

Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board

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Mental Health Champions

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	Seen by:	Name	Date
Report Sign off	Relevant Senior Manager / Lead Office (Director Level)	Christina Gray	05.02.2018
	Cabinet Member / Portfolio Holder (if applicable)	Christine Lawrence	05.02.2018
	Monitoring Officer (Somerset County Council)	Julian Gale	09.02.2018
Summary:	<p>This report outlines the plans to implement the Mental Health Challenge pledge that was signed by SCC following a unanimous resolution of Somerset County Council at Full Council on 29 November 2017, and which gave delegated authority to the Board on behalf of the Council to appoint two County Council members as mental health champions.</p> <p>The Mental Health Challenge is an initiative developed and supported by The Centre for Mental Health, The Mental Health Foundation, The Mental Health Providers Forum, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds. It recognises that Local authorities have a key role in improving mental health in their communities, and asks authorities to commit to promoting mental health across their business and appointing mental health champions from serving councillors, and in return will provide support and networking for authorities and councillors.</p>		
Recommendations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board acknowledges the value of The Mental Health Challenge and recognises that local authorities have a key role in improving mental health in their communities.• That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board, in accordance with the authority delegated to it by the County Council by unanimous decision on 29 November 2017, appoints the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board as the Mental Health Champion for adults, and the Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee to become Mental Health Champions for children and young people for		

	the term of twelve months, when the scheme will be reviewed.
Reasons for Recommendations:	<p>The independent Mental Health Taskforce published its <u>Five Year Forward View</u> in February 2016, which set out the current state of mental health service provision in England. The taskforce calls for all local councils to have a member champion for mental health. This 'leadership by example' role is critical to raise the profile of mental health in a local area. The intention is to take a proactive approach and promote positive mental health across the local area.</p> <p>These recommendations implement the resolution of Full Council on 29 November 2017.</p> <p>The scale and impact of mental health problems cut across all aspects of society putting a huge burden on local services and resources in the communities of Somerset. Implementing the County Council's resolution will make an important contribution to the leadership needed to promote mental health and prevent mental illness.</p>
Links to Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy:	<p>The Health & Wellbeing Strategy has three priority themes that all link to mental health:</p> <p>Theme 1: People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. Theme 2: Families and communities are thriving and resilient. Theme 3: Somerset people are able to live independently.</p> <p>Appointing two Mental Health Champions will help promote the principles and delivery of the Strategy.</p>
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	<p>There are no financial, legal or HR implications following these recommendations except for possible additional travel claims by Councillors but within the guidance on such matters. Any additional costs will be met from within the existing budget.</p>
Equalities Implications:	<p>The intention of the Mental Health Champions is to play a key role in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health.</p> <p>Identifying and addressing inequalities will be guided by the lead officer using Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and mental health intelligence data from the Public Health England mental health dashboard</p>
Risk Assessment:	<p>Member champions are elected members of councils who have a number of competing priorities and limited time to put into the role of member champion. The lead officer will be supporting Champions to ensure they are well informed and work respectfully, sensitively and empathically with people with mental health problems at all times.</p>

	National partners reserve the right to raise concerns about member champions whose conduct falls below the expectations outlined in the pledge material. If this was to happen there would be a potential reputational risk for the Council. Where steps are not taken to address concerns expressed by the national partners, councils may be removed from the challenge membership. There is robust mitigation in place through the provision of high level officer support to ensure that this does not happen.
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1. Background

1.1. The scale of the problem the Mental Health Challenge aims to address

- 1 in 4 Somerset residents will experience a mental health problem in any given year.
- Half of all mental health problems start by the age of 14, rising to 75% by the age of 24.
- Mental ill health currently represents 23% of the total burden of ill health in the UK and is the largest single cause of disability.
- In Somerset around 24% of children and young people aged under 18 experiences some form of emotional or mental health problem. Out of a population of 109,300 this equates to 26,190 children.
- 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.

