



**OLDHAM
YOUTH COUNCIL**

Constitution

Name.

The name of the group shall be Oldham Youth Council (OYC), and hereafter in this document shall be referred to as OYC.

The OYC will receive development and administration support from Oldham Integrated Youth Services.

Aims and Objectives

- To encourage and initiate communication between Young People and local and National Government
- To be a voice for the Young People in Oldham and to represent their views to decision makers within Oldham and to ensure we are aware of the needs of individuals or groups of young people who may experience disadvantage or are unable to speak for themselves. In order to represent their views.
- To contribute to Full Council meetings with Presentations, Motions and Resolutions regarding young peoples issues as identified by Oldham Youth Council
- To raise the profile of Young People in a positive way.
- To form a range of task groups as and where appropriate to enable the work of the OYC. These groups will report progress and conclusions to the full Youth Council.
- To participate in national and regional initiatives, such as the British Youth Council and the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.
- To meet and work with groups and agencies that work with and around the issues affecting young people to ensure the needs of young people are addressed.
- To inform Oldham Council and its partners of young people's views so that they can make decisions about young people more effectively.
- To promote and encourage activities, events and opportunities for young people from the Borough of Oldham.
- To celebrate and promote the achievements and successes of young people in Oldham.
- To plan, organise and deliver a range of activities and events for young people.

Membership.

- The OYC shall consist of a maximum of 70 members, with a minimum of 6 elected representatives from each district area of Oldham.
- The OYC is an opportunity open to all young people in the Borough of Oldham. Young people can become members by being voted on to OYC elections that are held every 2 years.
- All members must be between the ages of 11 – 21 years inclusive on their acceptance to OYC.
- Each member must be a resident or work or study in the borough of Oldham.
- A member of OYC may resign at anytime by informing the Chairperson of OYC in writing.

- The Term of Office for each Youth Councillor will be 2 years from the election event. Members are eligible to stand for re-election.
- A maximum of 20 existing Youth Councillors can be voted onto the following years Youth Council via an internal election. Those who are not internally elected can stand in the public elections. These 20 include the youth councillors who hold the positions of vice chair, Chair and Youth Mayor and members and deputy members of Youth Parliament

Co-opted Members.

- OYC aims to be representative of all young people within the Borough of Oldham. At times due to the nature of elections certain life defining factors may not be represented in the membership of OYC. These may include –
 - Geographical locality
 - Looked after Young People
 - Young carers
 - Young People with disabilities
 - Young People who are parents
 - Young offenders
 - Young People who are homeless
 - Young People from ethnic minority groups
 - Lesbian, Gay Bi-sexual, Trans-gender Young people
 - Young People from the travelling community
 - Young People who are refugees or asylum seekers
- To ensure that the views and voice of these young people are represented on the OYC, young people from these groups may be co-opted onto the Youth council. A co-opted member need not be democratically elected at the annual elections but will be elected by the group they represent (where appropriate). Co-optees have full voting rights and will serve a term of office until the next Election event, where they are eligible to stand for re-election.

Officers.

- The OYC has 4 officers; the Youth Mayor, Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary
- Officers hold their posts for one year.
- The vice chair and secretary are the only elected officer post.
- The serving Vice Chairperson then becomes the Chairperson. The serving Chairperson then becomes the Youth Mayor.
- Should the vice chair resign during their serving year an election for a new vice chair will be held.
- Should the Chair or Youth Mayor resign during a serving year. Then the other officers move up to the progressive roles early and an election for a new Vice Chairperson will be held.
- In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, a temporary Chair may be adopted for specific meetings.

- The OYC may appoint other officers, as it considers necessary to meet the work needs of OYC. These posts will be taken up by an elected member of OYC.

Meetings.

- The OYC will meet at least once per month.
- The Youth Council may hold additional meetings to address specific issues and tasks as and when is considers necessary.
- The OYC may invite anyone having special knowledge or experience relevant to the aims and objectives of the OYC to sit in and participate in OYC meetings. These people will have no voting rights.
- All decisions will be made by a majority of members present, based on voting on a one member one vote basis. If there is a tie the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- Decision making by voting can only take place if one third of the current members are present (not including vacancies)
- Officers will hold strategic planning meetings at least every 3 months. These meetings will formulate plans that will be proposed at full council for final decision making

Attendance.

- Members of OYC are expected to attend all Full Meetings. Where this is not possible they must send apologies.
- All non-attendance at meetings will be recorded regardless of whether or not apologies have been given.
- Non- attendance is acceptable if apologies have been given prior to the meeting, to the Chairperson or to the Youth Council support staff.
- Persistence non-attendance (covering a 2 month period) will be addressed by the group. Correspondence will be sent to the non-attending member asking them to attend the next meeting or their membership may cease.

Political Views.

- The OYC is a non- party political organisation.
- Members may hold allegiance or membership of a political party, but cannot express their political views as an OYC member or on behalf of OYC.
- Members can meet with any political party at any time as long as it is not used in any way to gain votes for that party.

Voting.

- The OYC shall make decisions by a majority voting system using either a show of hands or where needed a secret ballot.
- Where there is a vote split equally, the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- The number of votes received by candidates in any election will not be revealed.

Equal opportunities.

- All members of OYC are equal in status regardless of sexuality, race, age, gender, religion, ability, culture, lifestyle or background.
- OYC are committed to pursuing Equality of Opportunity for all. OYC will ensure fairness is built into all we do. All those involved in the work of OYC will be expected to promote equality and justice at all opportunities and will ensure that no-one is treated unfairly or discriminated against.
- All those working with OYC will be expected to challenge any forms of prejudice or discrimination

Finance and Budget.

- The OYC finances and budgets will be administered under the same policies and guidelines as used by Oldham Council.
- The Manager of the Youth Council Support Staff will take responsibility for the monitoring of any finances and budgets, including any funds raised by Youth Council members or any external funding received for the Youth Council.
- Any funds raised by Young people for the Youth Council will be placed in the Oldham Youth Council bank account or the related Oldham Council Budget for Youth Council Work.
- Decision making regarding how the funds is spent will be undertaken by members of the Youth Council in consultation with supporting staff.

Alterations to the Constitution.

- The Constitution may only be amended by a majority decision at the first annual meeting of the Youth Council or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Dissolution.

- The Youth Council may be dissolved by a majority decision at a meeting of all members, called for this specific purpose.
- The reasons for the dissolution must be put in writing and sent to all members 2 weeks before the meeting.

This constitution was ratified by OYC members on the 1st November 2006

Amended 11th December 2013

Signed:

Chairperson:

Vice chair:

Secretary:

Youth Mayor:

Date: