

Agenda Item 17.

TITLE	Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board: Reducing Social Isolation and Loneliness
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 15 July 2019
WARD	None Specific;
KEY OFFICER	Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive; Charlotte Seymour, Project Support Officer

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Wellbeing Board are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of the Borough and supporting communities to become self-sufficient and resilient which will also have a positive impact on health and social services in Wokingham.

RECOMMENDATION

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to review the current actions and support future endeavours to reduce social isolation and loneliness in the Wokingham Borough as requested following the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board Update 2018/2019 on the 3rd June 2019 Committee.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report highlights the current and planned activities that are supported by the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board to tackle one of its three key priorities which is to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

Background

A refreshed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2018-2021 was designed around the vision of “creating healthy and resilient communities”, within which is three key priorities:

- ◆ **Creating physically active communities**
- ◆ **Reducing social isolation and loneliness**
- ◆ **Narrowing the health inequalities gap**

Social isolation is about separation from social or familial contact, community involvement or access to services, whilst loneliness is a subjective feeling which may or may not relate to observable isolation. People can be isolated without feeling lonely, and can be lonely without being isolated, although the two often go together. Social relationships and interactions are vital to human health and wellbeing, and without them the stress response triggered can have a significant impact on both physical and mental health. By the very nature of these issues the scale of the suffering is often hidden.

Children and young people should not be overlooked when discussing social isolation and loneliness, they can become socially isolated due to adverse life events or circumstances, including experience of abuse and neglect, domestic violence or substance misuse in a parent. Social isolation in childhood is associated with poor mental health. Children who experience social isolation are more likely to have poor educational attainment and lower incomes in adulthood; they are also at greater risk of smoking, obesity and psychological distress in adulthood (PHE [Reducing social isolation across the life-course](#)).

Wokingham Picture

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides the data and accompanying commentary which informs local policy and strategies. This constantly updated document is insightful using infographic data to explore the life-course of an individual in Wokingham against those in the South East region and of England. The JSNA is currently going through a remodel but is still available for use and is expected to be published for public use around September 2019.

Wokingham’s 2018-2021 JSNA has highlighted insightful data has been and is being used to create an action plan to reduce social isolation and loneliness in the borough:

- Living alone is strongly associated with social isolation. The estimated number of elderly population living alone in Wokingham borough is 10,442. This number is estimated to increase by 25% by 2025.
- 7.3% of children and young people in Wokingham are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health disorder; this equates to a total of 1,828.
- There are around 443 children and 465 adults in Wokingham who need support for their learning disabilities. It’s estimated that 85% of young disabled adults aged 18-34 feel lonely. (Scope, 2017).
- Over 1 in 10 mothers are thought to be affected by post-natal depression which can be exacerbated by social isolation. It is estimated that around 300 mothers in Wokingham are affected each year.

Current Activity

Sports and Leisure

The Sports and Leisure department are very active in reducing social isolation and loneliness in the borough. The department has a database of around 160 clubs within the borough which aim to support residents through physical activity. Alongside this there are also multiple leisure contracts with local leisure centres which commission schemes such as free swim and gym memberships for foster children and their siblings, foster parents, looked after children and care leavers. The Sports and Leisure department supports the Wellbeing Board's strategy and key priority of reducing social isolation and loneliness and the board.

Community Navigators

The Community Navigation scheme aims to support and empower people to engage in self-care, independence and wellbeing across Wokingham. The scheme aims to provide an essential link between health services and local voluntary and community provisions. The Community Navigation Officers do this by linking people up to social or physical activities in the community to best meet the individual's needs. This process is also known as signposting or social prescribing.

The Community Navigation scheme is run by Involve who are the local support organisation for voluntary, community and faith groups in Bracknell and Wokingham. The chair of Involve is a member of and regularly attends the Wellbeing Board, providing updates on Involve Community events and valuable perspectives from the voluntary and community sector.

Within Wokingham Borough Council as part of the Customer and Localities department, there are Community Engagement Officers whose role is similar to that of Community Navigators. Although these officers each have specific areas of expertise, such as young carers, BME, young mentors, they are also able to assist in a much broader sense across different locations within the borough. Localities Plus will be leading the connectivity between Community Engagement Officers, Community Navigators and Social Prescribers to ensure the needs of those who are socially isolated and lonely are met through careful and effective signposting. Best practice examples from around the country and our neighbouring authorities are being utilised for learnings and methods that could be developed in the Wokingham borough.