1.2. Somerset County Council's response to the Mental Health Challenge

1.3. On 29 November 2017 Somerset County Council resolved:

- To sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, Approved Mental Health Professional Forum, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.
- To commit to appoint two elected members as 'mental health champions' across the Council; one to focus on adult mental health and one to focus on children and young people in Somerset.
- To delegate authority to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board to appoint the mental health champions referred to above.
- To identify a lead officer to support the Mental Health Champions.
- To ensure the Health and Wellbeing Board receives updates from the Champions, at least annually

1.4. The Council also resolved to:

- Support positive mental health in our community, including in 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

1.5. About the Mental Health Champions' role:

- Positive mental health is essential for our quality of life. It is important for thriving communities, for economic productivity and for personal relationships. The mental health champions' scheme is being set up to contribute to improving mental health and wellbeing in Somerset.
- The Champions scheme is 'leadership by example', to raise the profile of mental health. The intention is to take a proactive approach and promote mental health across the local area. It is not intended to replace the existing local arrangements. It is intended to complement and strengthen the work undertaken to promote mental health and wellbeing.
- The member champion is primarily someone who has enthusiasm and commitment to promoting mental health and wellbeing.
- The role of the champion is to seek the views of people with lived experience of mental health when identifying priorities and concerns and to provide a voice for mental health within their council.
- Champions will identify at least one priority each year for focused work and will be expected to work respectfully, sensitively and empathically with people with mental health problems at all times.
- It is proposed that the two champions are linked to existing roles that already advocate for mental health. This will ensure the champions are fully engaged and enthusiastic.

1.6. Key activities for the Mental Health Champions could include:

- Advocating for mental health issues in council meetings and policy development
- Reaching out to the local community (e.g. via schools, businesses,

faith groups) to raise awareness and challenge stigma

- Listening to people with personal experiences of mental ill health to get their perspectives on local needs and priorities
- Scrutinising the work of local services that have an impact on mental health: e.g. health, social care, housing, and police.
- Fostering local partnerships between agencies to support people with mental health problems more effectively
- Encouraging the council to support the mental health of its own workforce and those of its contractors.
- Responding to occasional requests from the national challenge coordinator

1.7.

Lead officer role description:

The Lead officer from Public Health will support and advise the Champions and help them to develop a co-ordinated action plan. It is proposed that a protocol will be developed in relation to the working arrangements between the two champions. This will ensure the two champions are working within the boundaries of the role and supporting each other.

The lead officer role may include, but will not be limited to:

- Providing information to the member champion to support their work.
- Advising the member champion on current issues and priorities.
- Supporting implementation of strategies initiated by the member champion.
- Raising awareness within the council's staff about mental health issues
- Seeking external support for activities led by the council to promote mental health and wellbeing.
- Liaising with the mental health challenge national partners to secure information and advice.
- The lead officer will also have access to the benefits described above for member champions.

1.8. National mental health organisations will support local authorities that take on the challenge by:

- Providing resources (for example published evidence, expert opinion and briefings) to help councils to take local action.
- Offering networking opportunities and peer support for mental health champions, including an annual meeting and through use of electronic media.
- Recognising and acknowledging publicly the councils that sign up to

the challenge and the champions they appoint.

2. Options considered and reasons for rejecting them

- 2.1. Option 1:** For Somerset County Council to not support the Mental Health Champions Scheme – this option was rejected due to the importance of mental health as an issue.

- 2.2. Option 2:** Commit to approving the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board as the Mental Health Champion for adults, and the Chair of the Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee to become Mental Health Champions for children and young people for the term of twelve months, when the scheme will be reviewed.(preferred option)

3. Consultations undertaken

- 3.1.** The proposal was discussed within officer groups across the South West. Some existing Mental Health Champions were contacted and asked for their views. Local Councillors and Senior Managers were consulted. The national scheme was based on a wide consultation exercise across the country.

4. Financial, Legal, HR and Risk Implications

- 4.1.** These are set out where applicable in the summary section of this report.

5. Background papers

- 5.1.** Five year Forward View for mental health
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf>

- 5.2.** Mental Health Challenge website
<http://www.mentalhealthchallenge.org.uk/>