

**HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
16 MARCH 2017**

**DEMENTIA TASK GROUP REPORT - HOW FAR HAS  
MEDWAY GONE IN BECOMING A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY  
COMMUNITY?**

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment  
and Transformation

Ian Sutherland, Director of Children and Adult Services

Author: Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

**Summary**

The report asks the Committee to consider the final report of the in-depth Dementia Task Group review ON 'How far Medway has gone in developing a Dementia Friendly Community.' The Committee is asked to consider the findings and recommendations of the Task Group, in view of the comments made by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 14 March (to be circulated separately), ahead of it being considered by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 March.

The recommendations aim to complement the wide variety of work already being undertaken by the Council and partners to implement the Council's Dementia Strategy. The review has had a particular focus on how Medway Council and its partners can lead by example to help make Medway a Dementia Friendly Community. This includes services that the Council directly controls and those, which while not directly under the control of the Council, it could influence through partnership working.

**1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 Under Chapter 4 of the Constitution (Part 5 – Overview and Scrutiny Rules - paragraph 21.1 (xvii), each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility to appoint time limited Task Groups to undertake in-depth reviews within the overall programme of reviews agreed each year by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to make recommendations to the Council and Leader and Cabinet as appropriate. The review topic, 'How far Medway has gone in developing a Dementia Friendly Community.' is within the remit of each of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Membership of the Task Group

has been comprised of Members drawn from each of these committees. A number of the recommendations will be of interest and relevance to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 1.2 The recommendations arising from the review are consistent with the Council's Policy Framework.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 In June 2011 the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to exercise a more pro-active role than previously in prioritising the programme of in-depth scrutiny review work. This followed a Council decision that a maximum of three reviews or themed meetings can be undertaken annually across all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, in light of shrinking capacity across the organisation. This represented a shift from the previous position of multiple Task Groups, with no fixed timelines, running at any one time.
- 2.2 In line with best practice, the Committee also decided to adopt a more systematic approach to the selection of topics, with nominations submitted by each Committee, taking into account suggestions and advice from Directors and Deputy / Assistant Directors.
- 2.3 In June 2015, the Business Support O&S Committee agreed a timetable and process for the selection of topics for the next round of in-depth scrutiny reviews. The topic of dementia was chosen for a review due to Medway having an ageing population, with the result that the prevalence of dementia is expected to increase. The topic is particularly suitable for review given the existing national and local focus on dementia, including publication of the Council's Dementia Strategy.
- 2.4 It was agreed that the Dementia Task Group should commence its work following the completion of a Housing Task Group, with the first meeting of the former having taken place in September 2016.
- 2.5 The Membership of the Task Group included Councillors Wildey (Chairman), Freshwater, Griffin, Purdy and Shaw. As the Task Group's review is on behalf of both the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the membership of the Task Group was drawn from Members of each of these committees.

## **3. Scope of the Review**

- 3.1 The Task Group's Terms of Reference were as follows:

*To assess how far Medway has gone in developing a dementia friendly community and make recommendations on potential further areas for action with a view to Medway achieving national recognition by the Alzheimer's Society as a dementia friendly community by 2020 in line with the (former) Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia.*

- 3.2 To support consideration of the Terms of Reference the Task Group agreed a number of key lines of enquiry:

1. To undertake a self assessment and review action required by the Council, partners and the wider community to meet the standards within the Alzheimer's Society's national recognition process and to make recommendations on the viability of, and a route map for, national recognition of Medway as a dementia friendly community by 2020.
2. To review progress in implementation of the Council's Dementia Strategy and seek assurance that the redesign of health and social care dementia services will support the outcome of Medway being a Dementia Friendly Community.
3. To assess, in particular, what the Council has done and could do more widely to develop a Dementia Friendly Community against the framework outlined in the LGA guidance for Councils and formulate recommendations on areas of focus for further action (with reference to the domains in the LGA guidance; The voices of people with dementia and their carers, the place, the people, the resources and the networks).

#### **4. Methodology**

- 4.1 During Summer 2016, service managers across the Council provided evidence to facilitate the completion of a Self-Assessment. This reviewed how much progress Medway had made in meeting the recommended actions set out by the Local Government Association (LGA) in its publication, 'Dementia Friendly Communities – Guidance for Councils.'
- 4.2 The first meeting of the Task Group took place in September 2016, with the Task Group agreeing the scope and Terms of Reference at this meeting. A second meeting agreed, using input from the Alzheimer's Society, the key areas that the Task Group should focus its review on. It was agreed that these areas should be how to ensure that Medway Council is dementia friendly – 'Leading by Example', the provision of dementia friendly services, particularly leisure services and post-diagnostic support.
- 4.3 In addition to the information gathered at the meeting with the Alzheimer's Society, The Task Group agreed to hold the following evidence sessions:
  - **Visit to Crawley** – to find out about the developments that had been made to make Crawley Dementia Friendly. Crawley is already recognised by the Alzheimer's Society as being a Dementia Friendly Community.
  - **Visit to Rainham Dementia Café** - to gather views from people living with dementia and their carers.
  - **Leading by Example evidence session** - how the Council could play a lead role in making itself more dementia friendly and how external organisations could be encouraged to do the same.
  - **Post-diagnostic Support evidence session** – Looked at the availability of post-diagnostic support and how this could be improved.

