

Recommendations of the Social Isolation Task Group – ‘The Impact of Social Isolation in Medway’

Recommendation No.	Text of Recommendation	Update July 2019	Update March 2020
1	That Cabinet asks the Chief Finance Officer to investigate how Council Tax and benefit related correspondence could be utilised to send out information about social isolation and to work with Public Health and Voluntary Sector Partners to identify what information could be provided.	The opportunity to include a link to the online “Staying Connected” Booklet as part of Council corporate communications in the autumn is being scoped by finance. This booklet outlines services and support for over 55s who may be lonely or isolated.	An awareness and information leaflet has been produced for inclusion with all council tax correspondence. Due to the cost of producing the volume of leaflets, this information will be scheduled for the 2021 correspondence.
2	That Cabinet requests that Bereavement Services consider how to engage, with appropriate sensitivity, with individuals observed to repeatedly visit Medway cemeteries alone, in order to establish whether the person feels isolated or lonely and if so, to signpost them to appropriate services, for example those in the Staying Connected resource.	<p>Bereavement services staff have attended social isolation training and evaluation shows staff have increased knowledge of services available and how to signpost people to support.</p> <p>Bereavement services have updated their website to include the Staying Connected booklet.</p> <p>Staying Connected booklets are now available at Medway crematorium and at Council owned cemeteries.</p>	At the Crematorium, work is ongoing to reduce social isolation. This includes supplying literature and advice for the bereaved and attendees. We also, when seeing people at reception have a policy of offering both verbal and signposting help and assistance to reduce the risk of social isolation.

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3	<p>That Cabinet requests that Housing Management / Strategic Housing:</p> <p>i) Works with contractor Mears and MHS Homes to further develop community involvement activities within social housing developments in Medway which aim to promote community connectedness and reduce isolation.</p>	<p>i) Reducing loneliness and social isolation is addressed at ongoing meetings with contractors Mears and MHS Homes. This includes awareness of support available across Medway. MHS Homes are also a member of the Medway Social Isolation Network.</p>	<p>i) Mears and Housing officers frequently visit tenants and identify tenants in social isolation. Work is underway to develop a referral process with the tenancy support team.</p> <p>Mears to meet with Public Health to look at additional workforce awareness and signposting as part of Mears toolbox talk sessions.</p> <p>Medway Community Team are supporting Mears at community events, including Big Lunch; Bake Off; Queens Birthday Celebrations, and community events that promote meaningful connections and prevent social isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>Work is ongoing with the Kent Engagement Group (KEG) looking at, and tackling the issue of the stigma of social housing and social isolation.</p> <p>Optivo have developed a survey to better understand and tackle the stigma associated with social housing across providers and local authorities in Kent and Medway. Optivo are funding the survey which will capture post code data. KEG Members have been invited to share information at the June meeting about what their individual organisations are undertaking to tackle stigma.</p>

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3	ii) Investigates the feasibility of people living in sheltered housing, who are not otherwise visited by friends or relatives on a regular basis, receiving regular weekend visits, linking up with the voluntary sector.	ii) An item is scheduled for the September social isolation network to look at housing and isolation and identify opportunities for partners to work more closely together.	<p>ii) Sheltered Schemes are providing a range of social activities. These include coffee mornings, social clubs and inter-scheme activities. Marlborough House offers a dementia support group, and the local Primary school at Woodchurch House visit the scheme weekly and run intergenerational activities with tenants. St Marks Church attends the scheme once a month.</p> <p>The Community Development Team have held mix-mingle events at Medway's sheltered schemes to reduce loneliness and social isolation of residents. This enables the tenant to build social connections in their local communities, and actively engage in social events as well as educational and cultural activities.</p> <p>Adult Education have held successful taster sessions at Medway's sheltered schemes; these include Tai Chi, Ukulele, and Water Colour Painting.</p> <p>Age UK Medway have partnered to promote services and support including Befriending schemes.</p> <p>Signposting takes place at all events to promote the significant work being undertaken across Medway and strengthen communication between the Council and local organisations to reduce loneliness and social isolation.</p>

