

CROYDON YOUTH SUMMIT

2018



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH



CROYDON BME FORUM

WRITTEN BY: KARL MURRAY

Croydon Youth Summit 2018

Enough is Enough

**"Until the lions have their own historians the tales of hunting
will always glorify the hunter!"
(Ghanaian proverb)**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Our special thanks go to Croydon Council for their generous support throughout the process, and in particular, to those Councillors and MPs who gave us much food for thought leading up to and on the day. Your support is truly appreciated.

To our sponsors and those agencies who gave prizes and supported the event in so many different ways, we thank you.

We were especially graced by the presence of colleagues and agencies from inside and outside the borough, principally the Mayor of Croydon, Metropolitan Police, South London and Maudsley (SLaM), Crying Sons, Kierran Jarrett, stall holders and Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt. If we have not mentioned you by name it's because there were so many; we hope you recognise your contribution, and our appreciation.

To the young people, parents and guardians who took time out to engage, to be challenged and to offer heartfelt concerns and ideas, we thank you all; if not for you, we would have been speaking to an empty room.

The event could not have been complete were it not for three categories of supporters. Firstly, we wish to thank Off-the-Record for providing a 'drop-in' counselling service on the day; secondly, to the volunteers who gave up so much of their time in helping to ensure things were where they should be and speaking to people about what was going on; thirdly, to the hosts for the event – Anthony King and Tia Brown – your task was perhaps one of the most 'in your face' roles on the day and one which at times may have seemed frantic and impromptu – your abilities to hold it together made for a very successful event.

Finally, to those organisations involved with the MOPAC programme, your journey has just begun and we truly appreciate the input you have made so far to the programme: Music Relief, Another Night of Sisterhood, Jam Total Sport, The Lions Society and Rising Stars Support.

CROYDON YOUTH SUMMIT 2018:

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INTRODUCTION

This document is an interim report based on the London Community Foundation's (LCF) Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funded programme led, in Croydon, by the Croydon BME Forum. The Youth Summit event was an aspect of this overall funded programme being delivered in Croydon against this aforementioned funding programme, and as such, is an integral component of the overall Community Connectors programme².

The Youth Summit event was organized by Croydon BME Forum, with support from Croydon Council, 20 young people and community organisations and a network of professional services who support young people. The event took place on 21st July 2018 at the BRIT Performing Arts School, Selhurst³.

The Youth Summit was conceived as necessary to engage with young people on issues and concerns around the carrying of knives and violent criminal activities and would also inform and influence the on-going work carried out by the larger ongoing Community Connectors programme.

The aim of the project, of which the Youth Summit is a key component, was:

"To address the issues experienced by knife crime victims/offenders, including supporting the groups who are particularly affected by knife crime, notably young black men and women, to be mediated through a process and direct delivery of diversionary and preventative programmes that tackle the key issues regarding Serious Youth Violence in Croydon."

In our attempt to ascertain the impact of the experience on participants, we obtained immediate 'on the day' responses through feedback questionnaires⁴ and structured one - to - one interviews with participant, volunteers, speakers and stall holders.

Additionally, by way of follow up, we carried out further interviews and focus group discussions with young people, adult participants and elected Council members within the weeks following the event.

The responses have been clustered and incorporated into the narrative of the report and where appropriate and relevant, have been highlighted to indicate follow-up reflective responses - which is a good indicator of impact⁵.

¹The funding is for 12mths working with five voluntary and community organisations based in the London Borough of Croydon and is expected to last until March 2019 (see Appendix 4).

²The 'Community Connectors' project is working with five (5) voluntary and community organisations already working with young people who are in scope to the criminal justice system to firstly develop their capacity, organisational understanding and awareness and secondly, to provide support and development opportunities to enable effective delivery of intervention programmes with young people.

³See Appendix 6 of list of those organisations that provided a stall and/or presence on the day.

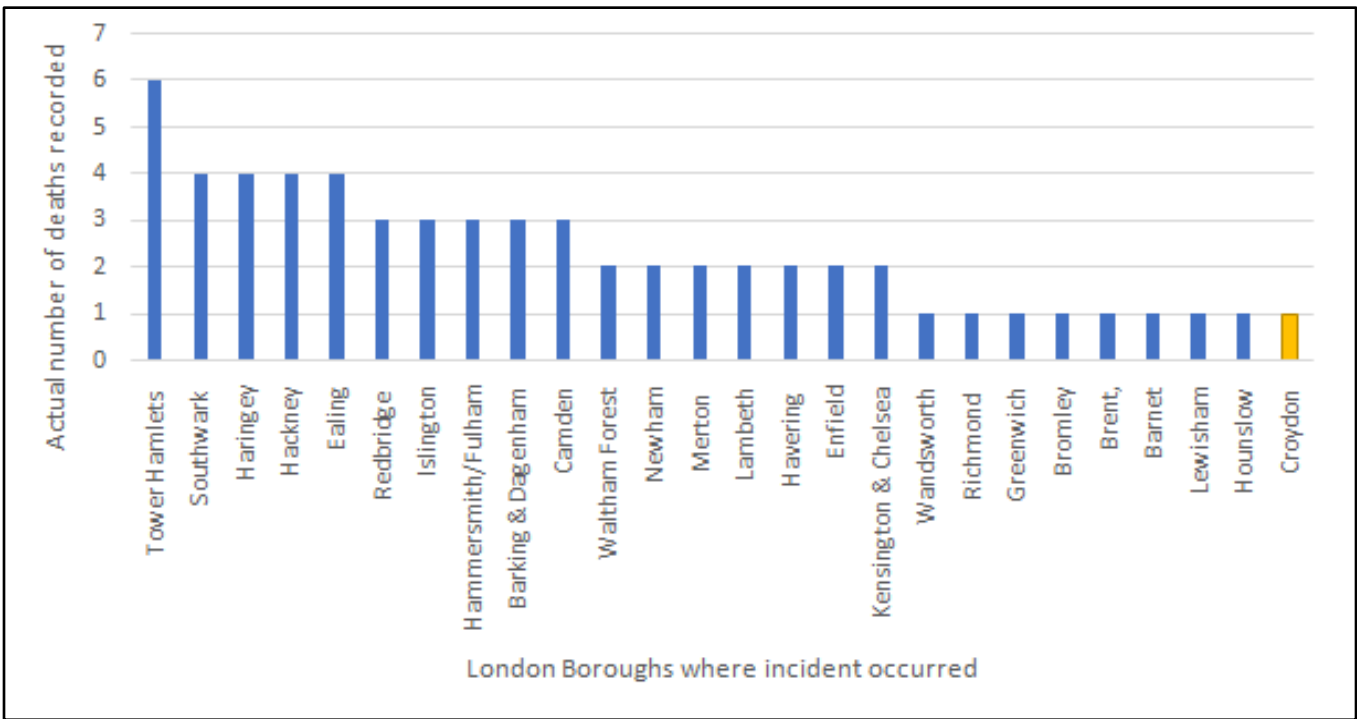
⁴See Appendix 1: Feedback questionnaire

Context and background

Knife crime is on the rise across the country according to latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) report. The ONS report shows that for the year ending March 2018 there were no changes in overall violent offences as indicated by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) which reported 1,259,000 incidents. However, there was a noticeable 16% increase in police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument (40,147 across England and Wales) and 2% increase in police recorded offences involving firearms (6,492 across England and Wales).

Closer to home, records showed that at least 60 people have been fatally stabbed in London since the beginning of the year, the majority of whom were aged between 13 – 24yrs (55%). Analysis from national press coverage of stabbings (death and fatally wounded) in London since January 2018 shows that the borough most affected by incidents of serious knife crime were Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Hackney, Haringey and Ealing with Croydon being the least impacted upon in terms of fatality to date (see Figs 1 and 2).

Fig 1: Recorded deaths from knife violence by London Boroughs: January to July 2018

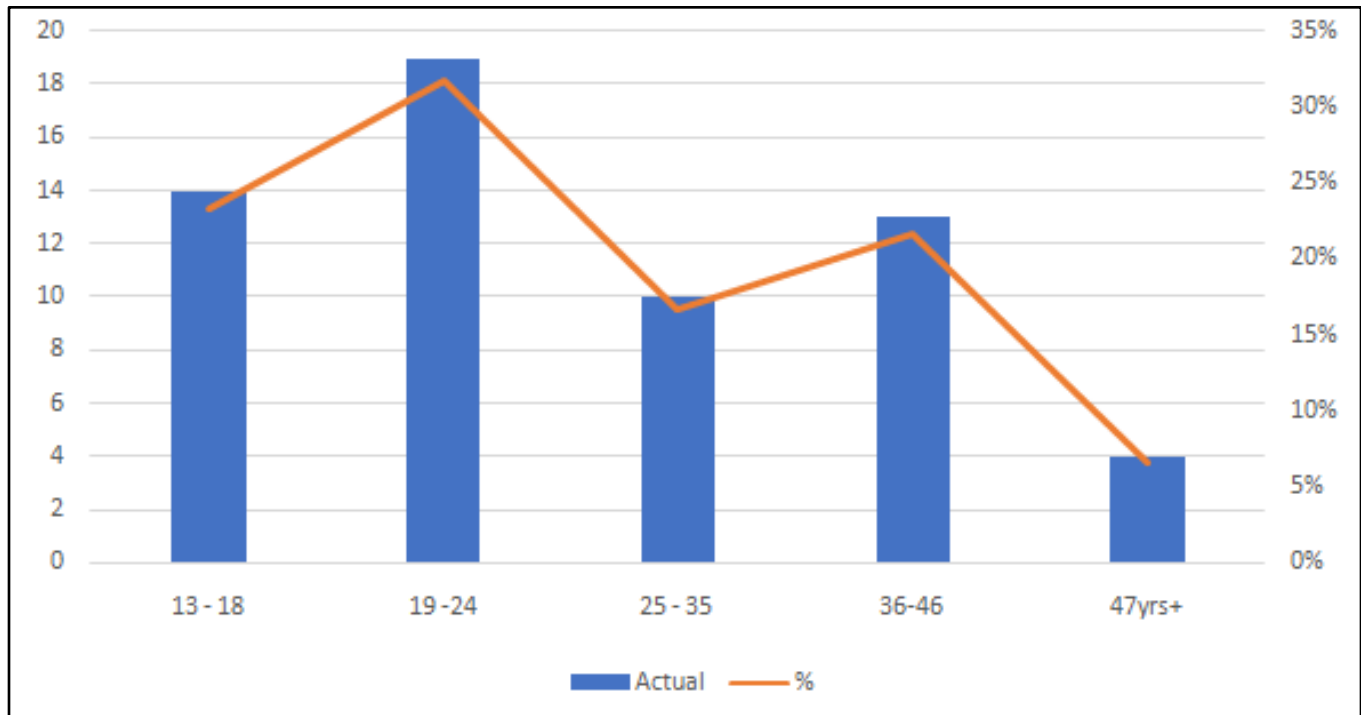


⁵See Appendix 5 for details of the methodology and approaches adopted.

