

ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 21 MARCH 2018

PREVENTING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

Summary

1. The Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel is to receive an overview on the Council's prevention work to tackle loneliness and isolation, which is on the Panel's work programme.
2. The Director of Public Health and the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Health and Well-being and Adult Social Care have been invited to the meeting.

Background

3. The Health Improvement Group (HIG), a sub group of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) approved the Worcestershire Loneliness Plan 2015-2018 (Appendix 1) which was developed by the Tackling Loneliness partnership group. The HIG agreed to receive annual progress reports.
4. Nationally it is estimated that approx. 20% of the older population is mildly lonely and another 8-10% is intensely lonely. Over 700,000 people aged over 65 in the UK report that they are lonely (Campaign to End Loneliness).
5. The effect of loneliness and isolation on mortality exceeds the impact of well-known risk factors such as obesity, and has a similar effect as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Lonely individuals are at higher risk of the onset of disability. Loneliness also puts individuals at greater risk of cognitive decline (Campaign to End Loneliness).
6. The Worcestershire Loneliness Plan was developed following a HWBB event in 2014 on social isolation and loneliness in older people across Worcestershire. The plan sets out a vision that older people in Worcestershire will maintain their connections, friendships and networks through times of life change, and therefore eliminate loneliness across the county.
7. To deliver the vision the plan identified three aims:
 - a) Empower residents and communities to maintain their connections, friendships and networks, making use of community assets with active members and volunteers
 - b) Improve access to activities and services that can prevent or alleviate isolation and loneliness, ensuring services are tailored to meet need and demand
 - c) Raise awareness of isolation and loneliness including why it is important, how to recognise the signs and risk factors, and local opportunities available for prevention and intervention.

8. Progress has been made on delivering the plan against the three aims and a refreshed plan will be produced later this year. Performance has been measured using the Public Health Outcomes Framework (the % of adult social care users who have as much social contact as they would like to), Worcestershire (45%) remains similar to the national average (45.4%).

Reconnections Service Worcestershire

9. The Council commissions Reconnections to deliver a service in Worcestershire to reduce loneliness in older adults. The budget includes contributions from Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Social Finance Organisation, Cabinet (funding ends March 2018) and Big Lottery. This Payment by Results contract is delivered within a social investment bond (SIB) for delivery of agreed reduced loneliness outcomes in a target population aged over 50 years living in Worcestershire. In addition, no fewer than 20% of service users should have a permanent place of residence in the most deprived lower super output areas (LSOAs).

10. The SIB model is based on attracting social investment to fund projects that are small, innovative and focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable populations with the aim of reducing inequalities. The contract between the Council and Reconnections is from 1 May 2015 to 31 July 2018. An agreement has recently been reached between the Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Big Lottery and Social Finance investors to extend the contract for a further 12 months operational period until 2019.

11. Payment by Results outcome payments are capped at £1.2 million and investors receive a financial return based on the achievement of outcomes against targets for reduction in UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) loneliness score measured at 6 months and 18 months.

12. Reconnections implemented a competitive tendering process locally and subcontracted with providers in Worcestershire: Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Simply Limitless, Onside Advocacy and Worcester Community Trust.

13. The service delivery model matches up volunteers to service users, providing suitable interventions to reduce loneliness and support access to wider social networks. Since mobilisation in 2015, the service has triaged 1600 referrals. The service has engaged 868 participants and matched 787 to volunteers. The benchmark impact on loneliness score is greater than expected-achieving an average of -1.2 points on the standard UCLA 12 point scale (independently verified) with 70% of clients demonstrating decreased loneliness at 6 month evaluation.

Wider Progress to Date

14. The Rural Communities Programme is led by Wychavon District Council with a range of public community and voluntary partners involved. The programme aims to support vulnerable individuals and communities in rural areas including older people and the socially isolated. The programme has engaged with targeted parish councils and community groups in 17 wards by taking services and support out to over 1000 potentially vulnerable people through door knocks as well as highlighting key issues

within the community for parish council support. The programme has established a network of "community connectors", who are local contact points in the villages; identified vulnerable, isolated and lonely individuals and created a village health check to help assess the strengths and weaknesses of communities and find local solutions to issues.

15. Health Chats has been delivered by the Public Health team, the University of Worcester and the Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (HACW) across the county and includes information on isolation and loneliness. As part of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability Transformational Partnership (STP) prevention priority, partners have committed to develop and roll out Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training to frontline workers. The Health Chats model has been re-designed to enable MECC to be delivered at scale across health and social care.

16. A Social Prescribing programme has been developed for the County following the countywide HWBB Social Prescribing event held in late 2016. Social Prescribing is one of the four prevention delivery platforms in the STP. Social Prescribing offers a way for healthcare providers to help lonely and socially isolated patients by referring them into community-based services that can help them to manage their own wellbeing and reduce pressures on health and social care.

17. Local campaigns have been rolled out by Public Health and partners of the Tackling Loneliness group including the Stay Well This Winter campaign (2017) which included a focus on reducing loneliness, providing information, advice and signposting to the services on Your Life Your Choice (YLYC) Worcestershire.

18. Loneliness training has been delivered across the county by Reconnections. Training is also being offered to Fire and Rescue Officers undertaking the Home Fire Safety checks, as they are working with people at risk of being lonely.

19. Events have taken place in districts including the Older Peoples Showcasing events. In addition, Worcestershire Association of Carers and HACW delivered a carers event on peer-to-peer support and isolation as a theme that affects carers locally.

20. There has been an expansion in the number of volunteer roles including Community Connectors, Community Resilience Champions, Health and Wellbeing Champions and Digital Champions. These models have been developed from local communities and through a countywide partnership approach. Volunteers can help to reduce loneliness by identifying people at risk and connecting them with appropriate services/groups, advice and information.

21. The tackling loneliness group will continue to oversee and monitor the loneliness plan, developing a re-freshed plan later this year and reporting back to the HWBB through the HIG.

Purpose of the Meeting

22. Members are invited to consider and comment on the information discussed and agree:

- whether there are any comments to highlight to the relevant Cabinet Member/s
- whether any further information or scrutiny work is required at this time

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Worcestershire Loneliness Plan 2015-2018

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 13 July 2016 available [here](#)