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3	iii) Investigates the possibility of establishing a Homeshare scheme in Medway.	iii) A meeting is taking place with a provider of a Homeshare scheme in Medway in August to explore opportunities and benefits that a similar scheme in Medway could provide.	iii) There is ongoing work through the Medway Housing Management team investigating the feasibility of a homeshare scheme in Medway.
4	That Cabinet requests that Public Health further investigates the 'Chatty Café Scheme' and other similar schemes, including the Places of Welcome Scheme run by the Diocese of Rochester, with a view to encouraging cafes in Medway to participate and to consider whether local venues could be encouraged to offer a similar service.	<p>Criteria for a Medway "Talkative Tables" scheme are in development, and it is planned to consult partners in the social isolation network on these in the autumn.</p> <p>A range of voluntary sector organisations also run schemes across Medway aimed at encouraging conversations e.g. dementia cafes and the rural café bus in HOO (delivered by Action in Rural Kent).</p>	<p>Discussions have taken place with agencies including the Integrated Care Partnership (Medway / Swale) to look at expanding Chatty Cafés in Medway.</p> <p>A key operating principles document has been drafted, and early discussions are taking place with partners to investigate how we create A Better Medway Together venues in Medway.</p> <p>A new Chatty Café has been opened in the Rochester Adult Education Centre. Jaspers Café is offering a range of activities, and ongoing conversations are taking place to expand and make this a successful community resource and increase the social connections offered.</p>

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5	That Cabinet requests that Partnership Commissioning investigates the possibility of the Council supporting widening the offer of Community Interest Companies in Medway, such as Walderslade Together and Hoo Peninsula Cares, to enable similar provision for other parts of Medway.	An evaluation of the outcomes of wHoo Cares and Walderslade Together, as part of the development of a wider social prescribing initiative is currently being undertaken. The outcome of this work will inform how best to take forward initiatives like this across Medway.	An evaluation of Walderslade Together and wHoo Cares has been concluded. Officers are considering the outcomes and how these should inform any further provision for other parts of Medway.
6	That Cabinet requests that Partnership Commissioning, in conjunction with local voluntary sector organisations, investigates existing volunteer databases and investigates the need for and feasibility of establishing a Medway database of volunteers, if a suitable existing database cannot be identified.	Medway Voluntary Action currently hosts a database for both voluntary groups and potential volunteers in Medway. The "VC direct" database has over 900 voluntary sector groups listed. The Medway Volunteer Network, helps and advises interested people to volunteering opportunities across Medway http://www.medwayvoluntaryaction.org.uk/Volunteering-Volunteers	The Simply Connect Medway Website was launched in November 2019. It provides a searchable online database of organisations and activities in Medway. This is accessible by all front-line staff, including those supporting Social Prescribing. https://medway.simplyconnect.uk/ Residents are also encouraged to directly access the directory. Anyone who can't access the database electronically can be supported over the phone (01634 812850) to access the full information service and help.

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7	<p>That Cabinet requests that Departmental Management Teams consider appointing a lead champion for reducing social Isolation and promoting community connectedness for each service area, particularly frontline services and that, led by Public Health, this group of officers meet as a task and finish group.</p>	<p>Lead champions have been recruited for service areas across the Council.</p> <p>A new social isolation training session has been developed in 2019 and is being delivered, and over thirty lead champions from across the Council have been trained to date.</p> <p>Evaluation forms demonstrate that the training is improving awareness of social isolation and knowledge about what support is available for residents and how to signpost people to it.</p> <p>Leads are sharing information with their teams through team meetings and other forums.</p>	<p>Champions continue to operate across the council, and work with Public Health to reduce loneliness and social isolation.</p> <p>This work has been supported by service managers who continue to make this an important issue at divisional and team meetings. This has led to a demand to attend team meetings, and deliver bespoke workshops in support of service teams. Public Health is continuing to develop a suite of awareness raising sessions in response to directorate needs.</p>

