

**Name of Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**Title: Update on Scrutiny of Loneliness**

To provide an update on the progress of the work of the Committee in looking at the issue of loneliness in Kirklees.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u> ?	Not Applicable
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Not Applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Not Applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	
Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a>	Councillor Musarrat Khan – Health and Social Care

**Electoral wards affected: All**

**Ward councillors consulted: Not applicable**

**Public or private: Public**

**Has GDPR been considered? No personal information included.**

## 1. Summary

This report provides an update on the work being undertaken by the Committee to scrutinise the issue of loneliness in Kirklees.

## 2. Information

2.1 In April 2022 the Committee agreed to undertake a piece of work in respect of loneliness in Kirklees pre and post-pandemic.

2.2 The scope for this work was established at the meeting of the Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022, as set out below:

- What is the relevant national and local research evidence on the prevalence of loneliness prior to the Covid- 19 pandemic and since the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What work has been carried out to date to address loneliness in Kirklees?
- What factors such as social isolation and other issues contribute towards loneliness and how have they changed during the pandemic?
- In light of the changes brought about by the pandemic, what are the protective factors, actions or interventions needed now? In the future?
- What are the key challenges to enabling meaningful social connection for people who are experiencing loneliness in Kirklees following the Covid-19 pandemic? How could responses to the challenges be developed or improved?
- How are Councillors/Officers/ services within the council identifying loneliness, offering support and signposting? Are there any plans in place to develop this? How could this be improved?
- How can ward Councillors and scrutiny further support this work go going forward?
- How are partners currently identifying loneliness, offering support and signposting? Are there any plans in place to develop this? How could this be improved?

2.3 Throughout 2022/23, the Committee held a number of formal and informal sessions to gather evidence, as follows:

- 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 - The Committee considered the role of the Partnership Loneliness Steering Group
- 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022 - A discussion about how best to develop local responses to identifying, signposting, and referring people who are lonely or isolated and how loneliness could be 'made everyone's business'.  
The discussion included consideration of the staff guidance document 'Conversations on Loneliness Guidance'. This had been shared with staff at the start of the pandemic and aimed to encourage and assist them to identify people who may be experiencing loneliness, through their normal interactions, and to be able to signpost them to appropriate support.

Members engaged with the following teams and partner organisations:

- Kirklees Partners' Loneliness Steering Group.
- Local Integrated Partnerships.
- Local Area Co-ordination.
- Public Health.
- Community Plus.
- The Council's Wellness Service.
- Luv2MeetU – a charity which operates on a national basis and organises events for small groups of people with learning disabilities or autism to address issues associated with independence and/or loneliness.

- Yorkshire Children's Centre – a local charity which takes a lead on the befriending partnership work in Kirklees.
- Age UK (Kirklees and Calderdale).
- Yorkshire Children's Centre.
- The Carer's Trust Mid Yorkshire – a local charity working to support unpaid family carers.
- Carer's Count - a not for profit organisation that supports unpaid carers within Kirklees.

and visited the following groups to discuss the issues with service users:

- Long Covid Support Group - one of two support groups run by the Council's Wellness Service based at Batley Town Hall.
- Young Onset Dementia Support Group – led by volunteers through Yorkshire Children's Centre.
- Carer's Count at two locations in North and South Kirklees
- Carer's Trust Listening Group.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

Not applicable to this report at this stage.

### **4. Consultees and their opinions**

As detailed above.

### **5. Next steps and timelines**

The Committee will give consideration to the terms of reference and will decide what additional work it wishes to undertake prior to giving consideration to any recommendations it may wish to put forward.

It is anticipated that a outcomes report will be submitted to the Committee in the early part of the next municipal year.

### **6. Officer recommendations and reasons**

That the ongoing work of the Committee and the approach set out in paragraph 5 be endorsed.

### **7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

Not applicable.

### **8. Contact officer**

Sheila Dykes, Principal Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer  
01484 221000 E-mail: [sheila.dykes@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:sheila.dykes@kirklees.gov.uk)

### **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

-

### **10. Service Director responsible**

Julie Muscroft, Service Director, Legal Governance and Monitoring