⁶The latest quarterly figures published on 18 July 2018:

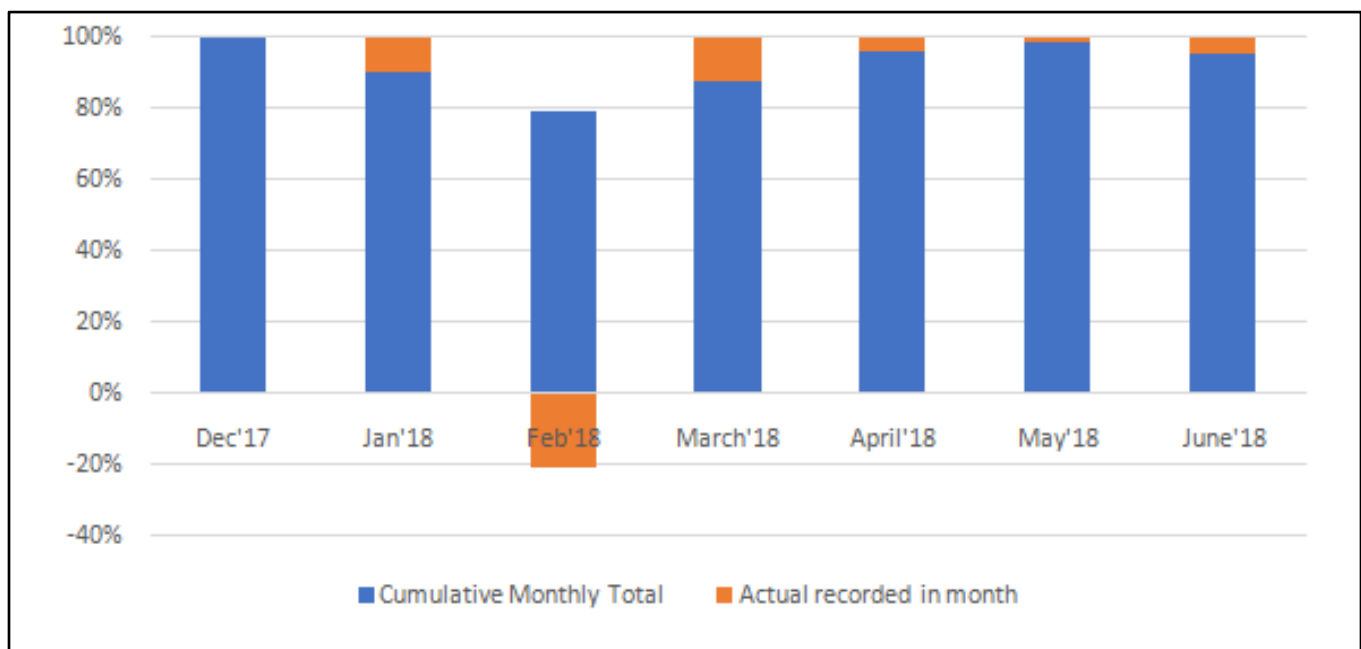
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice> (accessed 27/07/18)

Fig 2: Stabbings reported in the news (London): January to July 2018



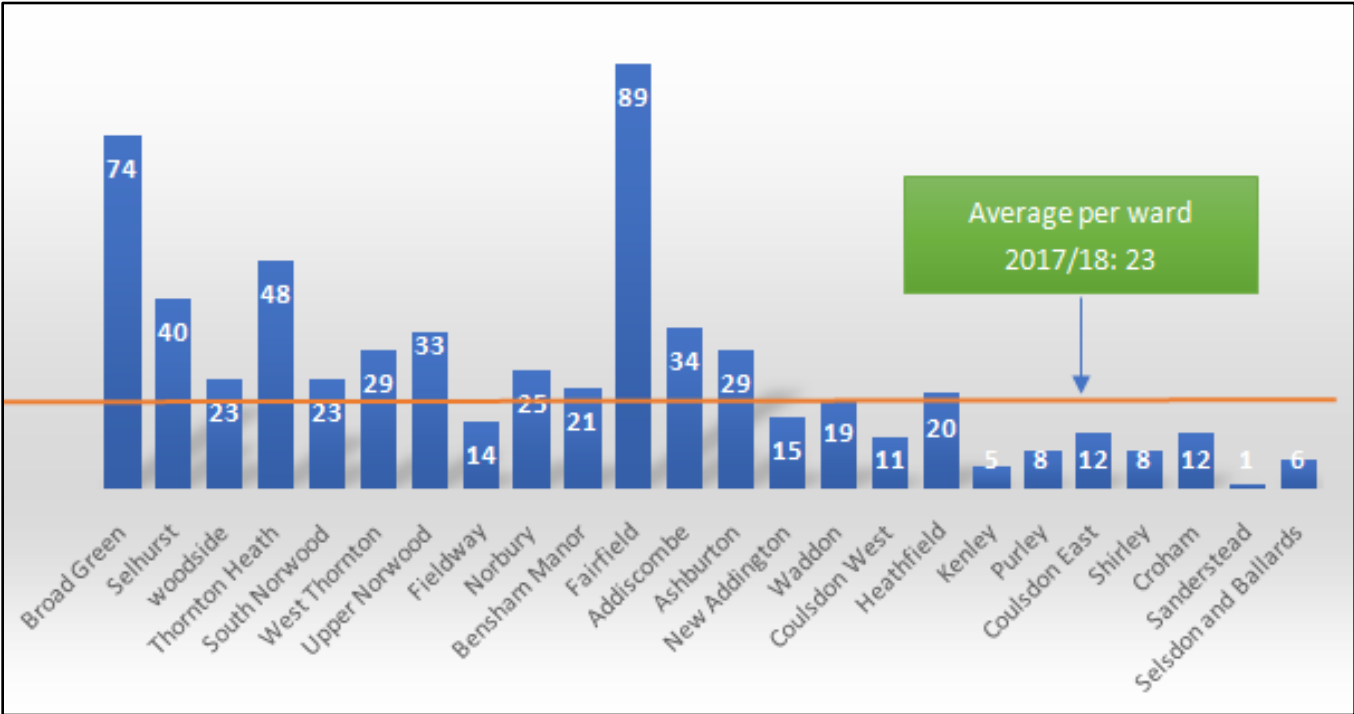
Though Croydon's fatality rate is one of the lowest, along with neighbouring boroughs, it saw an increase in knife crime and serious youth violence between 2016 – 2017 with a noticeable fall in February of 2018 before rising again up to June 2018. Analysis of the MOPAC Dashboard data shows a rolling 12month cumulative rate in excess of 600 incidents recorded (June 2017 to June 2018: 615 incidents: see Fig 3) with great variances across the wards as shown in Fig 4, with a borough ward knife related crime average standing at 23 incidences per ward in 2017/18.

Fig 3: Reported incidents involving carrying of knife: January to June 2018



⁷See MOPAC dashboard rolling monthly figures: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/weapon-enabled-crime-dashboard>

Fig 4: Recorded knife related incidents by wards in Croydon: 2017/18



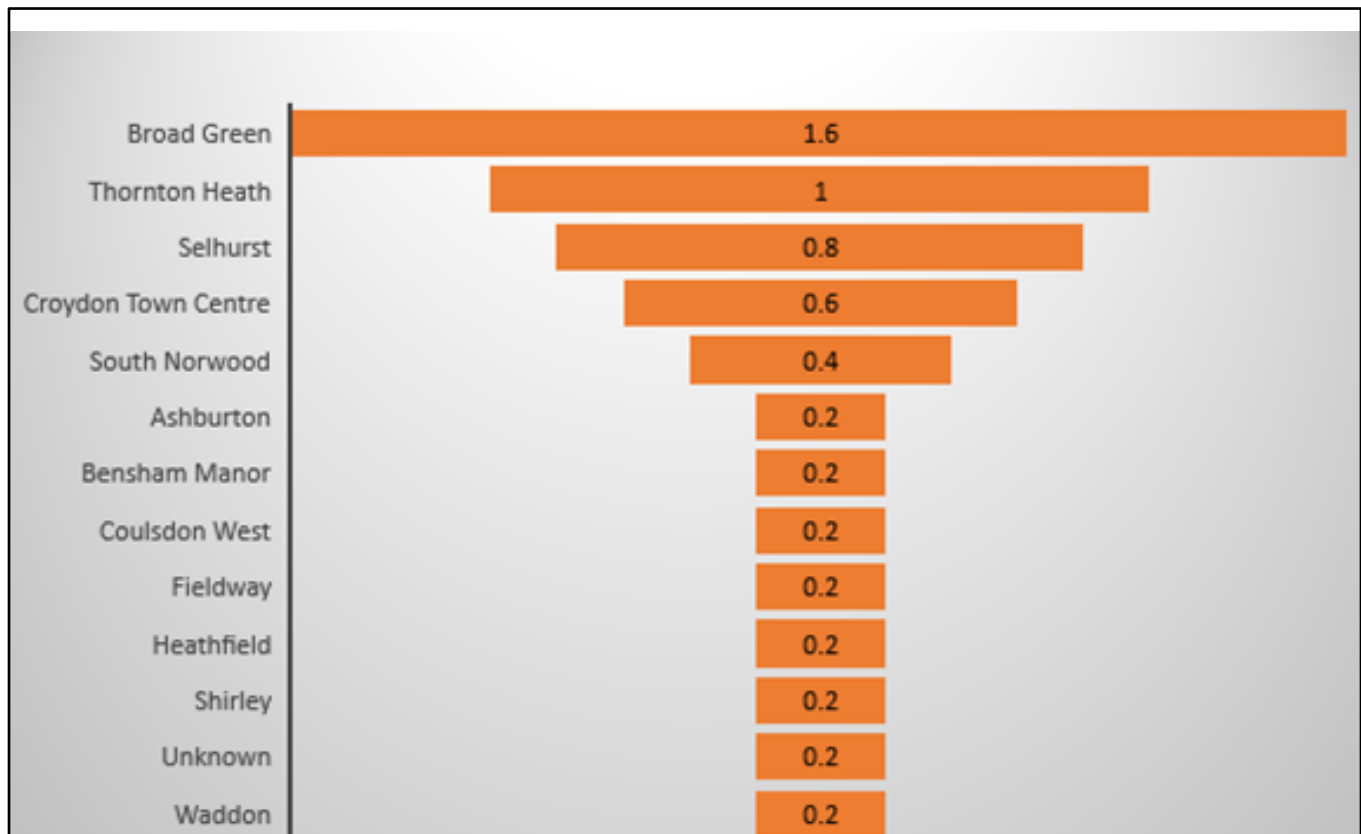
Source: Produced from the MOPAC Dashboard data-set, July 2018

The data in Fig 4 and Fig 5 shows there are clear distinctions across the borough where knife recorded incidents have been reported. The MOPAC Dashboard data reflects a rolling 12 month capture and this shows that the worst three wards for knife related crimes are:

- Fairfield (89 incidents at a rate of 15 per month by the end of the rolling year to June 2018);
- Broad Green (74 incidents at a rate of 12 per month by the end of the rolling year to June 2018)
- Thornton Heath (48 incidents at a rate of 8 per month by the end of the rolling year to June 2018)

The data obtained from the Croydon Advertiser (Fig 5), which provides month on month reported knife related crimes between January and May 2018, is consistent with the Dashboard data recorded by the MOPAC.

