

# Mental Health Working Party – Six Month Progress Report to Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Annie Mason – Cabinet Member for People and Safer  
Communities and Mental Health Lead Member

Ken Lyon – Assistant Chief Executive



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

# Background

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- Opportunity to join the Centre for Mental Health Led “Local Authority Mental Health Challenge” highlighted by Cllr Baxter in 2020
- Adopting and delivering the Mental Health Challenge part of SKDC Corporate Plan 2020-23
- Rural and Communities OSC considered the opportunity but were keen to develop an ‘SK response’ rather than adopt a standard motion, therefore:
  - Initial workshop took place engaging Members & Officers
  - A cross party Member/Officer Working Group was formed to take things forward
  - Strong theme about working with the community and partners (e.g. LCC / GPs etc)
- Developed a bespoke South Kesteven Motion on Mental Health which was unanimously approved at Full Council
- Agreed to report back 6 monthly to OSC



# Approach of the Mental Health Working Party

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- Cross party and Officer/Member Working Group, but no politics and everyone has an equal voice
- A culture of ‘playing to your strengths’ – i.e. SKDC enabling and supporting communities rather than delivering a service
- SK a key role in linking, networking and advocating to other parts of the Public Sector (e.g. Training via Don’t Lose Hope)
- Bespoke approach for each part of the District
- Keen to learn from what’s happened elsewhere (both within SK and nationally)
- All Members of the MHWP have been excellent and significantly contributed – thanks!



# The SK Approach – Areas for Focus

- The South Kesteven Mental Health Challenge is 5 pronged, recognising the levers that we as a District Council have to promote positive mental health in our District

## 1. Support Wellbeing in Communities



Cllr Amanda  
Wheeler



Emma  
Sharpe

## 2. Support SKDC Employees and Members



Cllr Phil  
Dilks



Alice Atkins

## 3. Consider MH in Decisions and Policy



Cllr Helen  
Crawford



Alan  
Robinson

## 4. Work with Voluntary sector



Cllr Penny  
Robins



Carol Drury

## 5. Engage with LCC & HWB Board



Cllr Ashley  
Baxter



Ken Lyon

# Supporting Positive Mental Health in our Communities

- Supporting and working in partnership with groups and organisations that promote positive mental health in our communities
- Aim to have a group / organisation in each market town to promote positive mental health:
  - Bourne – Don't Lose Hope
  - Grantham – B Hive
  - Stamford – Mindspace
- The Deepings Community Wellbeing Forum established by a group of local individuals and NHS partners to talk about mental health and raise awareness of activities focused on wellbeing taking place in the Deepings and surrounding areas







# Supporting positive wellbeing in Officers and Members

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## First Aiders for Mental Health

- Partnered with Don't Lose Hope to train 9 additional First Aiders for Mental Health at SKDC. This was following a review to determine which service areas would benefit from a higher number of First Aiders available.
- Existing First Aiders also undertook refresher training to renew their skills and update their knowledge of available mental health support.
- The training of Member First Aiders to take place in the New Year.



## Mandatory training for all staff

- In the process of entering into a contract with MIND to deliver mandatory online training for all staff. Training will aim to provide staff with greater mental health awareness and will include practical tips for building resilience and having sensitive conversations with colleagues.
- An additional module will be available for managers to build their confidence in supporting their teams' mental health.



# Supporting positive wellbeing in Officers and Members

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## Raising awareness of our offer

- The Council's Employee Assistance Programme provider, Health Assured, ran sessions for both Officers and Members. Sessions covered how the EAP works, what it offers, how to access it and when to make use of it.
- Additional sessions also ran for managers, focusing on how they can signpost their team members to the Programme.



## Bespoke training to support our Officers

- Partnered with Get Sorted People to provide specialist mental health support sessions for members of our Customer Service and CCTV teams. Sessions were designed to help attendees learn techniques around how to engage with people experiencing mental health difficulties, following a tough time for these service areas in the context of Covid-19.





# Embedding within decision making and policy

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- Focus has been placed on Equalities and Safeguarding Implications
  - Far great focus on mental health
  - Challenge on this by key officers and members as part of the sign off process
  - Ensuring that Equalities Impact Assessments are carried out and that mental health is included.
- Use of mental data to inform decisions
  - Mental Health data is now routinely presented to the Employment Committee
  - 783 working days lost due to mental health between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021
  - Employee Assistance used 218 in quarters 1 and 2
  - Mental health first aiders contacted 35 times in quarters 1 and 2



# Work with local partners and voluntary sector

- Engaging locally and nationally with partners to understand best practice and opportunities, including:

## Locally

- Building on relationships from SKCommunity Hub with voluntary groups
- Identifying synergy's with Lincolnshire County Council and approach to engaging with neighbours
- Exploring opportunities with Connect to Support Lincolnshire (e.g. Help My Street App to connect neighbours)

## Learning from National Best Practice

- National charity Connect to Communities (C2) to explore wider health inequalities
- Attended Caring Places, Building Healthy Communities organised by Buurtzorg Britain and Ireland – a pioneering healthcare organisation established 12 years ago in the Netherlands. Conference looked at different ways for organisations promoting wellbeing to work with communities.



# Engage with LCC and Health and Wellbeing Board

- Lincolnshire Districts undertaking work with the Health and Wellbeing Board, LCC and Health Colleagues as part of the development of an Integrated Care System (ICS)
- Focus of the ICS to be focused on wider population health management, prevention and community based support
- Mental Health a key health priority for Lincolnshire and we are seeking ways of sharing best practice and working collaboratively with partners to invest in community based Mental Health support and working with PCNs and social prescribers
- Actively engaged with locally based Mental Health Partnership Boards



# Lessons Learnt So Far

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## Lessons learnt:

- It is not always up to the Council to deliver – it is about enabling others who are active and connected in their communities
- Linking up voluntary groups can result in meaningful partnerships and provide practical service / support e.g. Don't Lose Hope have provided mental health training to other organisations in the District, insight and training at a local level
- Shared learning and collaboration is invaluable – conversations in Stamford across organisations, including Mindspace, Second Helpings, Art Pop Up and other local partners to coordinate efforts
- Activity needs to be community led – the communities of South Kesteven are diverse and what works in one area of the district may not work in another area



# Lessons Learnt So Far

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## Lessons learnt:

- Working with local voluntary groups to support our staff through the delivery of vital training has been invaluable - feedback on training provided by Don't Lose Hope has been overwhelmingly positive.
- The importance of enabling staff to provide their input into mental health and wellbeing support - we are setting up 'brain storming' sessions with our First Aiders for Mental Health in the New Year to discuss how they can shape wellbeing support at SKDC going forward.
- Pulse surveys as a tool to measure wellbeing across the organisation - results from the January 2021 Mental Health Pulse Survey helped to build a picture of staff wellbeing which we could develop actions from. We are looking to roll out another of these in the near future.



# Keeping the Momentum – Next Steps

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- Strong desire to maintain and build on the momentum and actions taken to date
- Will maintain focus on the 5 workstreams and will be seeking to explore opportunities to use our assets (e.g. Arts Centres, Leisure Facilities, Parks) to promote positive Mental Wellbeing
- Continuing to visit and encourage activity across the District (e.g. visiting Bhive in January) and link, promote and direct support
- Continue to identify and support applications for funding for community groups

