

Ward:

Portfolio:

FROM: Cllr Peter Bradshaw

Date: 25 February 2019

SUBJECT: Mental Health Champion Report

Internal Use Only: Please complete sign off boxes below prior to submission to Democratic Services			
	Seen by:	Name	Date
Report Sign off	Group Manager	Claire Malcolmson	12.02.2019
Summary:	<p>The Council continues to promote and support mental wellbeing of staff, residents, members and partner organisations.</p> <p>This is an update on the work around mental health and next steps.</p>		
Recommendation:	<p>That Members note progress has been made and endorse continuing promotion and facilitation of events including room provision wherever possible.</p> <p>That Members support appointment of Mental Health Champions at the earliest opportunity following the 2019 elections.</p>		
Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities	<p>Directly supporting the community through raising awareness and effective signposting to services. Indirect impact of training and raising awareness of staff resulting in more effective delivery of services.</p>		
Financial Implications:	<p>To date, organisations other than Mendip District Council organised and provided events with notable exception where the council's meeting rooms and the Council Chamber were provided free of charge for a small number of events and meetings that support the council's corporate priorities around mental health.</p> <p>Promoting and facilitating some of these events require some human resource.</p>		
Legal Implications:	None		
Crime and Disorder Implications:	None		
Equalities Implications:	<p>Members Equality Group is monitoring the work of the Mendip Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure no groups are unknowingly excluded or unintentionally discriminated against.</p>		
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	None		

INTRODUCTION

Members will identify the relevance of mental health being part of our corporate objectives – to enable the residents of Mendip to fulfil their potential both at work and at leisure. The concept and application of mental health is embedded into our policies and continues to be part of the corporate objectives under the umbrella of the Mendip Health and Wellbeing Board.

We are maintaining our duty of care to staff by training Mental Health First Aiders and Community Connectors, as well as providing dementia awareness sessions for staff to become Dementia Friends. These measures are now translated into practical relevance when the staff members interact with our residents as well as each other.

MENDIP AS A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY DISTRICT

There are now 5 Dementia Action Alliances (DAAs) set up in each town/city in Mendip with a district-wide DAA providing support and opportunity to share best practice in working towards the whole district becoming dementia friendly.

This not only means holding Dementia Friends sessions but approaching local shops and business premises in terms of suggesting their designs to conform to certain requirements, such as exit signs, lighting and noise levels.

Some academic work has been done with regards to the design of new housing estates to make them dementia friendly. I have forwarded some of these ideas to Planning for their evaluation and consideration in putting suggestions to builders within our Local Plan framework.

A meeting for Dementia Friends Champions was held in Mendip for the first time on 26 October 2018 where a network of Champions was established to hold Dementia Friends sessions across the Mendip district area.

The council is working with Shepton Mallet DAA in becoming a dementia-friendly organisation. The first step was holding sessions for all Shape Mendip staff and councillors with the support from Cabinet.

Five sessions were held during core time every day in the week of 14-18 January 2019. I thank the Corporate Management Team for encouraging their teams to join these sessions which were attended by 78 people, with 6 existing and 72 new Dementia Friends, including our whole customer service team, two PCSOs and staff from various teams across the council.

There are already twenty one councillors who attended a Dementia Friends session in December 2016 with a further session being held prior to this Full Council meeting.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING WEEK

Activity improves mental health and thus, a Mendip Health and Wellbeing week was organised with Zing Somerset and Smokefree Life Somerset during 14–18 January 2019.

It was a great success with colleagues attending from various departments across the Shape Mendip site and getting involved in different activities including badminton, table tennis, volley ball, boccia, archery, curling and food quizzes.

Smoking cessation support, pedometers, measuring tapes, games and Health Walks programmes as well as a wide range of information/support/advice leaflets were also available throughout the week.

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

Connected communities support mental wellbeing. Last year the council seconded a one-day-a-week post to Health Connections Mendip for six months to deliver Community Connector training to public and organisations in Mendip.

Community Connectors are individuals in the community who signpost their friends, family and colleagues to relevant support and services in Mendip that may help improve their health and wellbeing.

There are now over 900 Community Connectors in the district and the number is growing with continuous training taking place at the council's team meetings.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

Mendip District Council officers continue to benefit from the Mental Health First Aid course provided by Mental Health First Aid England and organised for free through Public Health at Somerset County Council.

Through having a number of Mental Health First Aiders, the Council is now better equipped to support residents who may have mental health problems. The names of the council's Mental Health First Aiders is published on the council's internal site Sharepoint so that any member of staff with concerns can contact someone.

RECOMMENDATION

Within the council we now have Mental Health First Aiders, Dementia Friends and Community Connectors who are able to bring comfort and signpost to a relevant service any resident in need of support in and outside our offices as well as continue good relationships across the Shape Mendip site.

I hope that Members may be satisfied as to the progress of these matters and agree to endorse continuing promotion and facilitation of events relating to mental health, including room provision wherever possible, as well as appointment of Mental Health Champions at the earliest opportunity following the 2019 elections.

Peter R Bradshaw
Mental Health Champion

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