

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT TO
COUNCIL**

Date 21st February 2018

1. **REPORT TITLE** **Mental Health Challenge**
- Submitted by:** **Acting Chief Executive – John Tradewell**
- Portfolio:** **Leader of the Council**
- Ward(s) affected:** **All**

Purpose of the Report

At its meeting in November 2018 the Council agreed to sign up to the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge, to appoint an elected member as "mental health champion" across the Council, and to appoint a member of staff within the council to act as "lead officer" for mental health. The purpose of this report is to update the Council on progress with this initiative.

Recommendations

- (1) That Councillor Jill Waring, as Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, be appointed as the Council's mental health champion**
- (2) That Council gives consideration as to whether it wishes to appoint an additional member mental health champion and, if so, asks Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to make the appointment.**

Reasons

- (1) To fulfil the Council's wish to appoint an elected member as mental health champion
- (2) To spread ownership of this important issue more broadly amongst the membership of the Council

1. **Background**

1.1 At a Council meeting held on 22nd November 2017 it was agreed that the Borough Council would sign up to the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge ("The Challenge"). This report seeks to confirm the necessary actions to put that into practice. Among other things this means that at least one Member Champion needs to be appointed together with a lead officer being identified.

1.2 The Challenge sets out some suggested activities for the Champion, whilst recognising that the specifics need to be agreed locally. Resources are available through the Challenge partners to support the Champion.

1.3 In terms of the criteria for the Champion, the Challenge advises that *“Enthusiasm and commitment are more important than formal position in becoming a member champion. What is crucial is that an elected local authority member takes on this role in order to influence the full range of the authority’s activities and responsibilities”*.

1.4 In terms of the Lead Officer role, this fits well within the Council’s Partnership Team and it is felt that this should be the responsibility of the Partnerships Locality Officer, Robin Wiles.

1.5 An Action Plan outlining activities to deliver the aims and objectives of the Challenge is being drawn up for consideration by the Member Champion(s) with the support of the Lead Officer. As a starting point there are a number of things that the Council is doing in respect of mental health and associated issues that can be built on including:-

- The Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2013 - 2018 includes references to mental health.
- The Local Police & Crime Plan 2017 - 2020 also includes references to mental health particularly in relation to the link with substance misuse. To reflect this, the Newcastle Safer Neighbourhoods Panel has a sub-group focusing on mental health.
- The Newcastle Safe Recovery Project (within Newcastle Partnership’s Commissioning Prospectus), which the local Charity Brighter Futures are contracted to deliver until 31st March 2019, provides 1:1 support for individuals in the Borough identified through multi-agency partnership working as needing intensive intervention and support to prevent offending and re-offending. The Safer Recovery worker is based with the Partnerships Team. The majority of clients on the scheme have mental health issues.
- The Borough Council are partners in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Suicide Prevention Group which is drawing up a Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Suicide Action Plan 2018-2020. Specific actions have been implemented to reduce the suicide risk on the Midway Multi-storey car park.
- Partnership working with voluntary, community & social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in general includes those working in the mental health field.
- The Council provides a range of resources, including access to a counselling support service, to support employees with mental health related challenges.

1.6 It is also intended that links will be made with Member Champions and Lead Officers in the other Local Authorities in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent – at the time of writing Staffordshire County Council have appointed a Champion but officers are unaware of any other Authorities that have done so.

2 Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

This proposal will support the Council’s aim of creating a healthy and active community.

3 Legal and Statutory Implications

None

4 Equality Impact Assessment

This proposal is intended to benefit positively residents of the borough, and the Council's own workforce, facing mental health issues.

5 Financial and Resource Implications

It is not proposed that meeting the Council's commitments to the challenge will incur new cost, it is about using existing commitments in a way that is supportive of the challenge.

6 Major Risks

None

7 Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

None

8 Earlier Resolutions

Council Minute 12 of the meeting held on the 22nd November 2017

9 List of Appendices

None

10 Background Papers

None