



Doncaster Council

Doncaster
Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 10th March 2022

Subject: Community Solutions to Substance Use

Presented by: Vicki Beere

Purpose of bringing this report to the Board	
Decision	
Recommendation to Full Council	
Endorsement	YES
Information	YES

Implications		Applicable Yes/No
DHWB Strategy Areas of Focus	Substance Misuse (Drugs and Alcohol)	Yes
	Mental Health	Yes
	Dementia	
	Obesity	
	Children and Families	
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment		
Finance		
Legal		
Equalities		
Other Implications (please list)		

How will this contribute to improving health and wellbeing in Doncaster?

For Information: Back ground to Project 6 www.project6.org.uk

Project 6 Doncaster (previously Doncaster Alcohol Services) has supported people for 38 years and is well embedded in the local communities across the borough, having been founded by local people in response to alcohol problems and their impact on the local area. Over the years the needs have changed, and we have been flexible and innovative in adapting to meet those needs, often in partnership with local organisations and stakeholders, always in partnership with the people who use our services and our community. We recognise the people who walk through our door as important assets for us and for Doncaster, with incredible potential, and we seek to co-design and co-produce

ways of keeping people safe and healthy, and of building communities. The solutions to the challenges that people face in Doncaster around harmful alcohol use are to be found in those individuals and communities themselves. Our role is to unlock them, through building trusted relationships and creating safe spaces, where people can learn tools and techniques and be inspired/supported by peers and others in recovery. Often people who have struggled with alcohol use need support within a safe community as a first step, somewhere like Project 6, so they can then go on to engage and flourish within the wider community.

Project 6 is a values-led organisation, working with individuals and families with drug and alcohol issues and /or multiple and complex disadvantages. Our core purpose is to provide opportunities and choices for individuals, families and communities to create meaningful and sustainable changes in their wellbeing. We give people and communities the tools and support to make these changes themselves, while we walk alongside them. This is how we support people to self-help, to build resilience and self-reliance.

Our vibrant Sober Social service is located in Doncaster town centre and delivers a menu of therapeutic groups and peer-led health and wellbeing activities, aimed at enabling individuals to sustain recovery from alcohol misuse. Over the last 12 months we have supported over 8,000 individuals across the organisation, 223 of them in Doncaster, to make and sustain positive changes to their health. Our timetable includes staff, peer & volunteer-led activities such as evidence-based relapse prevention, both 1-1 and groups, Mind Matters courses, self-care tool box sessions and SMART Recovery sessions, plus plenty of outdoor health activities such as a walking group and park meet ups. These sessions are critical in creating a visible recovery community in Doncaster, which shows that recovery is possible and challenges stereotypes and stigma.

More recently, as the impact of the pandemic has led to increased local need, we saw a 200% increase in telephone calls to our Doncaster service. We have developed our Pathways services in partnership with Primary Care, with a focus on crisis, alcohol related issues and diverting people into community provision, where they can access the support they need to make changes. We have identified a particular need through our work with the Alcohol Alliance around older people's alcohol use.

Our 2020 Satisfaction Survey of people using our services demonstrated:

- 85% of individuals reported improvements in mental health and wellbeing
- 78% reported improved physical health
- 73% reported improved relationships with families and friends
- 76% felt accepted as part of the community and able to give back to their community
- 84% felt optimistic about their ability to have a positive future.

Project 6 has a long history of successful development and delivery of both grant-funded and contracted services. We seek to bring added value and visibility into the community through fundraising activities, community events such as theatre, music events, art displays and sponsored walks or swims.

Examples of the social value we bring include:

- Engagement with the local community where possible, in shared fundraising events and through our Active Citizens scheme

- Bringing people together across other VCS organisations through joint activities such as the recent virtual recovery games and arts projects
- Our recovery services provide progression pathways, which include peer support and volunteer placements, skills training and support into employment
- We have over 80 trained volunteers with lived experience in the organisation; 10 of these Doncaster residents.

The Third Place proposal: a new way of supporting Street Drinkers

The number of people experiencing multiple and complex disadvantages is increasing nationally and Doncaster is no exception. These are people who cannot navigate our current health and social care system due to their chaotic lifestyles, structural and societal barriers and whose health inequalities and life expectancy are being severely impacted. As a consequence of this they are using what health and social care services they can erratically, inappropriately and sometimes not at all until it is too late. The average life expectancy of a street homeless individual is between 43 – 47 <https://simononthestreets.co.uk/news/the-average-life-span-of-the-homeless-why-the-risk-is-high> according to Simon on the Streets . They are not able to access our current health and social care system therefore this is a proposal to address that issue and create a supported entrance into our current system. We believe this proposal will allow us to reduce health inequalities, save lives and give people the opportunities of choice and positive change to their wellbeing.

The "first place" for most people is the home and those that one lives with. The "second place" is the workplace — where people may actually spend a considerable amount of their time. Third places, then, are "anchors" of community life and facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction. In other words, your third place is where you relax in public, where you encounter familiar faces and make new acquaintances.” Ray Oldenberg; The Great Good Place, 1999.

The Third Place will provide those opportunities to tackle the cycle of multiple and complex needs by providing a safe environment for street drinkers and others affected by homelessness, rootlessness and destitution who often have no access to their own first or second space. The aim of the third space is to offer opportunities and choices for individuals to create meaningful and sustainable change in their wellbeing through reducing harm and improving health outcomes. It will provide, appropriately and safely managed space for interventions for individuals affected by multiple complex needs including;

- Street Drinkers
- People who are homeless or on the edge of homelessness
- Those who do not ordinarily engage with statutory services

Aspire and Project 6 propose to work in partnership to develop a fully costed Third Place proposal in Doncaster in order to address the needs of the population, improve community safety and create opportunities for people to make and sustain positive change to their wellbeing and health using a whole system approach.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to: consider and support the proposal.