

To: City Executive Board

Date: 15 October 2014

Report of: Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present comments from the Scrutiny Committee on the Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford report and action plan.

Key decision? Yes

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Simmons

Executive lead member: Councillor Turner

Policy Framework: The Corporate Plan: Strong, Active Communities

Recommendations:

- 1. That the establishment of the Member Challenge Panel for Mental Health and Wellbeing does not divert officer resources away from other Member Services such as Scrutiny. Consideration should be given to whether a budget bid is required to support this new Member Panel.**
- 2. That the Action Plan is updated and elaborated upon to include progress made against actions that are due.**
- 3. That resources required to deliver the Action Plan are fully identified and costed, so that any bids for additional resources can be made as part of the current budget setting process.**
- 4. That consideration is given to the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Oxford, and to how these can be included in the action plan.**
- 5. That consideration is given to how the action plan supports the mental health and wellbeing of service personnel and veterans, and to whether more focus on these specific groups is required.**

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee considered the Towards Mental Health and Wellbeing in Oxford report and action plan at their public meeting in October. The Committee would like to thank Val Johnson for attending the meeting and answering the Committee's questions.
2. The Committee was satisfied that the motion agreed by the City Council on 3 February 2014 had been successfully interpreted in the report and action plan, and thanked Val Johnson and her team for their work in achieving this.

Conclusions and recommendations

3. The Scrutiny Committee noted that a Member Challenge Panel on Health and Wellbeing is being established, whereas the Council motion only asked for a Member Champion. The Committee heard that this is because several Members put themselves forward to be the Member Champion, which is welcome. However, the Committee were concerned that a Member Panel would require additional officer support, which could result in existing resources being diverted away from other activities such as Scrutiny.

Recommendation 1: That the establishment of the Member Challenge Panel for Mental Health and Wellbeing does not divert officer resources away from other Member Services such as Scrutiny. Consideration should be given to whether a budget bid is required to support this new Member Panel.

4. The Scrutiny Committee noted that some actions in the action plan had a target date of autumn 2014, and requested an update on progress made against these.

Recommendation 2: That the Action Plan is updated and elaborated upon to include progress made against actions that are due.

5. The Committee noted that some actions listed in the action plan had not been costed and that these had a target date of March 2015. The Committee suggested that the resources required should be identified as part of the current budget setting process, to prevent any possible delays in delivering these actions.

Recommendation 3: That resources required to deliver the Action Plan are fully identified and costed, so that any bids for additional resources can be made as part of the current budget setting process.

6. The Scrutiny Committee welcomed the partnership approach taken and suggested that the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders should also be considered and set out in this action plan.

Recommendation 4: That consideration is given to the role of ethnic minority groups and faith leaders in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Oxford, and for these to be explicitly set out in the action plan.

7. The Committee felt that service personnel and veterans are important groups who should not be overlooked in efforts to improve mental health and wellbeing in Oxford.

Recommendation 5: That consideration is given to how the action plan supports the mental health and wellbeing of service personnel and veterans, and whether more focus on these groups is required.

Further consideration

8. The Scrutiny Committee agreed not to re-visit the action plan as this would duplicate the work of the Member Challenge Panel.

Board Member Comments

Rec 1: I would anticipate this challenge panel being member led, and operating for the most part informally, rather than drawing upon extensive officer support.

Recs 2 to 5: These are sensible comments on how to develop the action plan, and we had certainly hoped to update and monitor it.

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List of background papers: None

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