Fig 5: Average per month recorded stabbings by wards in Croydon: January 2018 – May 2018



Source: Adapted from data obtained from Croydon Advertiser, 6 May 2018

It was in response to these local concerns that the Croydon BME Forum, as part of its work with black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, addressed the issue of knife crime by securing funding from the London Community Foundation (LCF) to continue its work through the 'Enough is Enough' campaign. The 'Enough is Enough' campaign was the culmination of a series of 'community conversations' which resulted in the Enough is Enough conference, held in November 2017. Through this process local residents came together to create a three-point action plan to combat knife crime and deal with the issues around knife crime. As a result of the conference, a three-point action plan was developed which included:

- Creating Thematic Groups where the community can come together to help support the work that is needed by arranging workshops and training.
- To create a community-led mentoring programme that will work with schools, colleges and parents to seek out young people who need extra help to stay away from crime
- To work with our local schools and churches to create a free after-school programme that will provide young people a safe and positive place to meet from the hours of 4pm to 8pm.

The Youth Summit arose out of the work of the Serious Youth Violence thematic group and reflects one of the key priorities to come out of the Croydon Youth Congress that was held in July 2017⁸.

⁸See Croydon Youth Congress 2017 report: <https://wp.croydon.gov.uk/news/croydons-first-youth-congress-highlight-aspirations-jobs-success/>

THE CROYDON YOUTH SUMMIT

The event was jointly hosted and compered by Anthony King and Tia Brown. They began by introducing and explaining the context that spearheaded the need for such an event⁹ and at the start of the proceedings thanked the 200 participants attending the event.

The Mayor of Croydon spoke about inspiring the participants to search for solutions and that such initiatives are needed to deter young people from involvement in crime. Points that were echoed by the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor, who were also interested in looking at career aspirations and opportunities that would support young people's journey in achieving their dreams.

Andrew Brown, the CEO of the Croydon BME Forum, spoke about the underlying concerns around knife crime and the number of deaths witnessed over the years due to stabbing.

Andrew spoke of his own inspiration to engage in community development work following the death of Billy Cox in 2003 as a result of being stabbed. A part of which has culminated in the Youth Summit.

Andrew went on to explain the challenge. He said "As parents we must do more about what's going on and also take a keen interest in our children's learning and development"

Tony Newman, the leader of the Council, commented that his hope was to see a transformation agenda coming out of the summit. That there is a fear of crime widely he identified in the community that is affecting the young as well as adults and that all this adds up to wasted talents. "The council," he said, "is committed to partnership working. Together

we can harness the talent of young people in the borough; to make it safe and to transform Croydon."

"Working together with the BME Forum, CVA and the many other voluntary groups who are supporting young people in Croydon is making a difference."

[Councillor Hamida Ali, Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon and Communities]

Martin Hewitt, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police, spoke personally of his abhorrence to violent crimes "As it does not affect one person but a ripple going outwards and affecting many others associated with both victim as well as perpetrator." The police, he went on to remark: "Are not detached from the situation; they see people die in front of them on the streets and many have found themselves trying to save lives as first responders. They are therefore not immune. It's important to recognise that they are not just uniformed officers but are themselves people. There is a 'task force' in place looking into these crimes... To prevent more and more mindless deaths from occurring, however, it is difficult to stop these incidents from happening when we struggle to get people engaged in the process. The police cannot do it alone; they need help and support from the community. Everyone must work together; we must all work together."

⁹That is, set against the MOPAC strategy and that of Croydon Council with respect to knife and violent crime. This was also a conference that built on the previous event in 2017. This is the first Youth summit of its kind in Croydon.

He went on to highlight his hopes arising from the Summit:

"Events such as this can work, and they are important. We also need to work within education, within the Council and within communities. There are a number of cases where we can show we are reducing crime, but it is not enough; work must continue. There are no pretences and we must 'front up' to the challenges about what's not working and what has been successful. A Boy does not just go into crime. Challenges are being set locally and generally with all those lives wasted through this gravitation and pipeline into criminality."

Kierran Jarrett, 25-year-old who had been diagnosed with cancer at the age of 20, spoke about his journey in combatting cancer to achieve a lifelong ambition to graduate from University.

Kierran Jarrett, 25-year-old who had been diagnosed with cancer at the age of 20, spoke about his journey in combatting cancer to achieve a lifelong ambition to graduate from University¹⁰. Kierran spoke passionately about his journey that almost saw him die of cancer just a few years earlier while at university. In his own words, *"I could have given up, but life is about choice. When you lose someone close to you it makes you really sit up and think – you want to make peace and show your gratitude to those who helped you. Within a negative environment no one should tell you what you can and cannot do. I chose life; I wanted to graduate and so, still under medical supervision and against medical advice, I took my exams and came out with 2:1. The point is that I could have given up; I was dying as I was given just a few months to live but I fought to live life."*

Kierran's message was clear and straight: he chose life; he made the choice not to succumb to his ailing condition but to fight for what he believed in, despite the odds. Since then he has given numerous talks to young people to inspire and to get them to see all is not as bleak as may at first appear. He told the audience:

**"You can make a difference and
you can change yourself.
You can change the way
you think ...
You can do whatever
you tell yourself you can do."**

[Kierran Jarrett]

"...whatever they tell you tell yourself everything around you is a mind game. You can make a difference and you can change yourself. You can change the way you think. Ask yourself: what can I control, not who controls you. You can do whatever you tell yourself you can do; whatever you want you have choices."

FIRST PANEL DISCUSSION

The host read out a series of questions that had been provided by participants addressed to the panel, which consisted of a mix of young people and professionals. As discussions provided fluid and moved between speakers at different points with 'interjections' from the audience and the host as part of the interactive approach. Responses have been clustered and tied to the key 'big questions' with accompanying sub-questions as they arose as part of the process¹¹.

¹⁰For further details and insight into this young man's journey go to: <https://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/news/2018/january/Inspirational-Alumnus-overcomes-illness-to-gain-his-degree>

¹¹Attached as Appendix xxx is an overview of the Panellists.

¹²The big questions are indicated in bold with the sub-questions and interjections presented in italics.

Question 1: Serious youth violence is often considered a gang issue, is this really the case?

Respondents on the Panel over whelmingly indicated that they did not believe this to wholly be the case though they recognised it as one aspect that cannot be overlooked as a factor. As one respondent declared, "It can be, but it is not exclusively about gangs. It is an issue that can have a relationship with the drugs market and some of these players carry weapons." For some others, some young people carry knives and weapons to appear 'strong' while for some others, they are carrying knives in the belief that they need it for protection (i.e. for 'safety').

The police panel member declared that:

"Using the power of stop and search can help but the police have to use that power wisely and sensitively; we've got to use it properly. People are rightly concerned about how it's done and not so much that we should not be doing it. There is a challenge because it relates to black boys and we need to be honest about the interactions as to who and why we may be stopping some people. There is an embedded culture that needs to be understood; we need to tackle this head on and not shy away from it."

Councillor Flemming responded by declaring that, in her view, "it's not all young people that are carrying knives; there is a small minority of people carrying knives and for different reasons."

What are some of the underlying reasons for carrying knives?

Gwenton Sloley from Crying Sons¹², responded to this question saying that he believed it to be a case of 'addicted' behaviour; that is, the carrying of knives is symptomatic of someone addicted to violence. In his view, *"it is this addiction that is driving those who get involved in gangs. This will take a lifetime and a long time to eradicate. The issue is one of addiction and the approach should be to treat it as an addiction".* Through his organisation, Crying Sons, he provides *"training that looks at addiction to knife carrying; to change the conversation to reflect addiction and how we become addicted...the problem is that these youngsters are addicted to carry knives and that is the way we need to treat the problem."*

Comments from participants based on structured interviews and focus group processes illustrate aptly the complexities associated with people carrying knives and hence, no one simple or straight forward solution:

"... young people's lack of awareness. Ironically, the fact that all the young people had designer trainers – which clearly reflects their conforming to the ideology they need to follow the masses." (parent)

".... Though I am more informed there is still more to be done." (14 -16yrs)

"...Protection – mainly because young people feel that something is going to happen to them.

The environment is dangerous, and people may be after them because they are moving with the wrong circle. More times I refuse to listen to them but for those who do its because they like making money as a young person. They want to earn quick and easy money – lots of it! Some get involved in AC, which is fraudulent activities such as scamming and stealing people's identity; some steal for fun. Its about the mindset to walk with knives as it makes them look cool." (focus group respondent)

¹³Crying Sons is an organisation established to answer the cry of boys and men caught up in the vicious cycle of gangs and serious violence. It works with victims, perpetrators and practitioners seeking and practically working on solutions (<http://www.keepthefaitth.co.uk/2017/05/22/crying-sons/>) .

"...as for those who get caught you'd think that'll be a lesson to the others wouldn't you? Well no –those who get sent down use it to recruit, 'brag' and 'blame the police'. It becomes a status and gives them street cred and enhances their reputation on the 'street'" (respondent from focus group)

What then is the root cause of the addiction and can it be detected?

