

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ADULT CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

TO:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD		
DATE:	22 JANUARY 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE PROPOSAL		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR HOSKIN	PORTFOLIO:	HEALTH
SERVICE:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Mental Health Challenge is a national initiative and was set up by a group of key mental health (MH) organisations. It is funded by the Department of Health, Public Health England and NHS England, through the 'Voluntary Sector Strategic Partnership Programme'. The initiative is asking all local authorities to undertake this important function through the Mental Health Champion role.
- 1.2 This report aims to outline the benefits to the Reading area of the lead councillor for health becoming a MH Champion.
- 1.3 Participation in the challenge is timely given the recent work of Cllrs Hoskin, Eden and Stanford-Beale in the scrutiny of the number of absconders from prospect park hospital which was presented to ACE in November 2015.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 For the council to take up the Mental Health Challenge programme led by the lead councillor for Health; Cllr Graeme Hoskin.
- 2.2 Agree the identification of a lead officer as described in the initiative.
- 2.3 For the council to agree to identify a person with experience of using mental health services to form part of the 'challenge group'.
- 2.4 Work with existing strategies and initiatives across the system, Such as CAMHs Transformation and future strategies in development to promote Mental Health issues.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The initiative highlights the need for Local Authorities to have a key role in implementing the mental health strategy and improving mental health in their communities. It supports and encourages local authorities to take a proactive approach to this crucial issue.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The challenge provides a vehicle to promote awareness and create challenge for issues related to Mental Health.

The initiative provides helpful information to aid the authority to understand the context and impact of mental illness on its community, as well as the roles and responsibilities individual members and officers across the council. These are described below:

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in a given year
 - The World Health Organisation predicts that depression will be the second most common health condition world wide by 2020
 - Mental ill health costs some £105 billion each year in England alone
 - People with a severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK
 - There is often a circular relationship between mental health and issues such as housing, employment, family problems and debt
- 4.2 The role of the council should be:
- As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health
 - Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority's areas of responsibility, including housing, community safety and planning.
 - All councillors, whether members of the Executive or Scrutiny and within community and casework roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis
- 4.3 It suggests that the council should resolve to:
- To sign the Local Authorities Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Providers Forum, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.
 - Commit to appoint an elected member as “mental health champion” across the council
 - Seek to identify a member of staff within the council to act as ‘lead officer’ for mental health.

And that the council should also;

- Support positive mental health in our community, including local schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces
- Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community
- Work with local partners to offer effective support for people with mental health needs.
- Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community
- Proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health

5. BENEFITS OF BECOMING A CHAMPION

- 5.1 The council will have access to a number of tools including a checklist to review Public Health impact on mental health as well as guidance tools for councillors and officers.
- 5.2 In the South East of England there are few councillors who have become champions. However, it is anticipated that this number will rise, particularly give the spot light that mental health services now have nationally.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 The Mental Health Champion role will promote out key corporate and strategic aims of:
- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable
 - Providing the best life through education, early help and health living
 - Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 Limited community engagement has been apparent to date. However this will increase through the development of the champion role.
- 7.2 There is a strategic commissioning group lead by the Head of Adult Social Care who can raise the profile of mental health needs and services across the Reading locality.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None identified at this stage

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 To be developed as the role becomes established.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no costs associated to becoming a Mental Health Champion, however it should be noted that neither is there any allocated investment as a result of becoming a champion.