



Acknowledgments

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All members of the Pakistani Youth Forum



**HUDDERSFIELD PAKISTANI
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE**



Introduction:

Pakistani Community Alliance (PCA) in partnership with Young People Services (YPS) supported the development of Pakistani Youth Forum. Pakistani Community Alliance was accountable of day to day running of the project in between 1st October 2002 to 31st March 2003.

The aim was to establish Pakistani Youth Forum as an independent network of Pakistani young people, with the capacity to advocate on issues and concerns relating to young people for the development of appropriate youth services.

For this we have targeted young people between the age of thirteen to twenty-five, both male and female, in order to secure their input for the formation of the Forum. It was also used as a platform to enable young people to discuss their every day problems.

Background.

Pakistani Community Alliance by involving its youth members carried out a numbers of informal meetings with young people in Thornton Lodge, Lockwood, Birkby and Fartown areas. The forum has identified a core of Fifteen Pakistani young people from different backgrounds who were invited to attend the residential course to help us to formulate a vision for a Pakistani Youth Forum. This was also seen as an opportunity to prioritise key concerns in areas of needs, which would then go to inform and facilitate activities for engaging and consult more and more Pakistani Young people.

A report containing recommendations from the residential was presented at an open meeting of Pakistani Young people at the Hudawi Centre. About eighty young people (50 men and 30 women) attended the meeting. Also, present at the meeting were Cllr: Mehboob Khan, Cllr Mohammed Sarwar and representatives from the key agencies. I.e. Community Support Services, Police etc).

The findings of previous consultations together with recommendations from the residential were presented, discussed and modified in line with the feedback at the open meeting.

The key recommendations identified at this stage were:

- More open community events to share information and ideas aimed at involving young people.
- More consultation with young people to encourage them to participate in the forum and raised their concerns.
- More organised sports events/activities.
- Youth clubs to offer sports, recreational and education opportunities in a motivated environment.
- Information on what is available in terms of education, recreation and development opportunities to be made available freely using local contact points.
- Common platforms for the young people giving them a chance to share and explore common interests and opportunity to address these.
- More educational programs, which aim to give the young people a sense of identity and direction in their social life.
- Development of educational, and training programmes to channel the creative energy of young people in improving the quality of their lives.

In order to further engage Pakistani young people and generate interest in the formation of PYF, we have organised a series of events with particular interest to young people. For example, the Asia Cup 2002 indoor football tournament had attracted more than three hundred youths. Mr Barry Sheerman local MP launched the Asia Cup 2002; Cllr. S. Smitheson and Saied Laher from Community Education & Regeneration were also present. They had the presented the winning team the Trophy cup. The Huddersfield Town Football Club donated the trophy and the Leeds UTD FC sponsored football shirts. Other supporting agencies included NLC, Outlook, JPL, Lifeline, Sanam, and Aleem & CO, etc. We also encouraged youth involvement in various community cohesion events during the

summer period. The highlight of this was the Thornton Lodge community festival through the Neighbourhood Learning Centre, which was opened by the Mayor. PYF members had also taken part in various programmes by the Chanun Youth Theatre. These programmes provided welcomed opportunities for the publicity of PYF.

Aims/ Objectives.

The aims and objectives were mutually agreed by Pakistani Community Alliance and Young People Services, they are as follows:

- Develop opportunities for young people to participate in a range of activities and programmes, which will develop their confidence and competence in dealing with issues of concern to them, their peers and their community.
- Encourage collaboration, where practical and appropriate, with the Kirklees Young People's Service, on issues relating to young people in Kirklees.
- Assist the YPS in establishing constructive relationship with young people from Asian/British backgrounds that will inform the future development of youth programmes in Kirklees especially the emerging ConneXions Service.
- Plan a residential, which would help in team building, confidence, and exploration to work out an action plan for the next twelve months.
- Support the active participation of the PYF, when and where appropriate and workload permitting, in YPS events and activities such as training, common planning and consultation especially as regards to youth work with young people.
- Set up the steering group by introducing young people across Huddersfield, which will represent both genders.
- To create cell groups of young people in all areas of Huddersfield. (Lockwood, Thornton Lodge, Birkby/ Fartown, Paddock and Crossland Moor).
- Data collection by PYF and supplied to the YPS central office.

Outreach Work.

The research was conducted by visiting the local youth provisions. Mosques, lead community locations such as Shopping centres, community centres, and local schools and bus station, Local Businesses, Colleges, the key people from the community. The outreach work was predominantly undertaken in un/social hours.