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8	That Cabinet requests that Social Isolation Awareness training is delivered to key frontline staff and that training is offered to Members as part of the Councillor induction process following the next Medway Council elections in May 2019.	See update for action 7. In addition, Public Health induction was provided for Councillors in June 2019 with an overview of public health topics including social isolation. Options for a bespoke social isolation training session for Councillors as part of the ongoing member development programme are being discussed with Member Services for later in the year.	<p>A loneliness and social isolation training session was developed, delivered and evaluated through 2019.</p> <p>Following the review, a broader range of training modules have been developed. This builds on raising awareness, and provides front line staff with the knowledge, skills, confidence and tools to help reduce loneliness and social isolation in Medway. The workshops have been offered to partner agencies across Medway. To date 115 people have attended the training courses.</p> <p>Further dates have been scheduled for 2020, and these will include bespoke awareness training for Young Carers and Learning Disabled groups and support agencies.</p>
9	That the Procurement and Partnership Commissioning Teams give consideration to how the Council's procurement and commissioning arrangements could encourage organisations tendering for Council and jointly commissioned services to ensure that their staff and models of service delivery contribute to the reduction of social	Procurement and Partnership Commissioning teams have awarded procurements which address social isolation. Work is ongoing to make all bidders aware of signposting literature (e.g. Staying Connected) and spreading the message through all procurement activities.	Work is ongoing to make all bidders aware of signposting literature (e.g. Staying Connected) and spreading the message through all procurement activities.

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	isolation and promotion of community connectedness in Medway.		
10	<p>That information on the impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness be collected as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Via a question relating to social isolation / loneliness to be included in the annual staff survey. ii) That opportunities to include the impact of social isolation and loneliness within impact assessments carried out in relation to Council policies be explored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The June 2019 staff survey included a question related to social isolation, by asking staff if they feel they have opportunities to connect with colleagues. The question asked colleagues to score how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "I feel part of the Council family and have good opportunities to connect with other colleagues". The results will be reviewed and any opportunities for action identified. ii) Scoping work is underway looking at best practice and how this is incorporated in impact assessments in other areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) An update will be provided at the meeting ii) HR are ensuring policies support potential social isolation at work. These are aimed at internal people. For example, if someone is off long term (sickness, suspension, career break etc), it's about ensuring a Keep In Touch process and sign posting is available to support. There is an opportunity through some networks, but at this time there is only the Disabilities and carer's network, so any further development will be later in the year.

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11	<p>That future surveys of Medway residents consider including questions relating to social isolation or loneliness in order to improve data in relation to social isolation amongst population groups in Medway.</p>	<p>Questions are being drafted for inclusion in the August 2019 Medway Citizen's Panel, to further build evidence about loneliness and isolation in Medway.</p> <p>Additionally, a household health and wellbeing survey is under development, which is it is anticipated will be implemented in the near future. This will include questions in relation to social isolation.</p>	<p>A digital survey was sent to all members of the Medway Citizens' Panel in September 2019. Of the 317 members to whom the survey was sent, 223 completed and submitted the questionnaire. Respondents gave their views about Medway's definitions of social isolation and loneliness; awareness of the A Better Medway Together campaign; and the best approaches to tackling social isolation and loneliness. The results have been shared with Public Health who will use them to inform their future work.</p>
12	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>i) Agrees to designate the Cabinet Member for Adults' Services as a Medway Social Isolation Ambassador, who will take the lead in representing the Council at external events and functions relevant to social isolation and loneliness and would promote action to raise awareness of the issues and actions necessary to help tackle social isolation</p>	<p>Councillor Brake is fulfilling the role of Social Isolation Ambassador as part of his portfolio for Adults' Services. Councillor Brake took part in an interview with BBC Radio Kent in June 2019 to discuss social isolation and promote the launch of Medway's campaign to tackle loneliness and isolation in Medway "A Better Medway – Together".</p>	<p>Cabinet Member David Brake has been significantly involved in the ongoing campaign. This recently included interviews and media briefings and joining Public Health staff on the successful 'Chatty Bench' tour.</p>