The response was that exclusion from schools is part of the problem. The debate indicated that it is an issue because exclusion can place the individual in a survival mode and from there they can become involved in an environment that is characterised by violence and rule breaking. They can then become addicted to that lifestyle which is reinforced through influences around them within this environment. By excluding the child, we can put them in an environment where the mindset tells them that they must survive; and they come across others in a similar condition and so build a like-minded bond and conditioning that plays a part in reinforcing such practices. Within this environment other persons reinforce this survival need, and so it can escalate, to becoming dependent on that lifestyle which now centres around violence. As a young person exclaimed, "we have to move away from being reactive and look at this environment." This too was a point reinforced by the Mayor who argued strongly that schools that exclude are failing those young people.

Some of reasons given for carrying knives:

- A belief that they need to be prepared to defend themselves
- Lack of opportunities: short and long term
- Being picked on by police: stop and search is the problem
- Peer pressure
- Looking/seeming cool: fad that has got out of hand and has suddenly caught the attention of the media etc and has generated its own 'sub-cultural form'.
- Idolisation of gangs and 'bling' culture
- Power and status
- Mental incapacity
- 'Addicted' to violence
- Gang affiliation/induction/protection of turf
- Lack of youth service provision
- Poverty: living in an environment riddled with no-hopers and street existence (i.e. lure of the 'Roadman').
- Media frenzy and exaggerations: over inflated concerns creating 'moral panics'

What about the impact of music? Much has been said recently about the banning of 'drill music', do you think this will help?

Steve Reed, MP for Croydon North, commented that *"drill music was more the symptom and not the cause and the answer is not simply to ban it in order to resolve the issue as that is likely to push it underground."*

He further explained that violence is a reflection of poverty and as such it is a reflection of our socio-economic environment which also comes with mental health considerations, which, in his view, "was not been looked at. There is no intervention in terms of mental health which makes it look attractive and therefore appealing. Those who are suffering from mental health episodes get involved in these situations, they get embroiled in this type of behaviour."

Another view was that there was the need *"to ask what are the types of activities that we need to get them into at an early stage? And that we need to undertake family and youth diversion intervention programmes."*

From the perspective of some young people:

"...Drill music lyrics operate at a sub-conscious level as it goes around in your head all the time and it stays there, and you can therefore act upon some of the things but in most cases, it is just words or rhythm or a tune. It should not be banned pure and simple. However, through the medium of music we can get young people involved in the agenda."

"Does drill music perpetuate violence? Yes and no - depends on mood. If I am angry it will make me feel more angrier and if I am calm, sometimes can't listen to it." (17 – 19yrs old)

From the police's perspective:

"...There is a form of normalising and glamorising of the music scene. The police do not want to ban drill music as music always reflect the reality of the times and reflects lived experiences of the day. Today social media makes it that more easy and quicker to obtain such music and we know that there are incidents directly related to things said in the music through the lyrics by way of taunts and 'instructions' in the form of codes that are clearly directed at certain gangs and that doesn't help. Music, on the whole, is not the problem, as it provides escapism, but it's how it is being used today that is the problem, especially when it is being used as a vehicle for taunting and goading gang members."

Question 2: There are good examples of projects that support victims and perpetrators of serious youth violence, what examples exist within Croydon that you are aware of and/or are involved with?

One of the Counsellor commented that there is to be a new Youth Zone in Croydon based on the Blackburn model developed by OnSide. ¹³ *"This will be a massive investment in the service from the Council against a background of swinging cuts across London councils",* she indicated. When this is completed it will provide a welcoming youth provision.

Why aren't the police doing more by way of interaction with local gangs, for example, to do more sports, music and such like events?

The police indicated that they are working very hard locally and across neighbourhoods through teams of youth workers.

¹³ The first Youth Zone was established in Blackburn in 2011 through the not-for-profit organisation, OnSide Youth Zones. Further details on <http://www.blackburnyz.org/about/>. Within Croydon, the Youth Engagement Team provides a range of opportunities that can be accessed via <https://youngcroydon.org.uk/>

The Superintendent remarked that:

"... the world is complicated, and the police are stretched; they are understaffed. They would like to do more, but they are just so stretched. We have a youth engagement team and they are always involved in activities and doing things in the community which often go unrecognised.

They are in 14 playschemes and involved with swimming sessions. The police have over £20m slashed from their budget and that means taking Officers from the streets across the UK."

From our focus group process with participants at the event, young people reported that:

"... we need more events and opportunities like the Event as well as youth clubs. Young people need to understand that there are other ways to earn money even if that takes much longer to get there." (young woman respondent from the focus group)

".. places to go will help, somewhere to go to do things, actual activities that are motivating and focused on advancing them, where you can gain something. These types of activities and opportunities are not being promoted. We have no prominent youth club that's attractive, that offers things like a trade, enterprise development etc. Something real and possible." (male respondent from focus group)

Are Children from BME background impacted upon more?

Responding to this question it was declared that there was no data showing that those from a BME background were suffering any more unfavourably than any other groups.

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) shows that young people not known to the services are getting involved in crime.

However, the response from our feedback questionnaire offered an interesting observation:

"...black parents find it hard not to be able to use physical punishment as the law has change and they feel they can't beat their child. Yet there is no need for violence and discipline can be maintained without that level of violence." (volunteer)

Case study 1: Pekish Petalz Ltd

Pekish Petalz Ltd is a cupcake enterprise established and incorporated as a company at Companies House by Nashada Saka, a 17yrs old entrepreneur. The company provides cup-cakes amongst other bakery confectionaries. At this moment in time, as a new enterprise, the service is targeted at families and friends as well as at events such as the Youth Summit.

The business started because of friends and family noticing how well she baked and how delicious her cupcakes tasted. The popularity amongst her friends grew and this encouraged her to develop her skills and talent further leading to the incorporation of her business in 2017. Pekish Petalz was born.

They currently promote and market the business through social media, Instagram, through word of mouth and events where they can secure a 'stand' and are in the process designing a website. The business offers different types of cup-cakes in the first instance but has begun branching out to produce birthday cakes with different flavours/ styles made to order.



The vision is to one day open a shop in Croydon. The lessons learnt so far is that you need to follow your dream and to go with your ideas; go for what you think and don't be afraid to try new things. She undertakes her own sourcing of supplies and do whatever research is necessary alongside the management of the business and two other jobs.

She is currently baking from home and this takes long hours. This is the frustrating part as she bakes hundreds the night before an event such as this using her mum's kitchen.

Further information and/or booking: pekishpetalz@gmail.com

SECOND PANEL DISCUSSION

Question 3: How do you stop the idolisation of gang culture?

Comments included helping to get those involved in this culture 'off the streets' especially through access to after-school clubs and out of school opportunities.

There is a need to challenge specifically who the young people look up to. Choose Your Future is a campaign led by the Council with a view of discouraging young people from carrying weapons and becoming involved in violent crimes. With 93,000 young people living in Croydon (more than anywhere else in London) the Council launched Choose Your Future as a call to action around two top priorities that arose from the Youth Congress held in 2017:

- (a) finding jobs and success;
- (b) staying safe.

The campaign is live on social media and at poster sites across Croydon (including at the Youth Summit event) and encourages young people to make positive choices in their lives and for residents, businesses and local organisations to support them in this¹⁴.

As one of the Council Officers remarked, "...the power of choice is an empowerment opportunity to enable people to make informed and positive choices. It is important to see yourself reflected in daily lives with all its diversity and complexities; in the workplace as well as beyond. However, it is not happening throughout society where numerous examples of inequalities exist because the system does not reflect you...Growth and development need to benefit everyone, and we have two years to focus interests on young people."



Croydon Works

Croydon Works is a service that provides opportunities for the preparation of entering the world of work by working with employers and individuals. The Council has a 'Good Employer' kitemark which is being rolled out. The Council is "encouraging all employers to offer the London Living Wage, to use local produces and to employ local people.

Croydon Council's Apprenticeship Scheme is in place and we recognise that there is an onus on the Council to get the word out."

"we need proper structured activities to change the culture of wanting to carry knives." (17 -19yrs old)
"... I think more young people need to attend these events." (17 -19yrs old)

¹⁴For further details and information contact: <http://news.croydon.gov.uk/choose-your-future-croydon-urged-to-back-new-campaign/>

Our structured and focused group processes revealed the following observations from our young participants:

"we need proper structured activities to change the culture of wanting to carry knives." (17 -19yrs old)

"... I think more young people need to attend these events." (17 -19yrs old)

"We must get to the children and tackle their core beliefs. Their triggers and automatic thinking is distorted."(17 – 19yrs)

"...we need to reach out to the families as well." (Female participant)

"...girls are not as easily influenced and therefore they are not easily attracted to the lifestyle. Don't get me wrong there are some involved but not as many as boys. The girls tend to be 'carrying for the boys' while the boys are in it for themselves." (female respondent from the focus group)

Why were you not attracted to the lifestyle as some of your boy peers have been?

"... More opportunities outside that lifestyle that I am interested in which offers me more than living on the 'edge'. I want to do something with my life. Those who get involved are very much about living for today and really not caring about tomorrow or the effect of their action. It's the here and now existence that they believe in." (male respondent from the focus group)

Sarah Jones, MP Sarah Jones, MP for Croydon Central, responded to the question of what else is taking place to address knife and violent youth crime in the borough by saying she has:

- Organised debates and raised concerns in the Houses of Parliament;
- Arranged for experts from Chicago, Scotland and elsewhere to visit the area as part of a fact finding exercise;
- Set up a Parliamentary Group that's looking into the aforementioned issues, talking to young people, and arranged for them to come to the Houses of Parliament from the local area.



She went on to comment "that we have seen the highest rate and incidence of knife crimes reported since the year began in January and there are high levels of exclusions in schools. All these factors are adding to

what we are seeing on the streets. We have had 60 serious cases of knife crime reported to date and looks like it may get worse by year end" ¹⁵.

As to why some young people get involved in gangs, it was stated by many of the participants that "being in a gang" is not straight forward as "there is a fear and power" dichotomy that exist. As another participant explained, the solution lay in "educating young people to the alternative; we need to provide distraction away from criminal lifestyle gravitation."

"As to what I took away from the event, there was nothing really new that I had not come across before. The reasons cited on the day as to why young people may want to carry knives did not reveal anything brand new: fear, group pressure, culture and behaviour journey." (local councillor)

Why then is there no improvement, given that we know the people who are getting into trouble?

"Young people," remarked the host, "have the answers. You have friends and bredrens who you know are doing these things and you need to open up and say something."