Resources.

The Neighbourhood Learning Centre played an important role in contributing their resources by giving us the opportunity of running meetings, preparatory work and flexible hours. In addition to this they have allowed PYF to use their other facilities such as the venue and their Kirklees Community Online (Kcol) Centre.

The main communication resource implemented to contact young people was the mobile phone.

As many individuals did not give their landline numbers due to privacy reasons. E-mailing was regularly used to maintain the contact with all people concerned and plenty of legwork was required.

Network

About three hundred young people were approached and two hundred and forty were males from these approximately sixty were females. Their views are as follows:

1. Unemployed,
2. No formal education qualifications
3. Lack of confidence
4. Victims of unlawful circles.
5. Vulnerable to drug and crime environment.

A very large number of organisations across West Yorkshire have been approached. See page eight.

The method adopted was face-to-face talking to young people and meeting with their families. We developed close links with the people

concerning. The relevant people were contacted to gain additional support required to enhance the project. This network included elected members, local businesses, Teachers and Imams (Religious scholars) etc.

Duration.

Once all the above were identified a coherent, transparent understanding was established. This was a crucial time for us to adjust in order to identify the essential information. Utilise this information to bring some benefit to these young people. An electronic/hard versions presentation pack was designed to inform the user groups.

Consultation Few questionnaires were designed to identify the young peoples needs. As many consultations had already taken place by their agencies before. The general feeling amongst the young people was that the agencies, local authority is not doing enough to meet their needs, they never meet their promises. They felt that they are not valued, respected and no feedback on findings was shared with them.

The findings of the questionnaire are as follows:

- Mountain of spaghetti

Few leaving school this year felt they do not know much about the big wide world they are about to enter. These young people summarised the youth provision, education and general awareness as a mountain of spaghetti. They felt they need direct, well constructed, and focused information if they are to find the right path forward.

- Lack of opportunity to express and discuss their problems.

One young female had a photo of her future fiance for over a month while she was at school. She finally decided to go and speak to her teacher; with teardrops down her cheeks, deeply emotion, she was upset and confused. She was introduced to a

confidential Counselling Service. It was easy for her to speak to someone and seek advice and support.

- Barriers.

Over the last few months many young of the people mostly year eleven have requested revision clubs in their local areas to be run out of school hours. Many said "they would like the revision clubs to take place at a venue which would be central and neutral. Due to the divisions e.g. different groups it was very difficult to unite whole community to use a specific location so decided to look for a neutral place to overcome this problem.

- Quality Time

Due to the social and economic pressures at all levels starting from parents that affect their overall responsibility to their children's. Many Imams (Religious scholars) feel that they were used to take up additional parental responsibility. The schedule of a typical Muslim child is to go to school at 9.00 am until 3.15 pm and from 4.00 pm onwards to 7.00 pm at the mosque learning Urdu and Arabic languages. This decreases the child's performance in homework areas. We wish to have enough resources to run a Home Work Clubs as some venue set up for child to carry out his/her homework.

Due to this in our region many have started to address this with positive initiatives being developed where the child is educated in segments after school hours with each segments sensitively tailored approach comprising of small number of students, monitored and evaluated to making sure that greater emphasis is on focused delivery with everlasting memory. Al-hikma Centre, Neighbourhood Learning Centre, and Home Study group in Bradford are the present pioneers.

- Blame

A large number of young people felt that they should be not to blame for not engaging in the local youth provisions. rather the central government to the local council are to blame. They feel this is due to lack of consistency and approach. The young people are willing to participate if the venue, activity, environment, staffing is best matched to their way of thinking.

- Transparency.

Majority of young people do not understand the structured policies, practises that are implemented by the mainstream/ voluntary bodies. More transparency, awareness and training on these structures would help in improving the communication with view to improving participation.

- Trust

Many young people have lost trust in the local council. The lack of involvement with the local counsellors, the streets are filthy, over all maintenance is very poor, departments take too long to response, community centres run down.

- Sustainability.

Many young people influenced by their immediate guardians and their past experiences are very concerned that every year so many organisation spring up across our region. Over time few of these organisations lack momentum, inspiration, determination and passion. This is a very important issue if the Pakistani Youth Forum is to attract sustainable growth. Pakistani Youth Forum is committed to partnership work and is determined to making sure that the young people from the British Pakistani community is involved in taking up ownership from the start.

