



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 4 June 2019

To the Cabinet

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Rachael Blake Cabinet Member	All	Yes

REPORT TITLE

THIRD SECTOR PROVIDER ALLIANCE TO ERADICATE SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN DONCASTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Doncaster recognises the serious impact that Social Isolation and Loneliness has on the health and wellbeing of people across all ages. Whilst acknowledging that there are key points in people's lives when we are more at risk such as ill health, ageing, disability, bereavement, becoming a carer or parent, loss of a job, divorce, teenage pressure, bullying, and moving home.
2. Whilst Loneliness is not something new the significant changes in the way we live, work, and relate to each other, layered with the shift towards a more digital society means in reality that we are less likely to physically connect or talk to each other makes this subject one of the most pressing Public Health issues locally and nationally. The National Strategy for Tackling Loneliness - A Connected Society (2018) provides further evidence of the associated impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness.
3. Eradicating Social Isolation and Loneliness in Doncaster is a key strategic priority sited in the Health & Wellbeing Board Outcome framework 2018-21. Translating through other key strategies such as the Adults Health & Wellbeing Transformation Plan (2018-2021) and Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) (2018 -2021). Cabinet Members have further emphasised their commitment by setting an ambition for Doncaster to be the least lonely place by 2021.
4. As a key facilitator and conveyor of the place the Council has allocated a Community Commissioning Investment Fund of £200,000 to establish through active engagement and adhering to co-production principles a different delivery model in the form of a non-profit Third Sector Social Isolation and Loneliness Partnership Alliance. The purpose of the Alliance will be to deliver, through

collaboration, interventions and activities that connect people together at a local level. Creating a new multi layered landscape of provision is essential to success.

5. Extensive engagement has taken place over the past 10 months with 17 Third Sector representatives who have responded with great enthusiasm and commitment (Appendix 1). All active representatives have signed up to be part of the Alliance but an accountable lead organisation is required to act as the body responsible for the administration and Governance of the grant on behalf of the Alliance Members. It was collectively agreed that the lead organisation would be selected through an expression of interest application process answering a number of pre-set questions developed by Alliance Members, which would then be subject to a member ballot. Three expressions of interest were received and Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT) were democratically elected as the Lead Organisation on the 7th February 2019.
6. Extending out to a Middle Tier Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation (DCLT) we are basing the approach on the highly successful experience of Expect Youth and latterly the development of a Middle Tier Organisation (MTO) to improve the quality of careers, education, information advice and guidance for the boroughs young people (Appendix2).
7. By creating this venture we will help improve the opportunities to secure additional funding and support the financial sustainability of a diverse range of likeminded partners, who are all currently working on the same agenda but not always in a joined up way.
8. We propose committing a Community Commissioning Investment fund in the form of a £200,000 grant, which will be apportioned over 3 years to pump prime this new delivery model. A funding agreement will be put in place incorporating a work plan and an agreed outcomes framework. The work plan will be for the first 6 months then reviewed and a longer term work plan put in place with a section considering incorporation of the alliance to a standalone entity.
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Year 1 = £100k
Year 2 = £66k
Year 3 = £34k
9. It is proposed over the lifetime of the funding agreement the Council will work with the Alliance in order for them to become a standalone entity. During this period there will be a robust evaluation carried out at the end of year 1 and year 2 to inform the future direction.

EXEMPT REPORT

10. There are no exemptions to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and that the following is recognised and agreed:-
 - a) To support the commitment of a Community Commissioning Investment fund of £200,000 apportioned over a three year period.

- b) To support the organic transition over the lifetime of the funding agreement from an Alliance hosted by a lead organisation (DCLT) to a standalone entity as yet to be determined.
- c) An in principle agreement to consider a sustainable commissioning model post three year investment. Officers to present a proposal July 2021.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

12. Social isolation and loneliness are increasingly common experiences for Doncaster residents. The *Doncaster Talks* report (presented in 2018 to the Health and Wellbeing Board) described how social connection, mental wellbeing and ability to experience new things are key drivers of health and wellbeing. Social isolation and loneliness can affect anyone at any time and can be triggered by a number of life changing circumstances, whether it be unemployment, homelessness, bereavement, relationship break down, bullying and harassment, transport issues or other socio-economic and life-changing circumstances.