The Mayor responded by talking about the rate and incidence of 'exclusions taking place': "...Exclusion places stigma on those excluded. This does not help them. By excluding them we are not investing in them. As a society we are shutting them away, locking them up and throwing away the key. School facilities are not being used nor are they accessible after 4 o'clock. We should be able to do something by way of opening up these facilities to provide something for them to do and not just send them to juvenile detention centres. These are a prescription for failure."

Sarah Jones MP commented that:

"there is a general sense that the media discussions around these issues do not help. Work experience opportunities are few and far between." However, she went on to explain, she "has managed to negotiate workplace practices with the Sunday Times and The Daily Express (amongst others) working through the BME Forum.

¹⁵ See ONS/MOPAC data referenced in the Introduction. For the latest crime statistics please see: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

There is the view that many young people do not believe that they have opportunities especially in things like the media and so that's why we are opening up this opportunity. If they don't get the chances and they don't see their reflection in these areas, they are likely to look around for something to do. And that is why we are brokering these types of opportunities."

Other views suggested:

"...I feel there will still be bodies and violence." (17 -19yrs old)

"young people are carrying knives for a range of reasons. In most cases the underlying reasons can be traced back to the home life where there is poor parenting. Other factors relate to social media where people are now embarrassing each other and shaming them; excluded pupils as once they are excluded where do they go? They go to look for something to do, look for those in similar situation as themselves." (20yrs+ participant)

"Much of what needs to be done is perhaps already being tried. We have in place a range of strategies and yet nothing seems to be working. What we do know is that a multifaceted approach is required that includes parents and schools. We need to keep organising to engage grass roots, schools and not to fall prey to reactive actions such as 'knife arches' as this is the slippery slope of security." (ward councillor)

What about the role of primary schools, shouldn't we be doing something there?

The police's response was that they are already:

"...going into schools and primary schools in particular. We have seen incidents where we have had to confiscate 'Samurai sword' from a child who brought it into school because a parent gave it to them 'for safekeeping'. You see everyone has to make a choice, including school teachers and parents.

There is an undercurrent in the school system which want to keep the children safe, but parents do not sometimes help by their actions. Why do these parents feel it is okay to give their child such a weapon and why do we condone such behaviours?"

In reflecting on this question of access, participants offered the following:

"...it is so easy to get access to weapons from a young age." (17 -19yrs old)

"...need to introduce things like conflict resolution and get ex-offenders into schools. Getting to the children early is crucial and there is no teaching of these things going on." (parent)

Would it be fair to say that the police are the biggest gang in the world?

Responding to this question the police commented that:

"This is not a fair comment or account of what we do. While some people in the community might feel this to be the case we are here to help, but yet we don't feel we are being helped. The police want to help and are trying desperately to help though we need the confidence of the community and help within the community to help. Failing this we continue to do our work quietly; we just

get on with doing our job as best we can with whatever resources we have at our disposal. When a stabbing occurs, no one wants to talk to the police. How can we then do our job?"

And another Officer responded with:

"Each individual must stand up and be counted; the majority are doing good things. People are dying on the streets some of whom we may not like (or know) but we have to work with them."

To this the host remarked that "if young people of the community snitched to the police they may not get the help and the support that they believe they will get. Informants feel unprotected and therefore they do not approach the police."

A response from a young person:

"...the Police do try but they still aren't respected, and the youth still need support." (14 -16yrs old)



Coming back to stop and search, what is happening?

"The police have set up The Young People's Independent Advisory Group which will allow us to hear the voice of those concerned through the Young Mayor. We want to speak to young people who are regular knife carriers, but we can't do this alone we need your help. We are trying but we're not there yet."

Work is taking place to look at the home environment as it is a factor and reaching out to schools through roadshows. There is a lot of work going on in schools and with agencies such as the outreach into primary and secondary schools. Through these

programmes we are talking to young people about drugs and life. We do sessions with Year Six on 'knives and crime' issues; with youth workers dedicated to this programme."



A respondent from the floor explained that: "With Ofsted looking at judgements around 'how safe schools keep children' could mean that schools do not want to raise the issue of knife carrying within the school as this could go against their rating/grade."

Stop and search

In the stopping of people using stop and search powers, the police response was that they needed reasonable grounds coupled with operational intelligence before they stop someone. They use factors such as description of the perpetrator which help them to build a profile which they then use as their basis: "If a young blackman has been identified as fitting the description following an incident, then that is the profile we will have to follow. If you haven't done anything wrong, it shouldn't be a problem."

"...the presentations by Jeff Boothe and the local MPs were inspiring because it showed what they are doing." (14 -16yrs old).

"...I have experienced the death of a friend through knife crime and did not know this event was focused on knife crime." (17 -19yrs old)

"There is a view on the street because of stop and search in some cases that if you gather as a small group you are automatically assumed to be in a 'gang'. This does not help. Many young people are getting caught up in being misrepresented." (young person responding from the floor)

To what extent are we seeing those diagnosed with mental health involved in knife crime?

Much has been said about violent crime being linked to mental health but there are no specific examples of direct cause-and-effect that has been detected. It is too complex to say for sure. As one respondent shared:

"There are 60 young people at the moment being studied as part of an exercise in the borough and what we have so far found is that there is maternal absence associated with mental health diagnosis. There is no trusted significant support system in their lives. This absence of a 'maternal' influence is now emerging as a factor for consideration."

Another respondent commented that:

"We need to identify early symptoms of mental health. We need more understanding of the traumatisation effects on families, on individuals and on society. More work needs to be done in this area."

And still yet another view from the floor was that:

"We need more early intervention work around gang cultures. Barriers to accessing support systems in NHS are challenging. We need more early intervention work that will educate parents as to what's happening and options for support, especially that they can do in the home by way of positive reinforcements. Opportunities that link to sport and social interaction opportunities are crucial and things that they can do and be involved with facilitating."

With regards to BME communities accessing NHS mental health services, it was thought that

traditional approaches to accessing services may not be working. Some other forms of engagement may be required such as joint working with stakeholders to access services; we need feedback through creative communication models.

"... Would have liked to see more on mental health in other boroughs." (autistic participant: 17-19yrs)

"The youth need support." (14 – 16yrs old)

"...need to explore more topics on mental health work with other boroughs." (14 – 16yrs old)

"We need to provide mentors and better access to therapists that don't sound patronising." (17-19yrs)

"...early intervention is crucial if we are to make a difference." (volunteer)

Is anything been done about role modelling?

Response to this was that projects like Crying Sons and the schemes offered by Jeff Boothe, Chief Superintendent and Borough Commander for Croydon, for work opportunities within the police service, offer some tangible options. However, many youth clubs "are either closed or closing and we are seeing an increase in criminal behaviour. What opportunities exist for learning a trade?"

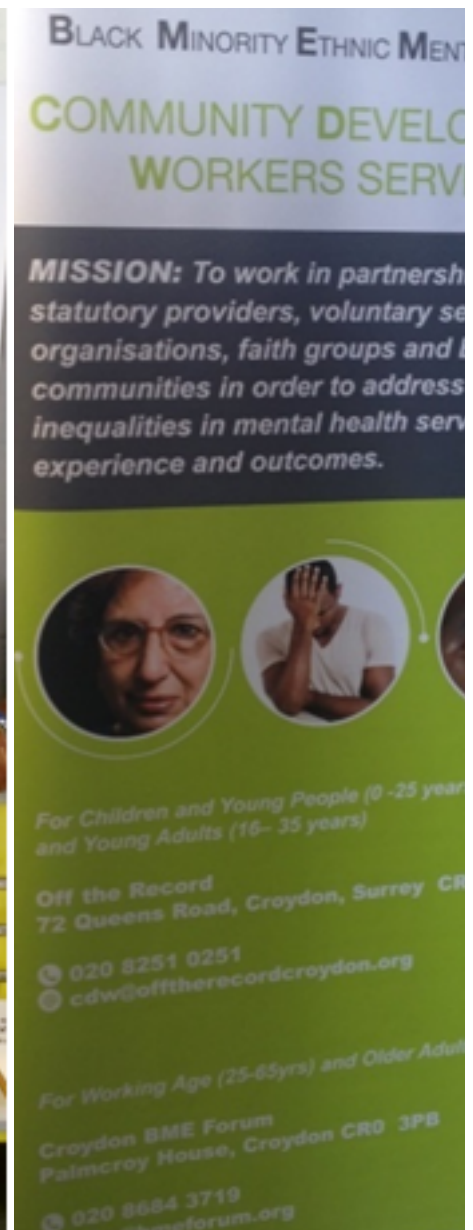
A young person responding to this question remarked that "we need to promote positive lifestyles than the carrying of knives and weapons. It is a lavish lifestyle that misrepresents reality; it raises aspiration in the wrong way and we therefore need to raise aspirations in the right way. It's not about the quick wins."

And from our focused and structured interviews:

"... the cancer guy was inspiring in how he survived." (12 -14yroid); and "...his motivational talk around overcoming his cancer was awesome." (14-16yrs old)

"...The panels and different types of people present gave different opinions and perspectives really caught my attention." (14-16yrs old).

"...young people need to step up and become involved and not just the parents. More young people are needed to organise events such as these; to take the responsibility." (parent)



"... what stood out for me was the Panellists, as they showed that people were doing something and not just talking about doing something. The personal story from the speaker who talked about his cancer touched me. Though not directly related to knife crime, it showed what you can do, how you can get out if you want to." (female respondent from the focus group)

"... I was surprised by the event and wished I had brought my son with me. I don't think, though, much is going to change. Those who attended were, perhaps, not the bad ones and so we really need to attract those inscope to the YOS and such likes to events like this; we ned to get those directly involved perhaps making attendance mandatory." (parent and student)



Case study 2: Stack or Starve (SOS)

Stack or Starve (SOS) is an unincorporated association between three 17yrs old friends of just under one year standing.

The business specialises in fashion accessories geared to young people and includes hats, track-suits and T-shirts and hoodies. Their products are sold at events and 'pop-up shops' wherever the opportunities arise. As a fledgling enterprise, they have been attending conferences and promote themselves via social media while they develop their brand and following.

To date they have learnt that they have to undertake marketing and promotion so as to get the word out. At the moment they feel openings are not as plentiful as first thought but they are getting out there.

They have so far sourced supplies locally, focusing on T-shirts, caps and track suits. Through the setting up of this enterprise, they have learnt massively about profit and loss, different suppliers, negotiation skills alongside business skills: "...Setting up the business as opened up my eyes to a number of aspects of running a business which we had not thought about."

