

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY UPDATE REPORT

Committee – Strategy & Performance Advisory Committee – 3 March 2015

Report of Chief Officer Communities & Business

Status: For Information

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report summarises this Council’s involvement in the Dementia Friendly Communities Project and the positive impact this work can have to improve access to services for people with disabilities.

This report supports the Key Aim of providing the right support at the right time, reducing health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing for all

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Hogarth

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Recommendation to Strategy & Performance Advisory Committee:

Members are asked to note the report.

Reason for recommendation: Members are asked to note the report.

Introduction and Background

- 1 By 2020, 38 per cent of the population will be aged over 50, and by 2029 this will have risen to 40 per cent. The significant increase in older people contributes to the increase of people living with Dementia. There will be a 25% rise in the number of people aged 65+ diagnosed with dementia by 2020, particularly those with mild or moderate dementia. One in five people over the age of 65 will have a form of dementia.
- 2 The prevalence of Dementia increases with age, however this is not just an older person’s disease as there are more than 40,000 younger people (under the age of 65) with dementia in the UK.
- 3 There are over 9,100 residents of Kent recorded to have Dementia, with over 20,000 undiagnosed cases. Sevenoaks is one of four districts in Kent who expect to see the greatest increase in an aging population, and therefore the greatest increase in people with Dementia. Two-thirds of people with Dementia in Kent live in their own home.

The Dementia and Community Friendly Challenge

- 4 The National 'Living Well with Dementia: A National Dementia Strategy' was published in February 2009. In March 2012, the Prime Minister sought to boost the impact of the National Strategy by issuing a personal challenge on dementia. One aspect of that challenge was based on his view that communities and services need to be more Dementia-Friendly.
- 5 The Audit Commission publication 'Don't Stop Me Now' encourages local authorities to 'age-proof' their services which can have benefits not only for older people but also for younger people, those with lower literacy, families with children, wheelchair users, people with disabilities and people with long term conditions.
- 6 The Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) have produced 'The Four Cornerstones Model' to help local authorities and their partners to ask questions about their communities and services to assess how dementia-friendly they are by evaluating their Places, People, Resources and Networks. The LGIU Policy Briefing can be seen at Appendix A.
- 7 The Four Cornerstones model clearly shows the potential for local authority services, beyond health and social care, to support local residents. The report states that it is important that councils take a corporate and strategic approach to dementia, harnessing this potential to support people with dementia and their carers to live well for longer.

Small Changes Make a Big Difference

- 8 How staff respond to people who may be experiencing these kinds of problems makes the biggest difference. People with dementia all differ in the way they experience their dementia, but generally speaking in public situations people with dementia may have a range of difficulties including:
 - Problems remembering what they are doing
 - Difficulties in communicating clearly
 - Problems handling money
 - Problems navigating in complex or confusing environments
- 9 Making small changes to physical environments can also make a big difference for anyone with dementia, a disability or impairment. By simplifying signage, flooring, lighting etc. we can create the clearest picture for people.
- 10 As people get older, there are a number of changes in their senses' sensitivity simply due to ageing; these are heightened for people with dementia and can deteriorate more quickly. These include a reduction in: peripheral vision; sensitivity to colour contrasts; speed adapting to lighting levels and depth perception.

Sevenoaks District Council – Dementia & Community Friendly

- 11 This Council has already taken some positive steps, as part of the Districtwide Dementia Friendly Communities Project, to implement best practice and lead the way to becoming more dementia and therefore community friendly. This work includes:
- This Council, in partnership with Kent County Council project officers, have set up Dementia Friendly Forums in the District, with the first two Forums now operating in Swanley and Sevenoaks Town. The Forums meet regularly and bring together people with dementia, carers, local businesses, residents and support organisations to develop local action plans. The aim of the forums is to raise awareness of dementia and work with local communities to enhance facilities for dementia sufferers to ensure they can continue to access services and facilities after diagnosis.
 - This Council has provided 'Dementia Friend' training for over 200 staff, Members and partners and continues to run monthly training sessions. This training helps people to understand dementia and how it can affect people as well as providing information on support organisations locally and how to refer for support.
 - On 9 December 2014, SDC Officers held a Stakeholders' meeting to gain information from people experiencing dementia on what this Council can offer to become more dementia friendly. The meeting was facilitated by The Good Care Group, a local dementia company who provides 24 hour dementia care and attendees included Dementia Nurses, people with dementia, their carers and family members and the Seniors Action Forum. As part of this meeting, participants toured the reception areas and facilities, talk to the reception staff and gave honest open feedback regarding their experiences, observations and expertise. The afternoon was a great success with some excellent feedback and next steps captured.
 - The LGA have produced a building checklist, in partnership with 'Innovations in Dementia'. This provides a checklist of small changes that can have a major impact on improving accessibility within public areas for people with dementia and other impairments. As a result of the findings gathered from the Stakeholders meeting and from LGA guidance, Officers are starting to assess public areas and facilities to see if small changes can be made such as consistent lighting and flooring, clear signage, adequate seating and further frontline staff training.
 - Reception staff are currently conducting a survey to try to ascertain the numbers of people using reception who may benefit from such small improvements. This includes not only those who may be affected by dementia, but also people with a physical disability and parents using buggies or prams. The outcome of the survey will be known by the end of March 2015.

Key Implications

Financial

- 12 This report is for information only and does not recommend any financial resources at this stage. If any environmental changes were to be made in the future as a result of this report, some financial resources may be required.

Non-Financial

- 13 Some Officer resources have been allocated to this project from within existing healthy living work already being undertaken by this Council.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 14 This report is for information only. There are no legal implications relating to this report.

Risk	Mitigation
This report is for information only.	If any changes to the building or environment take place as a result of the Stakeholders Finding Report, full risk assessments and Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out.

Equality Assessment

- 15 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

- 16 Members are asked to note this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – LGiU Policy Briefing – Dementia Friendly Communities

Background Papers:

Local Government Association – Developing Dementia Friendly Communities: Learning and Guidance for Local Authorities:

http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=b6401bb0-31a8-4d57-823b-1fde6a09290e&groupId=10180

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