BACKGROUND

13. Loneliness and social isolation are not the same thing. Loneliness is a subjective concept, which is influenced not only by circumstances and events, but is also subject to cultural and psychological factors. Whereas social isolation is an objective state whereby the number of contacts a person has can be counted. One way of describing this distinction is that you can be lonely in a crowded room, but you will not be socially isolated.
14. Social isolation is not just an issue of older age. People can become socially isolated at any age, often as a result of a trigger event such as having a baby, moving to a new house, being made redundant or being widowed. However, many trigger events are likely to hit hardest later in life, where isolation can also be triggered by deteriorating health, lack of mobility and increasing physical frailty. As a result, social isolation has a strongly negative impact on outcomes in older age and is a major contributing factor in the decline into dependency for older people.
15. The need to take urgent action to address the impact of loneliness and social isolation is recognised in two national campaigns. These are: The Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness a “call to action” and The Campaign to End Loneliness. both have been influential and effective in raising the profile of loneliness and isolation as national priority.

Campaign to end Loneliness website
<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/home/>

16. Loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: research shows that;
 - *Loneliness is as bad for you as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. (Holt-Lunstad, 2010)*
 - *Loneliness is worse for you than obesity. (Holt-Lunstad, 2010)*
 - *Lonely people are more likely to suffer from dementia, heart disease and depression. (Valtorta et al, 2016) (James et al, 2011) (Cacioppo et al, 2006)*
 - *Loneliness is likely to increase your risk of death by 29% (Holt-Lustad, 2015)*

17. Adults, Health and Wellbeing and health commissions a range of services that support older and vulnerable people and actively reduce social isolation. In addition a £400,000 Community Investment Programme was recently launched inviting groups/organisations to apply to the programme to try out new ideas and different ways to enable people of all ages to stay as independent for as long as possible and to reduce loneliness.
18. The Care Act 2014 established the “*wellbeing principle*”, making promoting wellbeing the core purpose of local authorities. Given the clear links between loneliness and poor wellbeing, Local Authorities must include actions to address loneliness and isolation.
19. One of the key principles of our transformation is to support people to **have a life, not a service**. The Care Act 2014 challenges us to think about asset based approaches and meeting people’s needs rather than providing services. The Council are already taking steps to reduce social isolation by providing services that connect people to each other and their communities. In addition in recent market shaping work we have been working with providers to help them diversify their offer into supporting people to connect with others and activities in their local community not just access commissioned services.
20. Strategically since January 2015 loneliness has been highlighted as an issue for consideration through the Doncaster Health and Adult and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The purpose was to gather an understanding about loneliness in the borough, how it is being addressed and examples of good practice.
21. A year later, in February 2016, a Health and Wellbeing Board workshop was facilitated by ‘the *Campaign to End Loneliness*’ to help the Board to develop its strategy for addressing loneliness and social isolation, specifically in older people. A wealth of ideas was generated around foundation services, direct interventions, gateway services and structural enablers. The follow-up report recommended that Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Board develop a consistent strategy and action plan, recognising all the assets at its disposal and involving the third sector.
22. Since 2016 there have been a number of initiatives that have clearly demonstrated a commitment to this agenda. For example following the Campaign to End Loneliness workshop, the Public Health Team scoped an ‘offer’ which could help address and support the loneliness agenda. In 2017 third sector partners came together to begin mapping what provision exists in Doncaster to help address loneliness and social isolation. In the same year an elected member’s initiative to enlist loneliness champions was implemented through the Stronger Communities team, in a drive to encourage elected members to engage with their local communities on this issue.
23. In April 2018 a Health and Wellbeing Board workshop was held at the Doncaster High Speed Rail College with 36 participants from a wide range of agencies including the public sector and third sector providers to focus on the priorities around the social isolation and loneliness agenda. Councillor Rachael Blake gave her full commitment to this agenda as well a plea to all ‘that loneliness should be eradicated in Doncaster by 2021’ and that actions should be simple and immediate. The next steps identified from the workshop and the stakeholder group were to look at developing an alliance to take the issue going forward.