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12	<p>and loneliness in Medway and promote community connectedness.</p> <p>ii) Acknowledges that in addition to the appointment of a Medway Social Isolation Ambassador, all Councillors should play a wider community role in helping to identify socially isolated or lonely people and signposting them to appropriate sources of advice and support.</p>		<p>An awareness and information workshop has been developed, and working with Member Services over timing, it is planned to deliver this to Councillors in the future.</p>
13	<p>That Cabinet requests that the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee both have an active role in monitoring implementation of the recommendations of the Task Group.</p>	<p>A six month progress monitoring report will be presented/provided to both of these Boards/Committees.</p>	<p>This progress report will be presented at the Committee and, if requested, will also be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>

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14	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>i) Expresses its support for the development of social prescribing in Medway and of an associated directory of services, subject to appropriate funding being secured and requests that this work is promoted across the Council to enable staff to signpost isolated individuals to appropriate support.</p> <p>ii) Emphasises the importance of ensuring that adequate provision is made for people who are unable or unwilling to access information via the internet e.g. if an online directory of services is developed.</p> <p>iii) Requests that consideration be given with regard to whether any in-kind, non-</p>	<p>i) The Medway 'Connect Well' Website was launched in June 2019. It is a searchable online database of organisations and activities in Medway, administered by Medway Voluntary Action (MVA). https://www.connectwellmedway.org.uk/</p> <p>People who aren't able to access it electronically can be supported over the phone by MVA to access the information.</p> <p>Medway Council have additionally secured some European funding to launch a new social prescribing service that specifically supports socially isolated older people (over the age of 65) to become less socially isolated. This programme will see three new link workers employed, and over the three-year programme they aim to support over 1,000 people living in Medway.</p> <p>The Medway Social Prescribing Network was also formed in December 2018, which is made</p>	<p>The 'Simply Connect' Medway directory continues to grow and support people to connect to their community. https://medway.simplyconnect.uk/</p> <p>Three Link Workers and an 'Asset Mapping' officer have been recruited and the social prescribing work will begin in March 2020.</p>

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	<p>financial support could be provided to local voluntary organisations where their activities or planned activities directly contribute to reducing social isolation or loneliness in Medway</p> <p>iv)</p>	<p>up of a range of voluntary, public, health and academic sector partners. This network aims to support the coordination and ongoing development of the six social prescribing schemes happening across Medway. The network is also in place to support the development of the wider system dependencies that need to be in place to have a fully functioning social prescribing system. One of these system dependencies is the Connect Well Medway Directory of Services described above, with the ambition of providing a single portal for residents to find local activities. These activities have been through a self-validated quality assurance process, before being registered on the system. The range of activities includes physical activity, arts and a wide range of other social groups, mainly provided by the voluntary and community sector. These activities provide a wide opportunities for people that are socially isolated to participate in. The system has an inbuilt referral system that allows</p>	

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		<p>individuals to self-refer to services or health and social care professionals to refer to activities and track the output of those referrals.</p> <p>ii) The Medway 'Connect Well' Website offers people online support. Additional telephone support is offered to people who are unable or unwilling to access information electronically.</p> <p>The Council are supporting voluntary sector organisations to raise awareness of their services/support that contributes to reducing isolation.</p> <p>For example, through the "A Better Medway – Together" social media campaign to tackle isolation in Medway, third sector partners' are offered the opportunity to promote their services/activities through A Better Medway's communications channels, and through inclusion in the "Staying Connected" guide. Support is also offered through the social</p>	