Going forward, the vision is to one day establish and/or turn this into a profitable business: "...who knows, perhaps a £1 million company."

Further information and/or booking:
stackorstarveltd@hotmail.com



CONCLUDING REMARKS, CHALLENGES AND NEXT STEPS

Over 200 young people and adults attended the Croydon Youth Summit on Saturday 21st July 2018 to share their views on knife crime. It was an opportunity to open up dialogue across the generational divide as well as amongst agencies and professionals involved with working with children and young people. It was a start to build on other processes already in place (i.e. The Youth Congress 2017 event) and offered people the opportunity to speak, to engage in dialogue about what is happening, and how communities can come together to finding a solution.

The summit was an opportunity to raise awareness of the Council's Choose Your Future campaign, which aimed at uniting Croydon against serious youth violence in encouraging young people to make positive choices.

The key messages to come out of the event is perhaps best summed up in the words of the Croydon BME Forum's CEO, who, when asked what he thought were the key take-away points, responded by saying:

"Why young people get involved in violent crime is complex, and the Youth Summit gave them the chance to come together and express their concerns, which included peer pressure, parenting and lack of funding and opportunities."



Three core questions provided stimulus for engagement on the day:

1. Serious youth violence is often considered a gang issue, is this really the case?
- 2 There are good examples of projects that support victims and perpetrators of serious youth violence, what examples exist within Croydon that you are aware of and/or are involved with?
3. How do we stop the idolisation of gang culture?

The responses and key issues that arose from the discussions around these core questions demonstrated that there were no simple answers and no straight forward cause and effect; rather, there were many interconnected spheres of influences with contradictions. What was clear, however, was that it required a community response rather than any one single agency response. For example, we heard from the police and elected Council members as well as voluntary and community sector providers that much is being done and yet incidences are on

the increase. . Parental input was said to be pivotal as well as school exclusions. We heard also from two inspirational young people – Just Gordon and Kierran Jarrett -as well as two young entrepreneurs (17yrs olds) trying to establish their own businesses (SOS and PekishPetalz). Their stories are inspirational and demonstrates that, though there are concerns about deaths caused by knife enabled crime, they are 'keeping it real' by showing that there are "choices" that one can take. It therefore does not mean, as one young person reminded the police, that all young people are in 'gangs just because they gather together.'

However, some areas for development were flagged up, and in no particular order, included the following:

- Lots of information, voices and repetitions yet no clear and evident ideas on key actions for transformational change.
- Comments were general with little specific examples of what people could do to take the choice of desisting from criminality
- Breaking down some of the complexities associated would have been helpful, especially as some felt resourcing the youth service, more police and stop and search were solutions.

Specific responses included:

"Event should be organised by the youth. More 'Roadman' should be here."(14 – 16yrs old)

"While the Panel discussions were intriguing and interesting there was not enough depth to the discussions."

"Would have been nice to see and hear from other areas working with young people to see what else is going on."

"Would have liked to see smaller panel to go into more depth. Working/break out groups would have helped to dig deeper."

"BME forum could be bold"

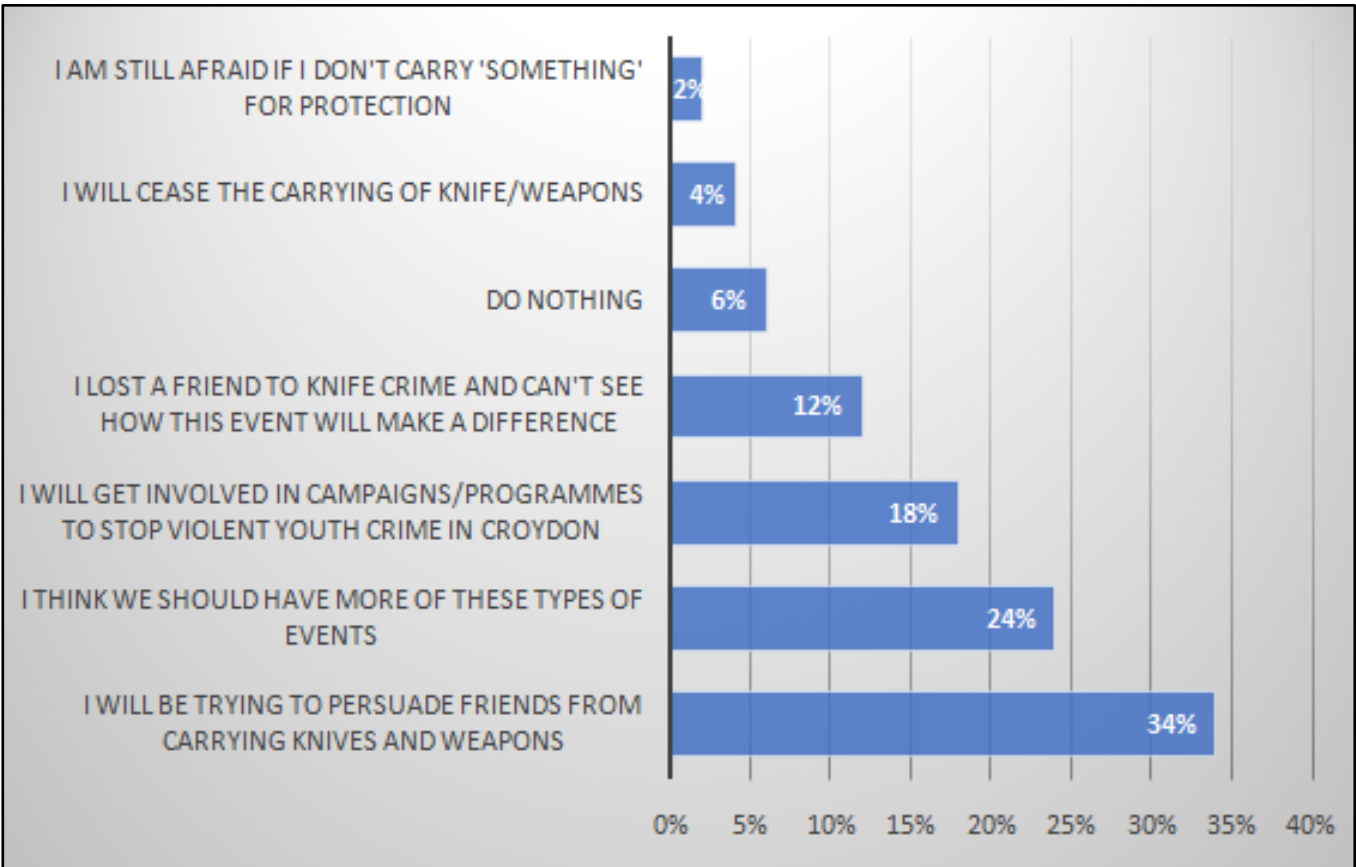
WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS ON THE DAY HAVE TO SAY?

In trying to gauge immediate impact on the participants we undertook a survey of those who attended the event. Through this process we obtained responses from 32 participants. Amongst the responses received there were two main areas we wanted to hear about. The first was in relation to their 'take-away' learning and secondly, how they rated the event against the four strands of the programme. In respect to the first, against a multiple response approach the majority of responses indicated that respondents felt empowered to wanting to 'persuade friends away from carrying knives or weapons' (34%) while 24% of responses indicated that respondents would like to see 'more of these types of events' and 2% of responses showing that some participants still felt afraid and so would be 'carrying something for protection'

(Fig 6). As the event was not targeted to young people explicitly known to be carrying knives, 4% of respondents indicated that they would cease carrying knives. This suggests that an event such as this targeted to known knife carriers might be worth exploring. If this level of consciousness was evoked by the Summit, then there might be a noticeable impact on a more targeted audience who are known to be carrying knives. This approach was not targeted and the fact that of those who responded, two actually admitted to carrying and were now prepared to cease carrying as a direct result of the experience is worthy of further consideration and exploration.

When cross-referenced to gender responses it is noteworthy that while female respondents indicated greater willingness to get involved in campaigns and programmes to stop youth crime (15%), none of the male respondents indicated such on interest. However, almost two-thirds of male respondents indicated that they would be trying to persuade their friends from carrying knives (Table 2: 64% response rate to this outcome indicator). While the overwhelming concern is focused on male involvement in knife crimes, it would be an over simplification that young boys are disinterested in trying to curb the violence around them. Far from it, they are just as active as anyone and herein lies another feature to consider. To what extent can these 'active' boys be identified and what support would they need? Are processes building resilience amongst these young people as part of a rippling and cascading approach?

Fig 6: Initial impact of the event on participants (%)



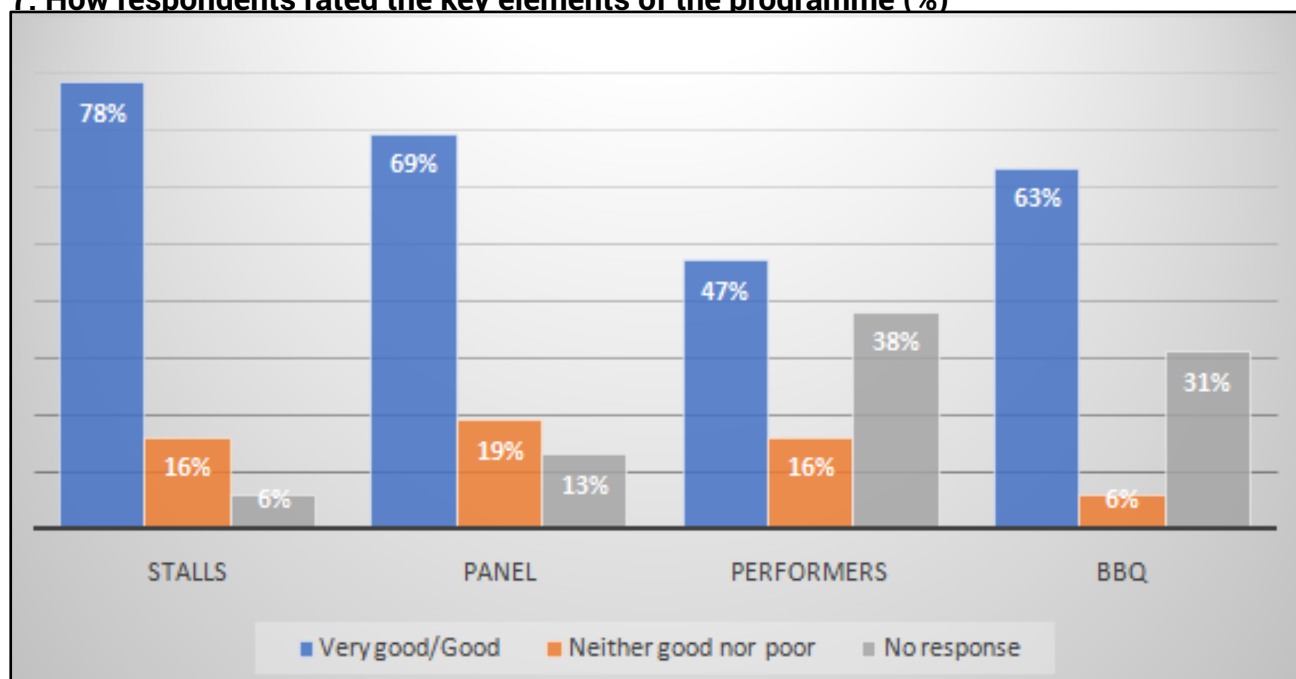
Base number: 50

Table 1: Impact responses by gender

Impact statement	Gender (actual)		Total
	Female	Male	
Get involved in campaigns/ programmes to stop youth crime	4	0	4
Trying to persuade friends from carrying knives/weapons	4	7	11
Do nothing	0	1	1
More of these events	7	3	10
Total	15	11	26

