

Notes to assist the further scoping and assessment by the Overview Committee, outside the meeting, of the Motions referred by Council

Two motions have been referred to the Overview Committee with the agreement of the Council Chairman prior to the full Council meeting on 26 February 2020:

- Local Authority Mental Health Challenge (Cllr Hall)
- Healthy Weight Declaration (Cllr de Saram)

The following notes comprise:

1. Information and recommendations to assist the Overview Committee in scoping the issues
2. Work currently undertaken across the Council
3. The two motions in full.

Officers will attend the Committee meeting to expand on the notes and to answer questions.

1 Information and recommendations to assist the Overview Committee in scoping the issues outside the meeting

When scoping the issues, the Committee may wish to take the following into account:

- In principle both initiatives offer a way of focusing on evidence-based priorities and of working within a national/regional structure that has already been worked out
- To comply fully with both initiatives would require financial and officer resources
- It is expected that the budget will be approved by the full Council on 26 February. To appoint a Member Champion and officer time dedicated to mental health and healthy weight may raise expectations around what EDDC can realistically achieve within its existing resources and budgets beyond what is currently being undertaken
- Greater awareness of both issues and available support could be promoted district wide by ward members and focussed on needs within wards
- We recommend that during 2020/2021 we continue our ongoing activities towards both mental health and healthy weight, to the extent that they are already addressed in Service Plans
- During the year we could scope what additional resourcing would be required to commit fully to either or both of these national initiatives

2 Work currently undertaken across the Council

Health and wellbeing – both physical and mental, is a theme that runs throughout the new [Council Plan](#). Its priorities, guiding principles and values include the following statement, to “support initiatives which specifically promote the health and well-being of our residents providing help and advice at the earliest opportunity”.

Mental Health

Mental Health is identified as one of the Council’s priority areas for activities in the [Public Health Strategic Plan 2019-23](#). Services are all encouraged to include activities supporting health and wellbeing, in their annual Service Plans.

The concerns being raised and the prevalence of poor mental health in communities today is recognised by the Council. EDDC already has initiatives which will go some way to supporting those experiencing mental health issues, including:

- Public Health Strategic Plan, Homelessness Strategy and relevant Service Plans and operational procedures reflect the implications and how EDDC supports people with mental health conditions
- EDDC’s equalities work also has regard to mental health
- Housing is in the process of preparing a mental health strategy for housing, which will be presented to the Housing Review Board in March or June
- EDDC works closely with mental health professionals, has existing relationships with the Devon Partnership Trust, Safeguarding Adults Board and supports services operating locally. Whilst Officers do have concerns about the capacity of support services in the district and are seeing people display severe behavioural issues with no apparent access to support/care, it should be borne in mind that Officers are not mental health practitioners
- EDDC provides mental health awareness training for frontline staff
- Staff have regular meetings with the Mental Health team in Exmouth, with the same being arranged for Honiton. Information sharing is improving greatly and the Council is looking to introduce more front line staff across the teams now to help improve lines of communication still further
- The Landlord Services Manager is involved in the Honiton Mental Health Friendly Town steering group, which is setting up a charter for the town
- EDDC has run a session with Mobile Support Officers around the criteria applicants for sheltered housing need to achieve. This is important to help get the right people in the right homes as much as possible, to support them better throughout their tenancy
- Community Development Work – various activities
- Countryside & Thelma Hulbert Gallery teams’ work – e.g. with volunteers
- LED outreach – e.g. links with Social Prescribers

- Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training, funded and delivered via Devon Sustainability and Transformation Partnership – already delivered to many frontline staff and to some community representatives
- Proposed support offer for taxi drivers could include MECC training; dementia awareness training
- Planning and regeneration considerations
- Happy Healthy Here initiatives for all EDDC staff, including a monthly newsletter.

The “Mental Health Challenge for Local Authorities” began in 2013 to encourage and support councils in England to champion mental health in their communities. To date 120 local councils have elected member champions for mental health. Devon County and Somerset County are listed; we note that neighbouring districts do not appear to have registered.

Healthy Weight

Improving physical activity, diet and nutrition are identified as priority areas for activities in the [Public Health Strategic Plan 2019-23](#). Services are all encouraged to include activities supporting health and wellbeing, in their annual Service Plans. These priorities are consistent with the Council’s ambition for its communities and its own staff.

The Public Health Project Officer was involved in Devon County Council’s roll-out of the Healthy Weight Declaration in late 2018 / early 19 and is not aware of more recent activities.

EDDC is already working on some projects that support the commitments:

- Public Health Officer and Environmental Health staff have received Sugar Smart training and have created fliers to provide to cafés
- Streetscene and EH staff are working to support provision of free tap water for people to refill their bottles
- LED are also exploring Sugar Smart and Refill initiatives

The 14 Healthy weight Declaration commitments are listed below. We understand organisations who adopt the Declaration must agree to all commitments rather than selection.

3 Motions

Motion 1 - Local Authority Mental Health Challenge (Cllr Hall)

Preamble:

One in four people in the U.K. experience a mental health problem in any given year. The World Health Organisation predicts that by 2020 depression will be the second most common condition worldwide, and mental health is now the leading cause for work absence in the UK accounting for over 50% of all work health-related absences. Evidence also shows that people with severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK.

As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our local community, and to help tackle some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in health. Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority areas of responsibility.

All 60 Councillors, Officers and caseworkers can play a positive role in our communities, championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis. It's vitally important that we play our part.

This will complement the work that was set out in the last quarterly report presented to Scrutiny by Karen Simpkin on the 21 November 2019.

<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/3708984/quarter-2-performance-report-2019-20.pdf> (see extract below).

