

Decision Maker: ADULT CARE AND HEALTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 23 November 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: TACKLING LONELINESS STRATEGY 2022-2026

Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation

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Chief Officer: Kim Carey, Interim Director, Adult Social Care

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report presents for approval a draft “Tackling Loneliness Strategy”.
 - 1.2 A report was taken to Adult Care and Health PDS in June 2021 outlining how the Council and partners had been mitigating loneliness since the Loneliness summit held in 2019.
 - 1.3 Members were advised that the Council would now move forward with key stakeholders to produce a “Tackling Loneliness” strategy for the borough. A series of co-production workshops were held during September to October 2021 to engage with partners to develop this strategy.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the draft Tackling Loneliness Strategy 2022–2026.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence, Excellent Council, Safe Bromley, Healthy Bromley
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Adult Care and Health Portfolio
 4. Total current budget for this head: £
 5. Source of funding:
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional):
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All vulnerable adults and older people within Bromley
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 As part of its commitment to mitigate loneliness, Bromley Council has acted as a systems leader to bring together the work that is being carried out by statutory, private, and voluntary partners throughout Bromley. In 2019 it hosted a successful Loneliness Summit as part of this role.
- 3.2 Since then Bromley Council has continued to work to mitigate loneliness through its strategic priorities outlined in the Ageing Well in Bromley Strategy and the Children and Families' Early Help Strategy. In addition, re-commissioning services such as Bromley Well, Learning Disability community day services and domiciliary care all include mitigating loneliness as a key priority to enable residents to access community, social and leisure activities.
- 3.3 During the pandemic, when the issues of loneliness and social isolation were brought into focus more openly during the periods of lockdown, the Council responded through the COVID-19 Shielding, Volunteering and Assistance Programme. Residents were supported in many ways, including befriending, by volunteers organised by Community Links Bromley. The voluntary sector and services such as libraries moved many of their activities on-line or kept in touch with existing clients through individual phone calls.
- 3.4 A summary report was presented to Adults and Health PDS in June 2021 to provide an update on all the activity undertaken since the Summit held in 2019. As lockdown restrictions have eased this is an opportune time to learn from what all sectors in Bromley are already doing to mitigate loneliness and to review how we can work in partnership to improve how we can support those at risk of or experiencing loneliness.

Co-Production

- 3.5 As the Bromley Tackling Loneliness Strategy will be delivered with our partners across the statutory, private, and voluntary sectors, four co-production workshops were held in September/October 2021. Over 50 people were in attendance including officers from all departments across the Council, representatives from the library service, social prescribing, housing associations, faith groups, user-led groups, and the voluntary sector.
- 3.6 The workshops were hosted by Cllr Aisha Cuthbert, Executive Assistant to the Leader of the Council, supported by the Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation division. The focus of the workshops was: to agree the direction and scope of the strategy based upon national data and [A connected society](#) the government's national strategy; map existing services and activities to mitigate loneliness and consider other approaches and best practice which could be implemented in Bromley. The informed, and often passionate, discussion at each workshop showed the commitment of each individual and organisation to supporting those residents at risk of or experiencing loneliness.
- 3.7 The outcomes from the workshops were:
- Recognition of Bromley Council's role as 'systems leader' that is supported by partner organisations and key stakeholders in the borough to help deliver the strategy.
 - Agreement that the strategy should be an all-age strategy covering the whole life course focusing on recognised trigger points that can put people at risk of experiencing loneliness. It was also agreed to mirror the themes in the national strategy.
 - The need to bring together a recognised source of information about all activities and groups in the borough that mitigate loneliness, which is easily accessible to both residents themselves and those who signpost individuals to appropriate activities.

- Other issues raised included co-ordinating and disseminating information about accessible transport and community venues.

3.8 The Strategy, which incorporates these outcomes, brings together:

- our understanding of loneliness, social isolation, and social wellbeing,
- what we know about loneliness, who is more likely to be at risk of experiencing loneliness and its impact and
- the three key priorities which are the focus of delivering the strategy.

3.9 Once the Strategy has been agreed, further work will be undertaken to develop an Action Plan.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

The Bromley Tackling Loneliness Strategy will help to mitigate loneliness for people throughout the life course who are at risk of, or experiencing, loneliness. This will prevent a greater likelihood of developing negative physical, emotional, and social outcomes as well as an adverse financial impact for individuals and families.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications arising directly from this report. Any policy implications arising from the implementation of the various actions contained within the plan will be reported to the PDS Committee separately.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any financial implications arising from the implementation of the various actions contained within the plan will be reported to the PDS Committee separately.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Any legal implications arising from the implementation of the various actions contained within the plan will be reported to the PDS Committee separately.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications, Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	N/A