

## **BRIEFING TO THE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE**

### **Report Title: District Dementia Champion**

**Report Author: Oliver Collins**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

#### **Background:**

In September 2016, the Council discussed and deferred a motion regarding improving the support given to those suffering from, and those caring for those suffering from Dementia in Oldham. The full motion wording is below

This Council notes that

- Dementia is one of the biggest health issues facing the UK
- In Oldham, over 2,500 people are estimated to be living with dementia
- This condition will affect one in three people over the age of 65, with that figure is predicted to rise by two thirds by 2030
- Dementia is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms that might be exhibited by people living with one of any number of diseases of the brain; it is not a natural part of aging
- Dementia is not just about losing your memory; it can also affect thinking, communication, inhibitions, and everyday tasks
- With the right care, support and understanding from those around them that it is possible for someone to live well with dementia and to continue to contribute to community life

Council commends the work that has been done so far in our borough specially:

- The training of well over 5,000 Dementia Friends across the borough
- Gaining recognition from the Alzheimer's Society as one of just fifty communities in England as 'Working towards a dementia friendly community'
- Establishing the Oldham Dementia Partnership and the Oldham Dementia Action Alliance
- Creating an Enhanced Memory Service to support people living with dementia and their carers

But Council also believes that as a major public-service organisation we can do so much more, particularly in:

- Delivering more dementia-friendly services with specially trained staff and from dementia-friendly buildings
- Promoting a more dementia-friendly transport network in order that people living with dementia and their carers can better access them

Council therefore calls upon the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to:

- Appoint a senior officer in each directorate as a Dementia Champion to lead on this issue within their directorate, with specific responsibility for ensuring that:
  - All new Council staff appointed to customer-facing roles, particularly those in the Call Centre, the First Contact centre and our public libraries and parks, participate in mandatory Dementia Friends training as part of their induction.
  - Existing staff in customer-facing roles participate in Dementia Friends training within twelve months.
  - Environmental checks are carried out in all of the public buildings and open spaces within their directorate's control to ensure that they are Dementia Friendly.
  - The Dementia Friendly logo is displayed prominently at these locations once they are determined to be dementia friendly.
  - Their directorate, and the Dementia Friendly public buildings and open spaces, are registered separately as individual entities with the Oldham Dementia Action Alliance, in addition to the Council being itself registered corporately.
  - A report of progress for that directorate is prepared for circulation to elected members and for publication on the Council's website during Dementia Awareness Week in May 2017.
- Ask these officers to work with the national charity Making Space and the local groups Let's Be Heard and the Springboard Oldham Dementia Carers Group to support the delivery of staff training, the carrying out of environmental checks, and the completion of the registration process.
- Carry out a review of Council employment practices to ensure that best practice is being followed in offering staff living with dementia, or caring for a family member living with dementia, appropriate ongoing support and flexible working arrangements.
- Ask our partner organisations, Oldham Community Leisure, Oldham Mio-Care, and Unity Partnership, to make similar commitments.
- Create a new Dementia Hub in an accessible, dementia-friendly Council building by providing accommodation to co-locate relevant staff from the following organisations – the Alzheimer's Society, Age UK Oldham, Making Space and the Memory Assessment Service – and meeting rooms and activity areas for people living with dementia and their carers.
- Investigate the merits and practicalities of introducing, and promoting, a Dementia Buddy wristband scheme with representatives from the emergency services and Transport for Greater Manchester. This scheme is operational and actively promoted within the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan.
- Create a transport sub-group of the Oldham Dementia Action Alliance to look specifically at how bus, tram and taxi transport can be made more dementia-friendly.
- Urge schools to include information about living with dementia into the local Personal Social and Health Education curriculum delivered to pupils to help develop their understanding of dementia.
- Council is also asked to appoint an elected member as a Dementia Champion to lead on this issue for Council.

The motion was referred to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and in turn referred to that committee's Health Scrutiny sub-committee. A task group was established to look at the motion, consisting of elected members and service officers from the Council, CCG and lead providers. The group met and provided its recommendations back to Council in September 2017.

One of the recommendations from the group was that, as well as an elected member being nominated as a Dementia Champion for the Council (Cllr Vita Price has taken on this role as her role as Deputy Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing), it would be worthwhile if each of the six District Executives in the borough would appoint their own District Dementia Champion.

### **What would a District Dementia Champion do?**

The idea behind each of the Districts appointing a Dementia champion, is that it would ensure that within each of the six districts, it is guaranteed that at least one of the elected members is aware of the challenges those suffering from Dementia face, and understand what support is required and available to both them and their carers in the borough.

The nominated elected member will be supported to develop their understanding of Dementia, to become a Dementia Friend or Dementia Friends Champion, be involved in the development of a new Dementia Strategy for Oldham and to act as a key point of contact for fellow councillors who may have questions regarding Dementia.

Should there be the demand, Districts are fine to nominate more than one elected member to be a District Dementia Champion.

### **Recommendations:**

The District Executive is asked to nominate an elected member to become the Dementia Champion for their district.