Service Plan Objectives - Priority 1 v2				
Priority: Encouraging communities to be outstanding				
Key Strategic Objective				
Objective Status	Code	Objective	Service	Comments
On track	HOU-PA-2541	Create a Mental Health Strategy for Housing in order to capture the increasing impact mental health is having on our tenants to ensure our teams have the right toolkits to manage. The strategy will explore and build upon current ways the housing service is managing mental health with the objective of ensuring this is embedded in our day to day service delivery.	Housing	Contact has been made with mental health teams locally and a first meeting held to discuss how a joint strategy could help both Housing and the NHS to achieve our goals and help support local people with their mental ill health more effectively. A MHED group has been formed (Mental Health East Devon) to agree the basis of the strategy and develop ways of working together at the point of tenancy start up to identify the best ways to work with each individual to help sustain their tenancy and good health.
On track	HOU-PA-2542	Deliver 30 events in partnership with HALFF charity (changing lives through food) promoting healthy eating and cooking.	Housing	So far we have delivered 23 events with HALFF since 1 April 2019.

Proposed Motion:

We call on the Council to:

Sign the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge. Full details here:

<http://www.mentalhealthchallenge.org.uk/>

We call on the Council

1. To commit to appointing an elected member as “Mental Health Champion”.
 - The Member Champion will advocate for mental health issues in council meetings and policy development and will reach out to the local community to raise awareness of mental health issues and challenge stigma.
 - The Member Champion will listen to people with personal experience of mental health and get their perspective on local needs and priorities.
 - The Member Champion will scrutinise areas that have an impact on people's mental health such as Housing needs, developments and other areas.
 - The Member Champion will look at fostering local partnerships between agencies to support people with mental health problems more effectively.
 - The Member Champion will identify at least one priority each year for focused work.
 - The Member Champion will respond to occasional requests from the challenge coordinator for updates on activities undertaken in the role of Member Champion.
 - The Member Champion will have access to advice and support from the mental health challenge national partners, access to resources on the challenge website, and an annual meeting with other member champions to share information, experience and ideas.
2. We will also seek to identify a current member of staff within the council to act as a lead officer for mental health:
 - 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.
 - Providing information to the Member Champion to support their work.

- Liaising with 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.
3. The Council will also look to support positive mental health in our community, including in local schools, neighborhoods and in all other areas of our community.
 4. We will work with local partners to offer effective support for people with mental health needs, we will also work to tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our local community and to proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.

Proposed by Cllr Ian Hall

Seconded by Cllr Andrew Moulding

Supported by Cllr Howe, Cllr Dent, Cllr Hartnell, Cllr Barrow, Cllr Allen

Motion 2 – Healthy Weight Declaration (Cllr de Saram)

Background

In a recent survey of members of the public in Devon, most of which were parents, 72.5% of respondents said that their main concern was the effect of food and drink on their child's dental health, with many having additional concerns about the impact on their child's weight, behaviour and mood.

Among other Local Authorities, Devon County Council have been working towards local pledges for the declaration including making water freely available across its sites, encouraging schools to sign up and be 'Sugar Smart', banning the advertising of junk foods on its campuses and encouraging responsible retailing by supporting the voluntary ban of energy drinks to under 16-year olds.

See <http://www.foodactive.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Food-Active-Declaration-Support-Pack-FINAL.pdf>

<http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Healthy-Weight-Declaration-making-the-case-FINAL.pdf>

Healthy Weight Declaration: the 14 commitments

- Engage with the local food and drink sector (retailers, manufacturers, caterers, out of home settings) where appropriate to consider responsible retailing (such as not selling energy drinks to under 18s), offering and promoting healthier food and drink options, and reformulating and reducing the portion sizes of high fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) products.

- Consider how commercial partnerships with the food and drink industry may impact on the messages communicated around healthy weight to our local communities. Funding may be offered to support research, discretionary services (such as sport and recreation and tourism events) and town centre promotions.
- Review provision in all our public buildings, facilities and 'via' providers to make healthy foods and drinks more available, convenient and affordable and limit access to high-calorie, low nutrient foods and drinks (this should be applied to public institutions such as schools, hospitals, care homes and leisure facilities where possible).
- Increase public access to fresh drinking water on local authority controlled sites.
- Consider supplementary guidance for hot food takeaways, specifically in areas around schools, parks and where access to healthier alternatives are limited.
- Advocate plans with our partners including the NHS and all agencies represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board, Healthy Cities, academic institutions and local communities to address the causes and impacts of obesity.
- Protect our children from inappropriate marketing by the food and drink industry such as advertising and marketing in close proximity to schools; 'giveaways' and promotions within schools; at events on local authority controlled sites.
- Support action at national level to help local authorities reduce obesity prevalence and health inequalities in our communities.
- Ensure food and drinks provided at public events include healthy provisions, supporting food retailers to deliver this offer.
- Support the health and well-being of local authority staff and increase knowledge and understanding of unhealthy weight to create a culture and ethos that normalises healthy weight.
- Invest in the health literacy of local citizens to make informed healthier choices.
- Ensure clear and comprehensive healthy eating messages are consistent with government guidelines.
- Consider how strategies, plans and infrastructures for regeneration and town planning positively impact on physical activity.
- Monitor the progress of our plan against our commitments and publish the results.

Motion - We call on the Council to sign the Healthy Weight Declaration

We move that this Council supports the Healthy Weight Declaration, showing commitment in reducing unhealthy weight in our communities. This is an opportunity to protect and support some of the most vulnerable in society by giving them the best start in life and enabling all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and make informed choices, by signing the Health Weight Declaration.

Proposed by Councillor Bruce De Saram

Seconded by Councillor Ian Hall

Supported by Councillors Maddy Chapman, Philip Skinner and Marcus Hartnell