure that adequate funding and resources are made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention services; and for an update on their manifesto commitments.

I have therefore been requested to write on behalf of the Council to request an increase in children and young people's mental health services spending without any reduction in spending on adult mental health; to again ask the Government to ensure that adequate funding and resources are made available to schools and colleges to allow them to invest in the early intervention services; and for an update on their manifesto commitments.

I look forward to your reply, which will be presented to Council.

Yours sincerely,



Shelley Kipling

Chief Executive

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