

Decision maker:	Cabinet Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing
Decision date:	6 March 2020
Title of report:	Executive response to “Lets Listen Herefordshire” motion from council
Report by:	Director of Public Health

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

The executive has been asked to establish a designated annual mental health day to be named “Lets Listen Herefordshire” to be held every third Monday of each New Year from January 20th 2020 onwards. This is to coincide with ‘Blue Monday’ which has been identified by Mental Health Research UK as being the most depressing day of the year due to it being short, and dark.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) The council do something different by promoting the National Mental Health Research UK campaign ‘Blooming Monday’ which coincides with ‘Blue Monday’ amongst council staff and members only;**
- (b) That the localised promotion is part of other planned events to promote mental health amongst council staff during January 2020;**

- (c) The 'Lets Listen Herefordshire' branding is not added to the National Campaign materials.
- (d) The promotion is evaluated and this evaluation considers whether the event should be supported in future years.

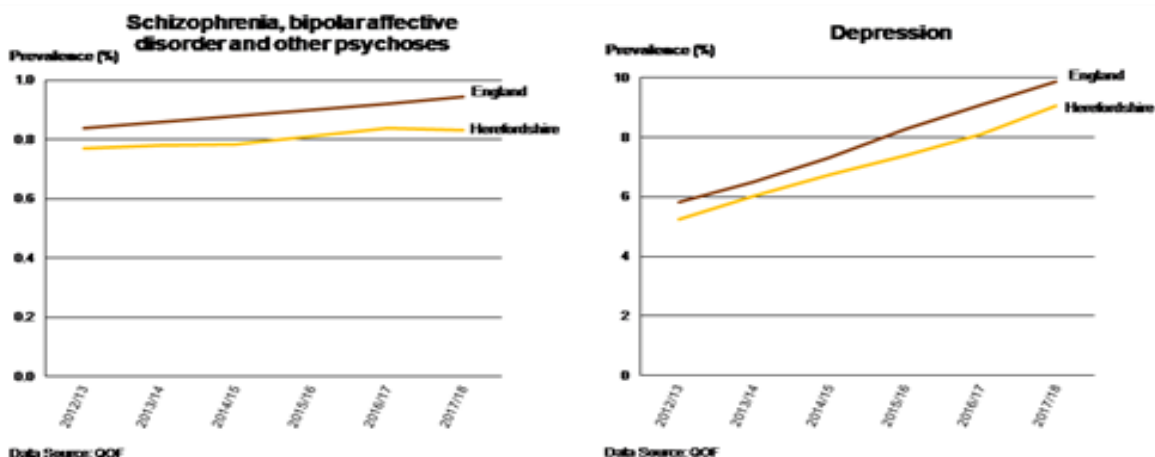
Alternative options

1. Do nothing.
2. Establish an annual 'Lets Listen Herefordshire' event to coincide with the third Monday in January known as 'Blue Monday'.
3. Do something different.

Key considerations

4. The motion at full council on 11th October resolved unanimously for the executive to be asked to establish a designated annual mental health day to be named " Lets Listen Herefordshire" to be held every third Monday of each New Year from January 20th 2020 onwards
5. The background to the motion was a concern that more needed to be done to promote mental health and wellbeing in particular amongst council staff.
6. Herefordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019 identifies that mental health is an issue of national and local concern. In the UK one in four adults will experience a mental health problem each year and 11% of children and young people aged between five and fifteen have a clinically diagnosable mental health issue. Mental ill-health is the largest cause of disability in the UK.
7. Mirroring the national pattern the prevalence of patients in Herefordshire with schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses has increased steadily. However, the local figure has remained lower than that for England and in 2017/18 was 0.83% compared to 0.94%. The prevalence of depression in Herefordshire has also risen, increasing by over two thirds since 2012/13 with a figure of 9.1% recorded in 2017/18, although the local rate is lower than that for England as a whole – Figure 1.

Figure 1: Mental health prevalence (all age)



11. Public Health England (PHE) is encouraging adults in the Midlands to look after their mental health as they do their physical health, through its new Every Mind Matters campaign. The new campaign highlights that while we can all feel stressed, anxious, low or have trouble sleeping, there are simple actions we can take to manage these issues.
12. It encourages people to visit the [Every Mind Matters guide](#), a free NHS-approved online resource which provides expert advice, practical tips, and experiences from real people to help manage these issues and those of others.
13. This evidenced based campaign is promoted through corporate communications channels and local events and has advantages of being supported by nationally produced apps and resources.
14. World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health. The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.
15. In terms of the specific offer to staff we have in place face to face counselling via our occupational health service. Access is via management referral and normally limited to six sessions. This service is well used and this contract is being re-procured in 2020. The details of the specification are currently being considered.
16. To supplement the above, the council offer 24/7 unlimited telephone counselling support via a commissioned counselling service. This service is accessed without manager referral which ensures total confidentiality but also means we have no stats on take up rates. Credit card sized materials to promote the counselling service have been produced have been made available to staff as part of the mental health promotion events in January.
17. The council have been providing mental health awareness sessions throughout January 2020. These are being run by the local MIND branch and are intended to both raise awareness and to provide support to individuals if necessary. All of the sessions have been fully booked.
18. Following the sessions the council will start the recruitment process for MH first aiders. Those selected will be trained and will take up their roles by May.
19. In addition to the above, as part of BWOW and 'wellbeing in all decisions' programme of work, a staff health and wellbeing group is being set up to take a lead in determining the types of activities that should be put in place to promote staff health and wellbeing, including mental health. This will be led by staff.
20. The promotion of 'Blooming Monday' has given staff and members the opportunity to be involved in raising awareness of mental health issues with their colleagues and accessing the information provided through Core News and in the displays that will be set up to promote the day. 'Blooming Monday', materials were sent to all libraries and council buildings for promotion by staff.
21. As a consequence of reviewing the national mental campaigns promoted throughout the across Herefordshire and the events that had been planned in January promote staff mental health and wellbeing in January 2020 the executive determined that the 'Lets Listen Herefordshire' branding would not be developed and that the focus on the events in January would focus on staff, rather than the wider population.

Community impact

22. The event will only impact on council staff and their family and friends who will become aware of the campaign.
23. This event hasn't been discussed with other partners and communities at this stage as the council is promoting other mental health campaigns in conjunction with partners.

Equality duty

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
24. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on the organisation of an event for council staff only, who will all be able to access the event, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.
 25. The Equality Act 2010 established a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine 'protected characteristics' (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have 'due regard' to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes. The event is focussed on council staff mental health and wellbeing and will be accessible to all staff.

Resource implications

26. No additional funding is required to support this decision as the materials supporting the event will be downloaded from Mental Health Research UK website and are freely available to event supporters.
27. In terms of human resources the only impact will be the time to promote the event, to discuss mental health issues with colleagues. This will be absorbed into the Adults and Communities Directorate.
28. There are no additional ongoing costs unless there is a decision to support the event in future years.

Legal implications

25 There are no legal implications.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Lack of engagement from staff.	As this is a pilot the lack of engagement will be used to inform future support for the event.
Possible increase in the number of staff that need mental health support which exceeds their capacity to provide a service	The Occupation Health Service can be accessed to provide staff counselling and the capacity would need to be increased

Consultees

29. Adults and Communities Directorate Leadership Team representatives have been consulted about this decision as the Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing briefing on 9th December 2019.
30. The consultees supported the recommendation of this paper as this formed part of the work already planned to promote staff mental health and wellbeing and this did not add additional pressures on staff time, as other national campaigns are already supported.
31. Proposer and seconder of the motion

Appendices

None

Background papers

There are no background papers.