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		isolation network, which is administered by Medway Council including sharing of best practice, funding opportunities etc.	
15	<p>That the Communications and Marketing team investigates the following, subject to resources being available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Undertaking a public campaign focusing on actions individuals and communities can take to promote community connectedness and contribute to reducing isolation and loneliness. ii) Promotion of activities and events run by local organisations that aim to reduce social isolation and loneliness and connect 	<p>A new social media campaign to tackle isolation and loneliness in Medway was launched in June 2019 (loneliness awareness week). The campaign is called “A Better Medway – Together”.</p> <p>https://www.medway.gov.uk/community</p> <p>The campaign focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the community to make more connections with others by asking people to make a pledge to connect with others. Pledges can be made by individuals or organisations, for example, pledges could include saying hello to your elderly neighbour, hosting a coffee morning or volunteering at a community event. 	<p>Campaign update – A Better Medway Together – The Chatty Bench Tour.</p> <p>Our A Better Medway Together campaign saw the launch of The Chatty Bench Tour on 28 October. The bench, made by Men in Sheds, visited 10 locations across Medway, which included high-streets, libraries, shopping centres and sports centres. The activity was another strand in the campaign to tackle social isolation and loneliness in Medway, helping raise awareness of the support that’s available.</p> <p>The bench achieved an array of media coverage, including KMTV and BBC Radio Kent to highlight the launch (which included an interview with Public Health Portfolio holder Cllr David Brake), while Medway messenger attached the first leg of the tour at Chatham Library for a great follow-up piece (achieving prominent positioning on the Kent Online homepage) along with print coverage.</p> <p>A Better Medway Together Chatty Bench Tour https://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/chatty-bench-project-launched-to-tackle-loneliness-215154</p>

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	communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of activities, services and support in Medway that residents can access to connect with others and reduce loneliness, including featuring at least one activity or service weekly on social media where residents can connect with others. • 85 pledges have been made in the first month of the campaign. • An example of one pledge was Great Lines Parkrun, whose pledge was to ask those attending Parkrun during loneliness awareness week to: a) say hello to someone new at Parkrun or b) bring someone new along to Parkrun. • The A Better Medway – Together campaign is performing well on social media. For example, the campaign launch post received almost 4,000 social media impressions (number of times the post was displayed on users’ 	<p>The tour also generated the best performing posts on our A Better Medway social media posts. This included a Facebook ad video featuring the Public Health Project Officer (one of several live bench videos which were issued during the tour). This generated over 10k views against a reach of 14,232 (a very high engagement rate).</p> <p>In total, the Chatty Bench Tour helped signpost 320 people directly to support services across Medway to reduce the loneliness and social isolation they were feeling. It further provided awareness raising messages, and information, guidance and advice to the passing footfall.</p> <p>Currently 640 pledges have been made to support the reduction of loneliness and social isolation in Medway.</p>

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		<p>newsfeeds). The launch facebook post was “liked” 242 times and shared 37 times. Examples of local projects which help people connect with others highlighted as part of the campaign are being viewed by over 1,000 people. The campaign can be followed on the “A Better Medway” social media pages or by following #MedwayTogether</p>	
16	<p>That Cabinet requests that Public Health ensures / continues to ensure that copies of the ‘Staying Connected’ booklet are available in key locations, such as libraries, cemeteries / funeral directors and that consideration is given to producing a version of the booklet aimed at younger adults.</p>	<p>Staying Connected booklets are distributed to a range of locations including libraries, sport centres, crematoriums and to people in their homes through Kent Fire and Rescue Safe and Well visits.</p> <p>Over 750 physical booklets have been distributed during 2019. Distribution has taken place through a range of public engagement events (Focus on days; Pensioner forum; and Medway Mile). The booklets are also available at a range of locations across Medway, for example libraries, council offices and crematoriums.</p>	<p>Over 2,500 Staying Connected booklets have been distributed since April 2019.</p> <p>Kent Fire and Rescue continue to use the Staying Connected resource as part of their ongoing home visits.</p> <p>The review and evaluation of the Staying Connected booklet was concluded in August 2019. Consideration is being given to the content of a new booklet, to compliment the Simply Connect Medway directory and offer a wider support publication for Medway.</p>

