

Notice of Motion

Background

The UK is in a mental health crisis.

1 in 4 people will suffer a mental health problem each year whilst 1 in 6 will experience a common mental health problem (anxiety/depression) each week.

Despite high-profile battles with depression being revealed in the media, there is still a widespread stigma which needs to be overcome.

According to NHS statistics, Chorley & South Ribble has seen a large increase in the number of people aged 18+ being diagnosed with a form of depression. In 2012/13, the figure was 1,758.

At the end of 2018/19, the figure was 3,439. The average percentage for new depression diagnoses in England is 1.7% and Chorley & South Ribble is deemed as being "significantly worse" with 2.3%.

In addition, the economic cost in England of dealing with mental health issues is an estimated £105 billion.

According to a survey undertaken in 2017 by *Public Health England*, 12.5% of 5 to 19 year olds had at least one mental disorder when assessed (2017), and 5% met the criteria for 2 or more mental disorders.

The *Mental Health Taskforce Strategy* document states that "mental health problems start early in life. Half of all mental health problems have been established by the age of 14, rising to 75% by age 24."

Aim

The overall aim is to help people recognise and understand how important our mental health is and where and how they can seek help.

Action required

I am therefore calling upon the Council to consider appointing an elected member as a *Champion for Mental Health Awareness*.

This role will require discussion of how mental health issues can have such a negative impact on the lives of people who suffer.

The stigma and misconceptions about mental health also need to be addressed.

An opportunity to communicate the ways people can help themselves and where to turn if they need help.

A councillor undertaking this role also provides a vital link between the council and the community.

How will it help?

I believe that this role would be hugely beneficial to people of all ages in the borough.

The opportunities for increased partnership working via stakeholders including Lancashire County Council, the NHS and community groups/organisations would

help increase awareness and give young people the information they require to help them become more aware of looking after their own mental health and wellbeing.

Conclusion

Awareness is the key to educating people so they understand exactly how their mental health can be affected by a variety of different things. Poor mental health can also lead to poor physical health and as reported so much in the media, it can also end lives - suicide is the biggest killer of men under age 45.

I believe it is our responsibility as a community to help address this problem and end the narrow-minded stigma surrounding mental health. Just because an illness is not visible, does not mean that it is non-existent.

Depression, anxiety, bi-polar disorder, borderline personality disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic attacks, eating disorders, psychosis - these are all very real and sadly, all too common in today's society.

Chorley Borough Council therefore agree to appoint an elected member to be a Mental Health Awareness champion tasked with supporting and signposting people with mental health issues, as well as working with organisations who support people with mental health issues. This will provide a more effective link and strong collaboration in tackling this important problem.

Proposed by Councillor Gillian Sharples

Seconded by Councillor Aiex Hilton