24. In early 2018 a stakeholder meeting chaired by the Director of People was held at the Civic Office which included the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, members of Communities, public health and third sector partners to re-ignite this agenda and review priorities going forward. The outcome of the meeting was a consensus around the concept of a Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance along with a consensus that an all- age approach is taken.
25. Next actions/steps for the Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance are:
- Develop a wider understanding and sharing of what each of the organisations deliver and scoping of areas for opportunity/innovation
 - Agree governance for the Alliance
 - Work with the Strategy & Performance Unit and academic partners (the Centre for Loneliness at Sheffield University who have expressed interest in supporting the Alliance's development) to explore impact measurement and research on best practice/innovation.
 - Develop a local loneliness charter
26. The Council has developed a Memorandum of Understanding relating to the Alliance with the lead provider (DCLT) along with a Funding Agreement that sets out the Governance arrangement, funding allocation and outcomes monitoring framework aligned to the overarching Commissioning Principles. Included within the funding agreement will be the initial 12 month action plan developed by the Alliance Membership.
27. Extending out to a democratically elected Middle Tier Organisation (DCLT) will provide the real opportunity to access certain benefits not legally and operationally available to the Council. For example the ability to access grant funding regimes and central government funding that are not necessarily available to local government.
28. Having a shared delivery and outcome plan linked to potential funding opportunities will bring financial and sustainable benefit. This activity will further support and connect with more formal services operating at area level.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

29. Option one - Preferred option:

To approve the award of a grant to Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT) as the Lead Organisation acting as the accountable body for the Social Isolation Alliance.

30. Option two - least preferred option:

To not approve the award of a grant to Doncaster Culture and Trust (DCLT) as the Lead Organisation acting as the accountable body for the Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance, but support an EU procurement exercise. This option if supported would have a significant negative impact on the relationship the Council has developed over time with the Alliance membership. It would be highly likely the Alliance would be disbanded. Additionally, and key to the Alliance approach is that the vast majority of funding that is secured over time would be invested in the essential requirements of delivery with more money as a result getting through to the individual, and correspondingly less being absorbed by bureaucracy and administration, the latter of which is often where monies are spent especially when there is more than one commissioned provider.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

31. Social isolation and loneliness are national and local priorities. Anyone can become social isolated or lonely through their life course and it is everyone's business to eradicate this issue.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

32.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>Through employment opportunities residents can feel socially connected and feel a sense of purpose at work.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for 	<p>Residents are socially connected and active in their communities, reducing the impact of social and loneliness. Happier, better-connected people have a higher quality of life overall.</p>

	<p>keeping Doncaster Clean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>Education is a life skill but also promotes social interaction and connectedness which can then continue throughout life. It provides life skills and experiences which can be transferred to future generations and promote community cohesion.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>The health and wellbeing of families is fundamental to community cohesion. The role of carers is also a key priority.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>Residents can build community resilience by supporting others through social connections. Local befriending services are part of this infrastructure.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

33. There are no immediate risks within this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS Officer Initials Date 26th April 2019

34. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the local authority the power to do anything that individuals may generally do.

S111 Local Government Act 1972 states that a local authority shall have power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Capital allocations must be made in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

As lead body for the Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance, DCLT should sign a funding agreement to confirm the acceptance of the terms and conditions of this funding. Once signed, the funding agreement should be monitored to ensure the funds are spent in accordance with approved Projects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS HR 29/04/19

35. The Community Led Support scheme has a combination of BCF and iBCF approved budget, tackling social isolation and loneliness is part of this scheme and £200k of the afore mentioned funding has been set aside to pay for delivering this. Year 1 £100k in 2019/20 will be funded from BCF and years 2 and 3 £66k and £34k respectively will be funded from iBCF

As this is to be paid to DCLT as a grant Financial Procedure Rule E.14 applies, 'The approval of Cabinet is required for all grants and annual assistance to external bodies with a financial value of £50,000'. A funding agreement with DCLT should be drawn up to ensure appropriate monitoring and performance arrangements are in place to safeguard council resources.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials BT Date...23/04/2019.]

