

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 12 March 2019
Subject:	Mental Health & Employment Task Group		
Report of:	Head of Economic Growth and Housing	Wards Affected:	All
Portfolio:	Regeneration and Skills		
Is this a Key Decision:	N	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	no		

Summary:

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Corporate task group on Mental Health and Employment.

Recommendation(s):

(1) that Members note the activities undertaken by the Mental Health and Employment Task Group

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Task Group is an informal cross-sectoral, multi-agency grouping which focuses on key practical objectives to improve service delivery for residents across Sefton and to encourage employers to adopt best practice in this area.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

N/A

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

N/A - The task group is maintained through voluntary contributions from key partners for room hire etc

(B) Capital Costs

N/A

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): none
Legal Implications: none
Equality Implications: none

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Mental health and employment are recognised as key issues in promoting resilience in our communities
Commission, broker and provide core services: The report identifies improvements gained from changes in commissioning
Place – leadership and influencer: The task group highlights the role played by the council as an influencer on this agenda
Drivers of change and reform: The report details service delivery improvements and systems reform
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Wellbeing in decent work, promotion of recovery and improved productivity are key themes in this work
Greater income for social investment: The report indicates the Groups ambitions to promote social investment
Cleaner Greener

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD.5574/19.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4698/19) have been consulted and have no comments on the report

(B) External Consultations

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection

1. Introduction/Background

Mental Health and Employment have been identified as connected issues of concern for Sefton in the context of government changes connected to welfare reform, the overhaul of the benefits system including the rollout of Universal Credit and continued financial pressures on public services over the last five years. The task group was designed to carry forward a number of the economic objectives described within Sefton's Mental Health Strategic plan for 2015 – 2020 and its Overarching Mental Health Action Plan adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Sefton Mental Health and Employment Task group was established in 2016 as an informal grouping and is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Cllr Paul Cummins. The Task group's focus takes into account the following factors:

- There is stigma and discrimination faced by residents faced with mental ill health conditions which too often leads to residents losing their employment
- There is a widespread deficit of understanding among employers about how they can best support the mental wellbeing of people in their workforce
- In most cases, good work opportunities provide essential steps to recovery through tackling isolation, increasing self-worth and improving prosperity
- The "customer journey" for people recovering their mental health wishing to re-engage in employment is unclear and confusing
- Work, volunteering, vocational re-training are key components for recovery for many people who have lost their employment through mental ill-health

2.Objectives of the Task Group

Poor mental health is cited as a significant and growing reason for poor productivity among Sefton businesses, particularly SMEs. Moreover, the issue carries the risk of devastating human costs since such a high proportion of the suicides occurring in Sefton are among residents who are workless. These factors provide a compelling case for action that sits across the pillars of Public health, Social Care and inclusive Economic Growth.

The task group's objectives, therefore, include the following:

- To provide an inclusive multi-disciplinary networking opportunity for national, regional and local agencies to share information to promote better outcomes for residents and businesses
- To map relevant health and economic data sets to better understand the particular challenges facing Sefton
- To create a more coherent customer journey for residents through increased collaboration between partners
- To identify and promote instances of good practice in local employers supporting staff with mental ill health or poor well-being to remain in and thrive at work
- To promote new delivery mechanisms to fill identified gaps, such as through social investment

3.Key Actions to Date

The Group has overseen many practical actions which have been designed to lead to service improvements. These have included:

- A review of evidence has been undertaken to draw together information on the prevalence of mental health related to certain areas and sectors of employment.
- Work has commenced on mapping referral pathways for use by employment and health advisors
- Invest Sefton has held "mindfulness" sessions with local SMEs
- Responsibility for the commissioned Individual Placement Support Service (IPSS) delivered through Imagine Independence Ltd has been transferred from Social Care to Inward Investment and Employment team.
- The IPSS delivery in community mental health teams has been augmented with additional funding from the NHS.
- The Hugh Baird College St Winifred Campus for health and social care and Life Rooms in Bootle and Southport have all been established
- Bespoke ILM opportunities (ie waged, subsidised employment placements) have been delivered through Sefton@work as a result of case conferencing with Imagine.
- Mental Health First Aid Training and Making Every Contact Count training have been rolled out to a number of employment projects who would otherwise not have participated
- JobcentrePlus have given regular presentations on nationally procured provision focusing on mental health of benefit claimants
- The group has reviewed evaluation findings from Nature4All projects delivered in Sefton

4.Planned Actions Going Forward

Much remains to be accomplished in this area and the nature of short term funding means that the job of keeping track of provision is ongoing. The programme of work for the coming period includes:

- Rollout of Suicide prevention training to local employment advisors (including Sefton@work, Jobcentreplus staff etc)
- Identification of Employer best practice examples across diverse occupational sectors and “Employer champions”
- Clarify the linkages between employment support and social prescribing in Sefton
- Focus on the availability of mental health support for adult learners and apprentices
- Update of data sources on mental health, economic growth and welfare reform impacts
- Identify suitable means to disseminate the work of the Group through the Localities model so workers in these settings are equipped with referral information

5.Representation on the Group

The group is informal in nature and seeks to be inclusive and cross-sectoral. Its membership reflects wide stakeholder involvement and includes:

Sefton Public Health
Sefton@work
Sefton Inward Investment and Employment
Access Sefton
Expect Excellence
Sefton CVS
Hugh Baird College
Merseycare Life Rooms
South Sefton CCG
Imagine Independence Ltd
JobcentrePlus
Sovini Group