#### **5. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Task Group**

- 5.1 The recommendations of the Task Group are presented under the three main areas of focus of the Task Group – Leading by Example, Provision of Services and Post-

diagnostic Support. The recommendations made in relation to Post-diagnostic support aim to complement the Council's Dementia Strategy.

- 5.2 It was concluded that one of the most significant contributions that Medway Council can have towards making Medway a Dementia Friendly community is to 'lead by example' by ensuring that its staff and services are dementia friendly. It is anticipated that this will not only will this help to support people living with dementia, but will also help to give the Council greater influence in the encouragement of other local organisations and businesses to be dementia friendly.
- 5.3 The second area of focus was the provision of services. The main element of this was universal services that are available to everyone, whether living with dementia or not, and how these could be adapted or customised to make them more dementia friendly.
- 5.4 The third area of focus was post-diagnostic support, including the ongoing work to implement the Council's Dementia Strategy and the proposals for a 'Test for Change' pilot in Rainham.
- 5.5 The recommendations recognise both constraints on financial resources and that implementation of the Dementia Strategy will already be facilitating improved dementia provision. It has still been possible to put forward a set of recommendations that are considered likely to make a significant contribution to making Medway a Dementia Friendly community.
- 5.6 The key aim of the review was to consider how far Medway had gone in creating a Dementia Friendly community, in particular to identify which of the Alzheimer's Society Foundation criteria to enable Medway to be officially recognised as a Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) had been met and where further work would be required. It is anticipated that the Task Group evidence will help inform submission of an application for DFC status.
- 5.7 Medway Dementia Action Alliance has indicated during the review that it considers that Medway is close to being ready to submit an application. An assessment of the the progress made in relation to the Foundation Criteria, against which an application for an area to be recognised as a DFC, has been included in the Conclusions and Recommendations section of the report. Notwithstanding the progress made towards Medway becoming a DFC, it is recognised that improving the lives of people living with dementia is a much bigger task than Medway being awarded DFC status and that there will be always scope for improvement. It is anticipated that the recommendations of the Task Group will have a key role to play in improving the dementia friendliness of Medway.
- 5.8 The recommendations of the Task Group are set out in full in Appendix 1.

## **6. Risk Management**

- 6.1 There are no risks arising from the report. However, adoption by Cabinet of the recommendations would lead to various options being explored and, at that point, any risks would need to be assessed.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 Any service improvements as a result of the recommendations of this report will need to be delivered from within existing budgets. The work of the Task Group was supported by Democratic Services and officers from the Children and Adult Services and Regeneration, Culture and Environment Directorates.
- 7.2 There is a small budget held by Democratic Services to meet the cost of any visits, stakeholder events or expenses incurred by expert witnesses associated with the review. The only cost incurred during this review was the hire of a mini bus for the Task Group visit to Crawley.
- 7.3 Task Groups are advised to formulate recommendations in the context of the prevailing financial climate.
- 7.4 The work of this Task Group was framed to complement rather than duplicate work already underway.

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 Medway Council has a legal obligation under section 149 Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic (pregnancy and maternity, age discrimination, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it.
- 8.2 To assist the Council in fulfilling the legal obligations set out above, a draft Diversity impact assessment is attached to the report of the Task Group.
- 8.3 There are no other legal implications arising from the recommendations. However, officers may need to consider the legal implications of some recommendations as the proposals are developed.

## **9. Equality**

- 9.1 A Diversity Impact Assessment is attached to the report of the Task Group.

## **10. Recommendation**

- 10.1 The Committee is asked to:
  - i) Consider the report and recommendations made by the Dementia Task Group set out at Appendix 1, together with the comments from the Health and Wellbeing Board, which will be circulated separately from the main agenda.
  - ii) Consider the recommendations and content of the report for referral to Cabinet on 9 May, subject to any comments made by the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Lead officer contact**

Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer  
Telephone: 01634 332715 E-mail: jon.pitt@medway.gov.uk

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft report from the Dementia Task Group

**Background Papers:**

The background papers relied on in producing the report from the Task Group are set out within the main report.