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		<p>The booklets have further been distributed to people in their own homes who may be isolated through Kent Fire and Rescue's safe and well home visits. The booklets can also be downloaded from the A Better Medway website.</p> <p>A review of the Staying Connected Guide was completed in July 2019 with the help of Kent University. It is planned that future versions of the staying connected booklet will be expanded to list opportunities for a wider age range of people to reduce loneliness and social isolation in Medway.</p>	
17	<p>That Cabinet requests that the Council takes opportunities to engage with central Government's work on reducing social isolation and loneliness in Medway, including opportunities to highlight key issues and good practice in Medway.</p>	<p>Medway continues to engage with the national work around loneliness, for example linking the launch of the A Better Medway Together Campaign to the national Loneliness Awareness Week. The pensioners' information and advice fair, hosted by MP Tracey Crouch, was also attended and Staying Connected promoted.</p>	<p>The Council recently fed into the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport first Loneliness Annual Report 2020.</p> <p>The Loneliness Annual Report calls for everyone to play their part in helping to reduce loneliness, to make it OK to talk about loneliness and to support society to accept the issue.</p> <p>The cohesive approach the Council is taking, including working with partner agencies and the public is already delivering for Medway.</p>

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18	That Cabinet requests that Medway Ethnic Minority Forum [now Medway Diversity Forum] be invited to join the Social Isolation Network with a view to discussing ways in which social isolation and loneliness can be addressed amongst BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) communities.	Medway Diversity Forum are a member of the Medway Social Isolation Network.	The current work programme has been reviewed around awareness raising and community reach. We are developing a focused piece of work to engage with BAME groups. This work will inform and influence the support and signposting around loneliness and social isolation.
19	<p>That Cabinet recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Arriva be invited to join the Social Isolation Network with a view to discussing the part it can play in helping to address social isolation and loneliness in Medway. ii) Consideration is given in relation to how the Villager community transport scheme 	<p>Arriva have been invited to engage with and attend the Medway Social Isolation Network meetings.</p> <p>A discussion with Arriva will take place to investigate initiatives such as introducing 'Chatty Buses' routes.</p> <p>Arriva staff will be invited to attend the loneliness and social isolation training module, to further raise awareness of the issues with staff.</p> <p>This is ongoing and a discussion with Norse is planned to progress this recommendation. An initial meeting was held with transport to discuss this recommendation and it was felt that routine bus routes may provide more opportunities for</p>	<p>Public Health and Arriva have met, and ongoing discussions are taking place on how we can work together. This will include through our Health Workplace initiative, and access to the ongoing training workshops.</p> <p>Public Health and Arriva are working together on a pilot intergenerational project. It is planned that in March 2020 through collaboration with the Medway Social Isolation Network, Arriva, and Medway Primary Schools to run the first intergenerational 'Chatty-Bus' in Medway.</p> <p>Medway Mobility, Villager, and supported bus services continue to provide services to residents that enable them to get out and access vital services.</p>

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	could be enhanced to further address social isolation and loneliness.	conversations as the Villager service often runs day trips which promote opportunities for conversation. Therefore, an additional meeting is planned with Arriva and a voluntary sector representative to discuss this opportunity.	
20	That Cabinet requests that evidence around the role of technology in reducing social isolation is reviewed and opportunities explored for a pilot within Adult Social Care / Public Health.	<p>Cabinet has recently approved the Carers' Strategy and action plan, which includes consideration of social isolation. Partnership Commissioning are working with colleagues to ensure opportunities are explored to embed social isolation throughout their work. This will include offering opportunities, where appropriate, to pilot technological advancements that may reduce social isolation.</p> <p>The use of Wider use of Telecare and Telehealth and technology solutions are also being considered. Partnership working between Adult Social Care and Public Health will look at opportunities to attract funding to expand the use of technology.</p>	The Carers Strategy Implementation Plan includes specific focus on supporting carers and reducing loneliness and social isolation.

