

**HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
12 MARCH 2020**

**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 Committee was provided a briefing note during Summer 2019 to provide an update on each of the review's recommendations. It was requested that a further update be presented to the Committee after six months.

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 is 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. This follows an update that was provided to the Committee as a briefing note in summer 2019.

## **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 further work undertaken in relation to implementation of the report recommendations. This section provides a highlight of the major achievements to date:
  - The A Better Medway Campaign continued to achieve an array of media coverage, including KMTV and Radio Kent. The 'Chatty Bench' tour generated the best performing posts on the A Better Medway social media pages. Currently 640 pledges have been made by individuals to reduce social isolation in Medway.
  - The Medway Social Prescribing Network will go live in March 2020
  - The 'Simply Connect' Medway database currently offers 1000+ activities to help reduce loneliness and social isolation. The database will form a key resource to support the launch in March of the Medway Social Prescribing offer.
  - The ongoing social isolation awareness training workshops have been expanded to support more agencies in Medway. To date 115 people have received the training, including A Better Medway Champions.

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 Committee is asked to note the progress made against the Task Group recommendations.

### **Lead officer contacts**

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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/ieIssueDetails.aspx?Id=24569&Opt=3>