- There is no real involvement of young people in the affairs of the community and particularly in the main community structures.
- Many who spoke for young people often had no real links with young people and hence were not in position to advocate for young people.
- The young people need to be encouraged, nurtured to speak for themselves. Majority of young people are responsible citizens and they do realise their responsibilities. With some of help and

encouragement they can speak for themselves with confidence and insight.

- **Communication.**

Building a credible relationship was the first step towards building a common ground to work from. This was achieved by recognising their individual needs and best catering/ matching them by being casual and informal. This allowed young people to open up to their inner feelings. There are many issues, concerns and needs that are alarming. There is a strong need to work with parents to improving the awareness of flexibility and choices. These options are vital if we are to engage/involve young females. There is a need to be very culturally and religiously sensitive.

- **Activities.**

We have regular activities running across Huddersfield. The young people participate in the local youth clubs. PYF members have started to plan their own leisure activities in their own areas. This has resulted in different areas that have history of rivalry actually participate in activities together. Thus facilitating communication, bettering relationships and positive signs for interaction with other parts of Huddersfield and communities.. The activities are run by our Youth Champions. Youth Champions are the movers and shakers on the front line. They facilitate meetings, booking venues, increasing membership, and promoting PYF.

- **Meetings**

The tone of the meeting we have kept was very casual. However we did agree collectively what issues/concerns/ topics needed addressing during the phase of that week or month of the meeting. This proved to be constructive, more new young people joined the meetings, this exercise proved a sense of openness, casual approach and welcoming

atmosphere. It also provided an impression of we are approachable and we felt that this was a good getting experiment. The real buzz was when young people started to express their feelings without conditions and structure. However now that we are "rock'n rolling" with the twist of "bangra" we are introducing the infrastructure of running these meeting on a regular basis with the introduction of more formalities in running a meeting.

The meetings will take place on every third Wednesday of the month, as PCA meet every first Monday of each month.

- **Core Group.**

The young people make up the core group from the British Pakistani community across Huddersfield. Both genders are being represented, with males being the majority. These members are the very Youth Champions from the local cell groups from Birkby/Fartown, Thornton Lodge, Lockwood, Paddock, and Crosslandmoore. The target was to identify two males and two females from the areas above. (See recommendations for females). These core group members very well attend the meetings. The passion, determination and good will are motivating each other. The general feeling is that once they have completed their training, this will take this group strength to strength. The bonus if this infrastructure is the fact that at one meeting all Huddersfield is being represented on one table. This opportunity enables sharing and exchanging information collectively and developing unity.

- **Residential.**

Initially we agreed that the members of the PYF would co-ordinate this outdoor activity. In the interest of ownership they would carry out research and bring back information to the committee as to where, when and total cost of their chosen place of residential. Many did invest time into research and came back with some excellent information. Unfortunately all of these venues were already booked. As a result contacted YPS, who gave us contacts, which we are pursuing. PYF members have now allocated responsibilities, swapped

roles to find a suitable venue. All their time and effort is going to be truly valued by the introduction of the Millennium Volunteers Awards.

- **Constitution**

This has been completed and is agreed upon by PCA/PYF. The intentions are that the PYF will operate independently in the future but at this stage it has been agreed after great deal of deliberation that PYF would be better represented and strengthened with the support from the PCA.

PYF will operate as a sub-group.

Present on going projects. (Successful Interactions).

The Pakistani Youth Forum members were introduced to the ConneXions/ Careers centre in the town centre. PYF's role is to work along with other members of the divers community and help in designing, improving their services. This is a first time opportunity to help in influencing decisions at this level is a break through. The eight young people at the first meeting felt valued, acknowledged and respected, thanks goes to the staff at the centre with their casual, open-minded approach as they have now established credible understanding of PYF members are keen to repeat this involvement with all agencies across our region

1. PYF came across information about a ConneXions centre in Oldham that has blossomed into an information point with very high turnover of young people. We are planning a one-day tour of this town. The overall aims are to educate our selves by researching our neighbours before and after affect of the riots. This will provide an opportunity to make their own mind up, as opposed to being brain washed by the media and other propaganda. See and hear first hand what caused the tensions and the break-up of communication. How and by what initiatives they have engaged in to bring stability and harmony back into their region.

