



HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

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SOCIAL ISOLATION TASK GROUP: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL ISOLATION IN MEDWAY – PROGRESS REPORT

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Summary

In January 2019, the Social Isolation Task Group review entitled 'The Impact of Social Isolation in Medway' was agreed by Cabinet. Prior to publication, this report had been presented to and considered by, the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2018 and the Health and Wellbeing Board in February 2019.

The Task Group report considered the impact of social isolation and loneliness in Medway. It made a number of recommendations for actions that the Council and other organisations could take to reduce social isolation locally.

The attached progress report (Appendix 1) summarises progress against each of the review's recommendations.

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. The overall programme of reviews are agreed each year by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Review findings and recommendations are presented to the Council, Leader and Cabinet as appropriate. The review topic, 'The Impact of Social Isolation in Medway' falls within the remit of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report recommendations are also relevant to the work of 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 On 30 November 2017 the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified a number of topics for the undertaking of in-depth scrutiny reviews, one of which was Social Isolation. The Task Group commenced its work in May 2018.
- 2.2 The Membership of the Task Group included Councillors Purdy (Chairman), Aldous, McDonald, Price and Wildey.
- 2.3 The findings of the Task Group were first reported to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2018. The report was presented to Cabinet in January 2019, with Cabinet having accepted all the recommendations. In February 2019, the report was also considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 2.4 The attached progress report (Appendix 1) provides an update on the progress made against the recommendations of the review thus far.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Social Isolation Task Group

- 3.1 The conclusions of the task group are outlined in the Social Isolation Task Group report, which is included as a background paper. The Task Group made 23 recommendations, spanning a range of areas, which can be seen in Appendix 1.

4. Progress against task group recommendations

- 4.1 There has been substantial work undertaken over the last six months in relation to implementation of the reports recommendation. This section provides a highlight of the major achievements to date:
 - The development and launch of a local campaign to reduce social isolation and loneliness in Medway called “A Better Medway - Together”. The campaign focuses on raising awareness of community assets in Medway where local people can make connections with others, and supporting local people to make a pledge to reduce isolation by connecting with others in their community. 85 pledges have been made within the first month of the campaign.
 - The establishment of a Medway social prescribing network and securing of European funding to further expand social prescribing in Medway, to support an additional 1,000 people in Medway through the programme.
 - The launch of a Medway ‘Connect Well’ website, a searchable online database of organisations and activities in Medway, administered by Medway Voluntary Action (MVA).
 - Development of new social isolation training, which has been delivered to over thirty newly recruited social isolation champions representing departments across the Council.

- A review of the Staying Connected guide has been completed, including consultation with partners, and recommendations for a new, improved version of the guide developed.

4.2 Further updates on the progress against the recommendations are included in the ongoing action plan at Appendix 1.

5. Risk management

5.1 There are no risks directly arising from the report. The impact of the recommendations contained in Appendix 1 are focused on helping to reduce social isolation in Medway and, as such, no risks are identified to delivery.

6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this update report.

7. Legal implications

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this update report.

8. Recommendation

8.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the progress made against the Task Group recommendations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Social Isolation Task Group Progress Report

Background papers

Social Isolation Task Group Report

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=24569&Opt=3>