36. There are no HR implications applicable as far as this proposed grant to DCLT for this update report is concerned.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials ET Date 25/04/19]

37. There are no technology implications as per the attached report.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...LW...Date 24.4.19]

38. Social isolation and loneliness are becoming big health issues for all partners likened to the obesity epidemic and it can be hugely detrimental to the health and wellbeing of our residents. Social connections are the key. The impact of social isolation and loneliness on our health and social care system cannot be underestimated particularly with an increasing ageing population with complex needs.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...FW... Date...30.04.19]

39. Everyone has the right to good health care and services and also the right to live in a safe and healthy community. No one should need to feel isolated and lonely if the

environment is right. To eradicate social isolation and loneliness, everyone should make it their business to ensure that friends and family have support and have access to good information. It does not have to be complicated – we simply need to ask people if they are ok and just checking in on our neighbours, friends and families can make all the difference.

CONSULTATION

40. The Health and Wellbeing Board workshops in 2016 and 2018 and the meetings with key stakeholders from the third sector (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) in recent months have provided meaningful consultation around the social isolation and loneliness agenda. The *Doncaster Talks* insights work has also provided invaluable insight into the local behaviours and personas of local residents and further examples may be sought through the Well Doncaster project and other community based initiatives. This work needs to be further enhanced through further mapping and consultation with the wider community sector and the local population through further community engagement work. The Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance will continue to build upon the foundations of this work.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

41. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny panel report (January 2015)
Loneliness into Connections - Doncaster Campaign to End Loneliness workshop Report (February 2016)
Health and Wellbeing Loneliness Workshop report (April 2018)
Doncaster Talks report 2018

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Appendix 1.

List of Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance members:-

- Age UK Doncaster
- B:Friend
- Doncaster Alcohol Services
- Doncaster Community Arts (DARTS)
- Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust – Middle Tier Organisation (MTO)
- Doncaster Deaf Trust
- Doncaster Mind
- Edlington Hilltop Centre
- Inspire
- Live Inclusive
- MHA Methodist Homes
- Motiv8
- North Doncaster Development Trust (NDDT)
- Partially Sighted Society
- People Focused Group (PFG)
- South Yorkshire Housing Association – Social Prescribing
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)

Invited and interested but not fully engaged

- Aspiring2
- Alzheimer's Society
- Cascade Foundation
- Choices4Doncaster
- Edlington Community Organisation (ECO)
- Reread
- Royal Voluntary Service

Appendix 2.

Executive Summary of Discussion Paper February 2019 titled:- Defining our approach to the Middle Tier Organisation (MTO).

- The 'Middle Tier Organisation' is an organisation which serves to broker, commission or provide services at an aggregated level above smaller organisations but below central government. A cross-thematic working group of SPU Officers have formulated a working set of criteria for defining a Middle Tier Organisation. Adoption of this definition would make us one of the first councils in the country to systematically define service provision at this level.
- In October 2016 Cabinet took a decision to support the development of a new model in fulfilling Doncaster Council's statutory duty to provide positive activities for children and young people. The first Middle Tier Organisation (MTO) namely EXPECT Youth made up of an alliance of organisations in the borough presented a different way of working for Doncaster Council and for the delivery of a youth offer.
- While the presence of the Middle Tier is most immediate to the current debates around service provision in learning, the application of the concept of a Middle Tier Organisation (MTO) can be of use when discussing policy and partnership approaches in other themes within Doncaster Growing Together (DGT).
- In the current national political and financial environment, MTOs are likely to grow in importance.
- Locally, we are currently creating a new MTO, the new Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) organisation, which is being co-commissioned by the Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Doncaster Council. This new organisation will be based on the highly successful experience of EXPECT Youth.
- The Commissioning and operation of MTOs confer a range of benefits in the provision of public goods and services, including access to a variety of legal and financial structures, access to external funding, a de-municipalisation of branding, opportunities for increased specialism and commercialisation and a chance to formalise partnership working arrangements.
- There is a great variety in the legal form and function of MTOs and as a consequence, adopting a 'one size fits all' policy towards the operation of these organisations would limit our room to tailor operational responses to some of the challenges faced within each of the DGT themes.