2. This practice was highlighted with greater emphasis in broadening the views of Huddersfield young people. Planning is in progress to extend this to touring at a national level. These young people can bring back home the good practise facilitated in partnership between Pakistani Youth Forum, ConneXions, Local Impact and Careers Services. There are many benefits from this visit as we can learn from their experiences after the riots in 2001.
3. PYF are looking forward to being involved with IYCE. Adding their contribution in making a difference towards influencing decision making at all level of their lives, whilst progressing to adulthood.
4. Making Things Equal has attended our meeting to introduce their aims/objectives around drug misuse. We have requested training on drugs awareness and their effects as a starting point.
5. Community United Project (CUP) is another agency who attended our meetings. They have regular activities across Huddersfield on a daily and weekly basis with the theme of Football. They have offered to involve PYF members to join in their accreditation training. Many are considering their invitations to participate.
6. Learning Chest has been approached to seek funding to facilitate courses on: Chiring, Minute taking, General Sectary, Trustee, First Aid, CSLA, Health & safety and six units from Youth Train co-ordinated by YPS. (PYF have been offered a choice of ninety courses to pick from).
7. The courses can be funded through the Learning Chest, which is managed by Groups For Growth.

8. Deighton Sports Arena is being utilised by PYF currently on Wednesday evenings. After discussions with the centre we anticipate block booking for next six months minimum. This opportunity will provide routine/ regularity and will open many door for many individuals. We are working on having outdoor activities during summer period.
9. We have started to target young from within schools. This has been very impressive and constructive. We started from Royds Hall School where we did a presentation to a group from the year eleven; this has created so much interest that we have meetings during their lunch breaks. Mostly females attended, who have elected between themselves to become a Youth Champion and now they are planning a leaving party and a fashion show. Their immediate requests consist of Exam revision clubs out of school hours and more awareness of the big wide world they are about to enter. They seek direct information not sign posting.
10. A member of PYF has been put forward to ConneXions who will be trained to become a member of their recruitment panel.
11. PYF was one of twenty-four South Asian groups who contributed to a consultation led by QED. The emphasis was around Education with Huddersfield input taking up the largest space of the report. ("Our children, their education, our future").
12. PYF members were taken to meetings simply to demonstrate what happens in meetings, the culture of office, environment, how approachable many agencies are and introduce the members to follow up any concerns/queries.
13. Many members have been helped in completing their applications forms for admissions in university. (UCAS)

14. Many members have benefited from advice, guidance, and support around their personal and professional needs.
15. PYF members have been actively involved with the launch of the Young Peoples Enterprise Forum. This project is to highlight the significance of entrepreneurial aspirations and the difference between being self employed as oppose to an employee. Holding workshops/seminars facilitated by key people in within our local area is carrying out this project.
16. Five PYF members are put forward to go on a training session around drugs with Making Things Equal.

Structure of PYF

The infrastructure has to be created from the right ingredients for it to sustain growth. The main elements implemented and introduced are the steering group training, from which having qualified Youth Champions. These are the role models on the front line who will posses range of multi skills that can add new dimension to a modern management/steering group. See six above.

Recommendations.

From the consultations and discussions so far with young people there is much interest and support for the idea of PYF. However, these are early soundings that need to be addressed. A great deal of resources will be needed to develop and establish PYF as a vehicle for Pakistani Young People.

Key issues:

1. Although we have contacted and consulted young Pakistani women, we have not been unable to involve them in our activities and planning. This is mainly due to religious and cultural reasons or family commitments. Many females are

- concerned about attracting negative publicity if they were seen to be mixing freely in a male dominated environment.
2. Many young women are keen to be involved but are looking for a religiously and culturally acceptable and safe environment.
 3. They are striving for programmes and activities, which reflect their concerns.
 4. Those young women who are quite confident to take part in mixed gender setting, the issue of safety is of paramount importance.
 5. From the discussions with Pakistani young women, the appointment of a Female Development Worker comes to be a major priority.
 6. Many young people are not aware of:
 - What help and support is available,
 - What resources are available to them,
 - They often lack confidence to access information and help.
 7. There is a high degree of mistrust and disillusionment with professionals and agencies. There is a need for greater links.
 8. There needs to be more tailored resources training and information for the youth.
 9. Neighbourhood facilities and services for young people to positively engage.
 10. Activities and services need to cater for the creative development of young people.
 11. Many young people feel that local councillors have no real involvement.
 12. Many young people have commented on their local community centres/ youth centres and their feedback is very common across Huddersfield.
 - Bigger venues
 - More Activities (Outdoor/Indoor)
 - More accessibility on daily basis.
 - More flexibility.
 - Buildings need revamping/modernising.
 - Variety of equipment required to engage young people with.