

Notice of Motion 1 - Local Authority Mental Health Challenge

1. Motion from Councillor MacLeod

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 Councillors, whether members of the Cabinet or Scrutiny and in our community and caseworker roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis. It's vitally important that we play our part.

Proposed Motion:

We call on the Council to:

Sign the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge.

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, neighbourhoods 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.