Base number: 26

With regards to the second area of assessment, as Fig 7 shows, overwhelmingly, respondents felt that the event was either 'Very good or Good' (64% overall average rating). On element by element rating, by far the most favourable rating was for the 'Stalls' (78% Very good/good) followed by the Panel discussions (69%) and the BBQ (63%). It is worth noting the high level of non-response rates for the BBQ and Performers. It could be that, as was noticeable, not all participants stayed to watch the performance and so was unable to comment and, as some of the questionnaires were administered at different moments in the afternoon – in order to catch those leaving early – it was possible that some of the respondents had not yet been to the BBQ. Taken as whole, what this tells us is that, at one level, the format of having Panel discussions with information stalls and BBQ worked well. As someone commented, "...there was so much, I couldn't stay all day." And another commented that: "...Due to respect and interest I stayed for all performances and discussions which resulted in much of the food being consumed by early leavers (for food)" Fig 7: How respondents rated the key elements of the programme (%)

Fig 7: How respondents rated the key elements of the programme (%)

CHALLENGES

Some of the key discussion points and challenges are perhaps best summarized as follows:

- ✓ The complexities associated with why people get involved in violent crime could not be put down to a single factor or reason. It is likely to be a combination of factors. However, reasons given range from peer pressure to poor parenting to over zealousness of some police officers using 'stop and search' in a heavy-handed way to poverty and cuts in police services. Is there a case to consider a 'targeted' event to those known to be involved in crime, carriers of knives and weapons, for example?
- ✓ There was a particular concern that the image of violent youth crime was somehow particular to the black community, specifically, black boys.
- ✓ Some people felt that 'snitching culture encouraged by the police' will not work because there may not be the support for those informants. Police were keen to express the need for greater community support in solving crimes.
- ✓ Addiction theory was thought to be an area of exploration as this offers an explanation linked to medical conditioning in the same way one can become addicted to drugs; that is, violence begets violence until it becomes a 'craving' - an addiction.
- ✓ The absence of maternal and paternal influence was said to be another factor leading to negative outlook and outcomes for some (i.e. a mental health perspective).
- ✓ The high level of exclusion, 'leaving many to wander the streets looking for something to do' was yet another reason put forward.
- ✓ Young people as entrepreneurs offered positive peer 'role modelling' which should be harnessed and/or supported. By providing the opportunity to showcase them could act as demonstrating 'alternative lifestyle' in practice. The biggest challenge here is how to support them to make the leap forward so that their journey becomes the catalyst for inspiration and change. Could a 'Dragons Den' type process with corporate/small businesses adopting or investing in such enterprises provide the stimulus needed to demonstrate that 'slow progress is better than a short-term acquisitive culture'?

Perhaps the greatest challenge that faced the partners involved was that of coordination and strategic alignment. From a systems perspective, at the local authority level, the partner holding the major share of this responsibility rest with Croydon Council. It is therefore a challenge to them as to how they, with their partners, especially the relationship they have with infrastructure organisations such as CVA and CBF, ensure that the youth strategy is coordinated and have a high profile across the borough in its leadership and enabling role. This would be more than just enabling young people's voices to be heard but actioned as resources would allow and/or provide support to secure such resources. There is a major challenge in particular to being seduced by the 'Magpie Syndrome' to youth service development and implementation through the lens of thinking that the 'blingest' and most 'talked about' new initiative is better than the ones already

¹⁷What some have referred to as Magpie Syndrome is described as "an irrational affinity for shiny objects." See <http://www.alivewithideas.com/blog/magpie-syndrome>; <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=magpie%20syndrome>; <https://aspergersthealien.blogspot.com/2011/05/magpie-syndrome-and-aspergersautism.html>; <https://www.smallfish.com.au/tradies-toolbox/magpie-syndrome/>

in place. That is, 'If everyone is talking about it, it must therefore be better?' In the light of the Safer Croydon Community Safety Strategy, to avoid the 'Magpie Syndrome', the local authority and its partners might want to consider:

- Setting out its policy and ambitions for services for young people, clearly articulating the roles and responsibilities that each partner will play to deliver that vision – and stick to it for as long as it takes (see Appendix 2 which provides some of the key objectives of the Safer Croydon Community Safety Strategy as it relates to youth violence);
- Explicitly include responsibility for young people within a 'cabinet' portfolio to establish a champion for young people and ensure coordination of policy across all partners. While there may be a 'cabinet' member holding the reins for a broad portfolio say around Community Safety that may actually clash with another with say an overlapping portfolio for children, young people and education, for example. Where, within this framework, does the Young Mayor's role sit? To what extent is their role realistic given that they are in post for one year with 'responsibilities' that appear to be substantial as if it were a 'full-time' position though unpaid (i.e. a volunteer role. See Appendix 3)?
- Allocating a proportion of the funding dedicated to supporting the VCOs to supporting core costs of those organisations, over a minimum 3yrs linked to match funding being secured.
- Sustainable investment in preventative services by providing some resources to early intervention programmes, especially with respect to 'targeted' youth work through detached work especially across the boroughs shown to rank high in recorded knife related incidences.
- Supporting the measurement of outcomes and development of a wider evidence base for youth services in line with strategic priorities, and the agreed key action of partners. Care should be taken not to seek measurements for those things that do not actually indicate outcome, such as between soft outcome (e.g. confidence etc) versus hard outcome (e.g. accreditation).

¹⁷ NCS, OnSide's Youth Zones, Young Foundation and Mutuals as alternative delivery models of youth service provision.

¹⁸ Though the Young Croydon approach indicate a Youth Outreach provision, it is not the same as 'detached youth work', which is more targeted and relationship building utilising youth work principles and processes. It is not to be confused with 'promoting and marketing' services and activities.

NEXT STEPS: The Way Forward - BME FORUM?

As the event was intended as a 'dialogue' with young people as part of an exploratory process. There were no expectations on recommendations other than organisers reflect and consider the output from the event, and that the organisers consider what their next steps ought to be in the light of the experience.

From this perspective, CBF should reflect on:

- Revisiting the work of the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) to see if a more focused consideration could be given to work around some of the underlying factors highlighted as well as building resilience amongst those on the cusp of criminality, and with those currently involved (i.e. a targeted event for those carrying knives and/or in scope with the criminal justice system).
- Whether 'ward level' conversations with young people around key issues coming out of the Summit should be undertaken and/or another similar 'Summit' over the coming school terms;
- The support being provided to those organisations working on the overarching MOPAC programme to enable their 'journey and stories' to be written up as part of the momentum of stopping the 'idolisation of gang culture' and 'illustration of social action programmes' taking place.
- Exploring ways to dig beneath the data and headlines to ascertain what is going on within the borough through 'qualitative conversations' and opportunities arising through the overarching MOPAC project via the groups, (i.e. there are many anecdotal evidences of the pervasiveness of knife carrying which may not actually be the case. There is a need, therefore, for informed facts and less single-story narratives).
- Seeking ways to work with the Young Mayor and others to engage with harder to reach children and young people.

Appendices



APPENDIX 1: FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

We want all young people to have a fulfilling life. However, in recent months we have seen an escalation of violent youth crime in the borough. This conference aims to engage young people in an understanding of the concerns and to seek ways to address what is a worrying trend in Croydon.

Your views and experience, alongside your contributions to the discussions, will help us enormously.

We do not ask for any personal details that might identify you; complete anonymity is assured.

Section 1: Contextual background

1. Gender: [1] Female ☐ [2] Male ☐
2. Age range: [1] 8-11yrs ☐ [2] 12 -13yrs ☐ [3] 14 – 16yrs ☐ [4] 17 – 19yrs ☐ [5] 20yrs+ ☐
3. Do you live in Croydon? [1] No ☐ [2] Yes ☐ If no, which London borough do you live in? _____
4. Do you attend school/College in Croydon? [1] No ☐ [2] Yes ☐
5. How did you come to hear about the Youth Summit event?
 - a) Word of mouth (friend) ☐
 - b) A family member ☐
 - c) Internet/social media ☐
 - d) A presentation given at my school/youth club ☐
 - e) Leaflet/advert in local paper/letter box ☐
 - f) Other (please specify): _____
6. Why did you attend today's event (main reason)?
 - 1) Came with my parent(s)/family member ☐
 - 2) Accompanied my friend ☐
 - 3) Involvement with the police/Youth Offending Service ☐
 - 4) Curious/wanted to see what it was about ☐
 - 5) To learn more about the carrying of knives and weapons ☐
 - 6) Am involved with a youth group trying to prevent the carrying of knives and weapons ☐
 - 7) Other (please specify): _____

Section 2: Your views on the event

7. On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is very good and 5 is very poor, how would you rate the following aspects of the day? (tick as appropriate)

	1 - Very good	2- Good	3- Neither good nor poor	4 - Poor	5- Very poor
The Stalls/exhibitions					
The Panel Discussions					
The Performances					
The BBQ					

8 Following your participation at the event, which of the following would you say best sums up your experience? (tick as many as appropriate)

- 1) I will get involve in campaigns and programmes to stop violent youth crime in Croydon ☐
- 2) I will be trying to persuade friends from carrying knives and weapons ☐
- 3) I will cease the carrying of knife and/or weapons ☐
- 4) I will not be doing any of the above ☐
- 5) I am still afraid if I don't carry 'something' to protect myself ☐
- 6) I lost a friend to knife crime and I can't see how this event is going to stop it from happening again ☐
- 7) I think we should have more of these type of events ☐
- 8) Other (please specify): _____

9. Overall, based on what you have heard today, what stood out for you and why?

10. How would you describe your ethnicity/racial background?

- 1. Black – African ☐
- 2. Black – Caribbean ☐
- 3. White – UK ☐
- 4. White – Other ☐
- 5. Asian – Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi ☐
- 6. Asian – Chinese, Oriental ☐
- 7. Mixed – White & Asian ☐
- 8. Mixed – others ☐
- 9. Mixed – white & Black ☐
- 10. Other (please specify): _____

11. Do you have a disability? [1] No ☐ [2] Yes ☐

12. Is there anything in particular about young people and knife crime that you would like to share with us?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your views will contribute to the overall report on the conference.