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21	That Cabinet commends the significant amount of work to address social isolation and loneliness already taking place across the Council and requests that consideration is given as to how the need to address these challenges could be taken into account as part of departmental service plans.	The Business Intelligence team are undertaking work to explore opportunities to embed social isolation within service plans and induction.	<p>Highways – have adopted a phased top down roll out for staff to complete the corporate loneliness and social isolation awareness training offered by Public Health. Over the next 18 months all managers and team leaders will attend.</p> <p>Environmental Services – are working with Public Health on the residents who have requested an assisted collection. An initial contact is made with a Community Warden for a suitable location for the collection. Wardens are also able to alert agencies to potential issues of social isolation. Public Health are using the data to produce thematic maps to inform the work on reducing loneliness and social isolation in Medway.</p> <p>Community Wardens are further undertaking work to reduce the impact of social isolation. This includes working in the ‘Luton Project’ with Arches Local; Men in Sheds; A Better Medway Healthy Walks; and working on the stray dog and Canine Code, as a dog is often the only companion a person has. As part of the ‘Mayfair Project’, a street party was organised with residents encouraged to come together and make connections.</p> <p>Library Services - The Library Service has an increasingly major role to play within Medway in helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>The Home Library Service is expanding with currently over 200 customers. The volunteer</p>

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			<p>supported service delivers books for residents that, for whatever reason are housebound. This vital service provides regular social contact and is making a big impact on the wellbeing of potentially isolated residents.</p> <p>The Community Mobile Library visits isolated communities on a two-weekly timetable. The service offers social connections and conversation that are an important contribution to reducing loneliness and social isolation.</p> <p>To underline the value of this offer Libraries are currently pulling together the results of a Generic Social Outcomes survey, this will help us understand the impact on residents.</p> <p>Some useful feedback below. Question – How does receiving the Home Library Service make you feel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better – some social interaction ▪ I'd be lost without it ▪ It makes me happy and keeps me in contact with the community ▪ As if we are cared about <p>Groups and Activities - The Library Service runs and host regular activities for residents. These include book groups, coffee morning, knitting groups, as well as events for parents and their children, in the form of</p>

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			<p>Baby, Bounce and Rhyme and Toddler, shake and Boogie. Again these events provide regular free social interaction for residents. In a survey compiled on early years activities 96% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that it gives them an opportunity to get out of the house. In the same survey 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the events make them feel less isolated.</p> <p>Customer And Business Support - The CABS management team is investigating the installation of a dedicated phone line for customers feeling socially isolated; reference is being made to managers in Adults' and Children's Social Care (Sharon Greasley, Michael Hood and Chanelle Billingham) to establish how calls would be routed to reach the right officer in the social care services. Our CABS officers dealing with inbound Adults' and Children's Social Care calls, can signpost callers, who cite social isolation, to available resources. This is being revised and refreshed in December conjunction with the social care services.</p>
22	That the voluntary sector in Medway be encouraged to continue working with the Council to reduce social isolation, for example by attending the Social Isolation Network and supporting the Government Strategy and public campaigns	<p>The Medway Social Isolation Network (MSIN) meets regularly and is well attended. The network is engaged with over 30 local organisations.</p> <p>A Medway social isolation newsletter for professionals has been introduced in 2019 and three newsletters have been produced</p>	<p>The Medway Social Isolation Network has set its meeting dates for 2020.</p> <p>It will continue to monitor and both the Medway report on Social Isolation, and the Government Strategy on Loneliness.</p> <p>Public Health will continue to work in partnership with the Medway Social Isolation Network in the production of the social isolation newsletter.</p>

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	aimed at reducing isolation.	and distributed so far.	
23	That Cabinet requests that the Social Isolation Network reviews the national strategy against actions taking place in Medway and identifies any gaps for possible actions to be further investigated by the Council / partners.	In January 2019 the Medway social isolation network reviewed the action plan against the national strategy. The action plan was felt to be fit for purpose in light of the national strategy and no additional gaps/actions were identified by partners.	<p>The Medway Social Isolation Network responded to the recent first year review of the Government Strategy. It supports the Loneliness Annual Report 2020, and the next future big areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for more information and communication about loneliness and the activities which are available to reduce it. • The need for further policies targeted at tackling children and young people’s loneliness. Young people report struggling with loneliness more than any other group. • The need to tackle loneliness through place – strengthening community infrastructure and assets, and growing people’s sense of belonging. <p>The recent work and focus on reducing loneliness and social isolation in Medway undertaken by Medway Public Health and partners, was cited as an exemplar of good practice against the National Loneliness Strategy (2018) by the Medway Social Isolation Network.</p>