

Urgent Decision Taken on Behalf of Cabinet

Report to the Leader of the County Council

Report submitted by: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

The Establishment of a County Council Champion for Mental Health

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

The establishment of the role of county council Champion for Mental Health to support the Leader of the County Council and appropriate Cabinet Members.

Reason for Urgency

This decision is urgent and cannot await the next meeting of Cabinet on 5 November 2020. The reason for this is in recognition of the increasing prevalence of mental health issues amongst our population, especially reflecting the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic, it is important that the new champion be in post and able to make a contribution as soon as possible. This decision is therefore being taken on behalf of Cabinet by the Leader of the County Council in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order C16(1).

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve:

- (i) The establishment of the role of county council Champion for Mental Health.
- (ii) Subject to (i) above, the appointment of County Councillor Eddie Pope as the county council's Champion for Mental Health.

This decision should be implemented immediately for the purposes of Standing Order C29 as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the county council's responsibilities for the reasons set out above.

Background and Advice

The role of county council Champion was established in November 2002 with the appointment of Champions for Older People, Parishes and Young People. Subsequently, the roles of Champion for Disabled People; Armed Forces and Veterans; and Digital Inclusion were also established bringing the total number of Champion roles to six. The role of Champion for Digital Inclusion was disestablished in 2017 reducing the number of Champion roles to the current five.

Following a recommendation from the Health Scrutiny Committee, it is now proposed to establish a further role of Champion for Mental Health, bringing the number of County Council Champions to six.

Each Champion has a brief role definition, their main role being to support the Leader of the County Council and appropriate Cabinet Member(s) in relation to their specific areas. It is proposed that the role definition for the Champion for Mental Health will be developed in consultation with the relevant officers and Cabinet Members, and approved by the Director of Corporate Services.

If approved, Full Council will be asked to approve the necessary updates to the constitution and Members Allowance Scheme – see financial implications below.

It is proposed that, should approval be given to establish the role, County Councillor Eddie Pope be appointed.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risks in relation to the proposals set out in the report.

Financial

Each Champion is allocated a sum of £10,000 per annum to use at their discretion to finance activities associated with their area of responsibility. This may include organising and attending meetings or events, the payment of grants within the scope of their remit or to meet other incidental costs necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties.

The approval of expenditure to be incurred by a Champion has been delegated to the Director of Corporate Services.

Any unspent balance, up to a maximum of £2,500, can be carried over from one financial year to the next giving a maximum budget of £12,500.

The establishment of this new Champion role would, if approved, increase the overall annual budget from £50,000 to £60,000. The additional £10,000 cost in 2020/21 of the new role will be met from existing budget provision and the ongoing budget provision will be reflected in the next updated medium term financial strategy update.

A Champion is, under the county council's Members' Allowance Scheme, entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £5,482. Subject to the approval of the recommendations in this report, the proposed new Champion for Mental Health currently receives a Special Responsibility Allowance as Chair of the county council's Pension Fund Committee. He will, therefore, forgo the Special Responsibility Allowance normally payable to a Champion. As a result, there will be no change to the Members' Allowance Scheme budget.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Urgent Decision Taken on behalf of Cabinet: Declarations

Leader of the County Council

The Establishment of a County Council Champion for Mental Health

Original recommendation, as set out in the report, approved without amendment. Yes/No *

Original recommendation amended and decision as follows: Yes/No *

I have a pecuniary/non-pecuniary interest in this matter. Yes/No *

If an interest is declared please give details below:

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Leader of the County Council

13.10.2020

Chief Officer

I certify that this is an appropriate and accurate record within the terms of Standing Order C30(2) and (3) of the decision taken by the Cabinet Member.

.....
Dave Gorman, Senior Democratic Services Officer

13.10.2020

*Delete as appropriate

This decision is to be taken by more than one Cabinet Member and all relevant Cabinet Members must be in agreement with the decision