Appendix 2: Strategic Objectives from the Safer Croydon Community Strategy

VIOLENT CRIME – KEY ACTIONS	
Reduce the harm caused by gang activity through the multi-agency gangs team	
Maintain a visible police and partner presence in the hotspots to provide reassurance, improve confidence and reduce offences	
Undertake a review of the Council's Licensing Policy to take into account the growth and regeneration of the town centre and the desire to put on events and continue to ensure that licensed premises operate safely.	
Establish Working group on use of the offensive weapons to provide recommendations to schools	
Deliver gangs awareness training to relevant partner agencies	
Engage 100% of young people involved in gangs in 1:1 interventions so that they:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are referred into needs-led education, training and employment (ETE) provisions - Are referred into diversionary activities - Are referred into relevant mainstream services including drug/alcohol, social care, CAMHS/Adult services, Housing, Functional Family Therapy and Troubled Families 	
Establish structures to ensure joint agency responses to targeting of prolific gang and robbery offenders with appropriate civil enforcement intervention.	
Ensure all young people charged for knife crime receive a weapons awareness programme	
Increase work to identify vulnerable people being drawn into county lines – which is the setting up of drug markets across the south of England by London drug dealers	
Targeted, intelligence-based use of Stop and Search to tackle knife possession	
TO BUILD TRUST AND CONFIDENCE – KEY ACTION	
Increase awareness of the work being done to combat crime and to change perceptions and align people's thinking with the reality that Croydon is a safe place to live, work and visit through a sustained communications plan.	
Develop a campaign focussed on knife crime to raise awareness of the issues for both young people and parents and professionals.	
Engage with communities and explore closer working with enforcement partners on a targeted localised basis to increase visibility, improve relationships and develop messages that will inform, help them feel safe and promote civic pride.	
Build stronger relationships with local press and media organisations and be proactive in releasing positive news stories.	
Develop targeted communications for under reported crimes, such as hate crime, DASV, CSE etc to encourage victims to come forward and get support	
Work with the Safer Neighbourhood Board on monitoring police performance and confidence, to oversee the use of Stop and Search and to support them to effectively engage with young people and develop structures and processes that allow young people to participate meaningfully	
Develop a communications plan to systematically engage all Croydon practitioners and the wider public on the DASV agenda	
Continue to promote civic pride through the clean and green street champion scheme and increase the number of champions and community projects they are involved in.	
Work in partnership with the community to monitor road deaths and identify ways to reduce them through schemes as Operation Safeway, Community Roadwatch, use of speed display signs and ANPR systems as well as physical traffic calming measures and targeted enforcement.	

Work in partnership with the GLA to develop and deliver Vision Zero for London, a new approach to reducing road danger, setting a greater level of ambition for reducing death and serious injury on our roads.
Work with Neighbourhood Watch to increase the numbers of watches and explore new ways that they can support their members
Continue to build trust and confidence through a programme of community events, engagement activities and by supporting community networks and relations.
Build relationships with communities using their local asset- base to set up new activities to promote their area, creating opportunities within these relationships to understand how communities prevent crime and support victims.

Source: Safer Croydon Community Safety Strategy 2017 – 2020

Appendix 3: Croydon's Young Mayor: roles and responsibilities ¹⁹

Croydon's Young Mayor

Croydon Young Mayor is elected for once per year and serves a term of one year to represent the views of young people and encourage them to create opportunities around issues that matter to them and their communities.

To do this they will:

- Listen and act on the views of young people in Croydon
- Encourage young people to be active citizens and champion democracy
- Recognise the value and potential in young people's ideas and fund them

The main role of the Young Mayor is to represent Croydon's young people – regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, class or sexuality – and promote their interests to the council, businesses, the wider community and other public service providers such as the NHS.

The Young Mayor will have a calendar of civic engagements and will meet regularly with the Mayor, Councillors and Council Officers.

The Young Mayor will also lead the Youth Cabinet. He or she will work with the youth cabinet and other young people to voice their views and opinions on policy to decision makers across the borough.

The Young Mayor will also be able to campaign on issues that are important to young people in Croydon and support young people and fund projects that benefit the local community. These projects may come from the successful candidate's manifesto or be ideas generated by the young people they represent.

Croydon's Youth Cabinet

Young people are elected to represent their peers through annual youth elections in their respective 'Area Youth Forum' and sit as representative on the Youth Cabinet, which is led by the Young Mayor. The Youth Cabinet allows young people to have a say in how local services are organised and connects them with local democracy. The Youth Cabinet meets monthly to discuss issues which are relevant to young people in Croydon and works to influence policy and development within the local authority on behalf of young people.

¹⁹<https://youngcroydon.org.uk/young-mayor/>

Appendix 4: Organisations and projects involved in the delivery of the MOPAC funded programme: 2018/19

Another Night of Sisterhood (ANOS):ANOS was founded in April 2016 and offers a wide range of services that aim to support families, children and young people within Croydon.

Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/ANOSisterhood/>

Jam Total Sport:A project that uses sport and dance as a tool to allow young people and adults to express themselves creatively in sport and dance.

Contact: <https://www.jamtotalsport.com/>

Music Relief Foundation:This project primarily targets the young people living in the Broad Green and Thornton Heath wards, especially where unemployment and poverty is high, where young people have been excluded from the school system as well as those from households where no member of the family has been in work or has had one or more parent involved with the criminal justice system.

Contact: <https://music-relief.com/services/>

The Lions Society: This project provides talks to young people to promote non-violence through prevention and outreach programmes. Examples of work include organising events in the community such as the Barber Shop Peace Cup and the Barber Academy for young people.

Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/The-LIONS-Society-1840432789543322/>

Rising Stars Support - offer personal development/progression support. Also 1:1 mentoring, group workshops and seminars.

We often use martial arts as a means of engagement and a holistic, therapeutic means for developing transferrable life skills such as resilience, determination, focus, self-esteem and discipline.

Contact: www.risingstarssupport.com



Appendix 5: Methodological approach

The report was produced using a mix approach that combined:

1. Desk research, including access to on-line portals (MOPAC, ONS and Council websites),
2. On-the-day feedback questionnaires: a short card response approach alongside a 12 questions questionnaire that included closed as well as open ended questions.
3. One-to-one structured interviews on the day with participants, volunteers, stall holders, speakers, and organisers.
4. Follow up interviews and focus group sessions with councillors and speakers and young people.

Feedback from the questionnaires were inputted into a statistical package known as SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science), which enabled us to cross tabulate responses across different variables and so provide some statistical reflections alongside the qualitative responses we were able to capture through the processes indicated above. This enabled us, for instance, to be able to ascertain differences in responses between genders, age, ethnicity and so on.

Qualitative analysis was undertaken using a mix method of manual data handling, which is simply reading through the interview notes and pulling out common themes and to confirm and clarify what we were 'hearing' with a recognised open source text analysis tool hosted by Texifter called Coding Analysis Toolkit (CAT)²⁰. Using the questions of the conference we were able to code the texts to enable us to provide cross referenced perspectives as highlighted within the body of the report.

Publicising the event took many forms, including the following:

- Leaflets, banners and pdfs widely circulated via email using our data-base, Whats'App, Twitter and other social media platforms
(e.g. <https://www.stevereedmp.co.uk/event/croydon-youth-summit-ages-11-24/>; <https://twitter.com/croydonevents/status/1009853467479953408>; <http://news.croydon.gov.uk/page/4/>)
- Eventbrite platform to register and promote the event
(<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/croydon-youth-summit-2018-registration-46016082341#>)
- Announcements on the local community radio station, the Croydon Communities Consortium, the Forum's own website
(<http://www.cbmeforum.org/croydon-youth-summit-2018/>), the Metropolitan Police's newsfeed
(<http://news.met.police.uk/news/senior-officers-hear-views-of-young-people-at-croydon-youth-summit-315027>),
- Word of mouth through network organisations and not just those who are involved with direct delivery of the overarching MOPAC funded programme (see Appendix 4)
- Dialogue and conversations with speakers, especially the Young Mayor, amongst others.

²⁰ CAT is a free and open source text analysis service hosted by Texifter, which enables the user to load, code, and annotate text data.

On the surface this may seem straight forward and not overly complex or complicated. Far from it! Before starting we were acutely aware of the tensions within the borough as well as across London, as a whole with respect the high level of knife related crimes being reported. The Youth Congress that took place in the summer of 2017 started a process of direct engagement with young people on these issues, the momentum needed to be maintained against a backdrop of shrinking resources and other infrastructural changes within the council (Local Election 2017) and interim management arrangements specifically within the Croydon BME Forum.

It was therefore vital that as the opportunity arose we needed to have in place a follow up and to seek ways of capturing not only the content of the programme but some of the process involved, the impact on participants and others and indication as to next steps.

Appendix 6: Stalls and organisations that participated at the event

1.	Croydon Young Mayor
2.	Croydon Council's Choose Your Life Campaign
3.	Rising Stars Support
4.	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation
a)	The OCD Multi-cultural Youth Project
b)	CAMHS
c)	Oasis
5.	The BRIT School
6.	Jam Total Sports
7.	Palace for Life Foundation
8.	Stack or Starve (SOS)
9.	Pekish Petalz
10.	Community Development Workers Service (Black Minority Ethnic Mental Health)
11.	Inspiring Vanessa
12.	Turning Point
13.	Music Relief
14.	Mula Cake Clothing
15.	Guiding Hands Organisation
16.	Croydon Drop-in: Talkbus
17.	Finesse by Nature
18.	Off-the-Record

From the team, we wish to extend our appreciation and thanks to our sponsors and funders for their support of the programme and of the event specifically.



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