Wokingham Libraries

Wokingham Borough Libraries support the mental health agenda by providing a range of regular reading groups, reminiscence groups and craft groups for all ages. In particular, the 'Reading Well' national scheme is aimed at people living with long-term conditions is being supported across Wokingham borough libraries; people with a health condition are 56% more likely to report loneliness than those without, and those with caring responsibilities were 37% more likely to be lonely. The Wellbeing Board supports the Wokingham Libraries in this scheme through the Customer and Localities department.

Planned Activity

Wellbeing Board

The Wellbeing Board are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of the borough and supporting communities to become self-sufficient and resilient which will also have a positive impact on health and social services in Wokingham. As one of the key priorities for the Wellbeing Board, reducing social isolation and loneliness is a focal point of the strategy and action plan. As such, the board is engaging with both internal and external partners to gauge the level of current activity around this topic. The feedback received has reaffirmed the knowledge that there are a lot of support and provision services for those in the Wokingham borough who are socially isolated or lonely but the key is to ensure that these services are reaching those who are affected. These activities and ongoing projects have been included in the Wellbeing Board's action plan and it is the responsibility of the board to ensure that accountability and responsibility is being upheld.

The Children's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy has been presented to the Wellbeing board during development and final version for review to which the Wellbeing Board have supported. Ongoing review of the strategy will be carried out annually. This strategy is linked with the Wellbeing Board's strategy and will be key in aligning further with the needs of the children and young people in the borough.

Children and Young People's Partnership

The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) Board is a sub-board of the Wellbeing Board and is acutely aware of how social isolation and loneliness can affect children and young people mentally and physically. The CYPP has membership which includes representation from schools, the parent carer forum SEND Voices Wokingham, Berkshire Health Foundation Trust and CAMHS. Together this membership provides a comprehensive overview of the children in the borough. The CYPP are in the final stages of refreshing their strategy and key priorities which will include a focus on the emotional wellbeing of children and young people. The board will be holding themed meetings which will involve extending the invitation to relevant partners and young people themselves to listen to their perspectives, develop a picture of what affects them most and enable the board to utilise those around the table to make a difference.

Population Health Management

Population Health Management (PHM) is a key element of the NHS Long Term Plan and is an approach aimed at improving the physical and mental health of the population. Effective PHM will enable a deep level of understanding of care needs and health status at a postcode level which will assist targeted communications to be distributed to. This could be hugely beneficial for those who are feeling isolated or lonely as they can be difficult to identify and reach out to. Furthermore, by better understanding the communities within Wokingham, specific areas can be targeted by social prescribing services such as Community Navigators to provide support to those who are isolated.

The Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership is continuing to work towards delivery of the NHS England Five Year Forward View and the NHS Long Term Plan. The Wellbeing Board hosts members from the Berkshire West CCG who cascades down the progress of implementing the NHS Long Term plan and PHM; the Wellbeing Board supports the ongoing work towards PHM in Wokingham.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care within Wokingham Borough Council are currently engaging in regular conversation with the voluntary and community sector to establish what the needs of the borough are and how to tackle social isolation and loneliness effectively and efficiently. A meeting is being held in August between Adult Social Care, Public Health and the GP leads which will discuss reducing social isolation and loneliness and out of this will be the development of actions which will be fully supported and monitored by the Wellbeing Board as part of its strategy.

Ageing Actively Wokingham – Pilot

In the winter of 2018, Wokingham Borough Council Sports & Leisure recruited & trained Senior Peer Mentors with the view of supporting older residents in the borough. The Peer mentors have been trained to help signpost physical activity sessions led by the department. Activities include:

- SHINE over 60’s Activity Programme
- Walking for Health
- Steady Steps Fall Prevention
- Sheltered Scheme activities
- Sporting Memories Reminiscing Project
- Long Term Health Conditions Gym
- GP Referral Programme

The Reducing Social Isolation project would like to connect with all of the teams in ASC; Duty, Health Liaison Team, Assessment Team, as well as the Therapy Team. In addition there are is the NHS Intermediate Care Teams, Optalis Long Term Brokerage Support, Involve Community Navigators, and the CHASC – Community Health and ASC MDT teams. By keeping active as possible, we may find improved mental wellbeing and physical health as well as finding that our opportunities to socialise increases. The Wellbeing Board will support this pilot and welcomes updates on its progression in the borough.

Analysis of Issues (including any financial implications)

<p>Partner Implications</p> <p>All partners to review and acknowledge the current and future endeavours of the Wellbeing Board against its strategy and key priorities and for these to be utilised in policy. It is essential that all partners feel engaged with and contribute to the action plan and thus are well informed about the Wellbeing Board and its purpose, strategy and key priorities.</p> <p>The Wellbeing Board strategy and actions are in alignment with the Council’s wider Borough Plan and other key strategies.</p>

<p>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</p> <p>N/A</p>

List of Background Papers
N/A

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