CAMPAIGN TO END LONELINESS IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

To: **Health and Wellbeing Board**

Meeting Date: **31 January 2019**

From: **Katharine Hartley - Consultant in Public Health**

Recommendations: **The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:**

        a) **Note for information the brief on the local campaign to end loneliness-'#50000reasons''**
        b) **Comment on the '#50000reasons' campaign impact**
        c) **Provide comments to support the development of the second phase of the campaign**

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief to the board on the launch of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough campaign to end loneliness - '#50000reasons' and to highlight the impact the campaign has made to date. Comments are also sought from the board on the next stage to ensure continuation of this campaign through 2019.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Loneliness is not necessarily about being alone, but about the perception of being alone and isolated. There is no universal definition of loneliness but Masi et al (2010) define loneliness as "the discrepancy between a person's desired and actual social relationships".

2.2 The prevalence of loneliness in older people in the UK has been estimated to be between 5 and 16% depending on the definition, with a median rate of 9 to 10% (Victor et al, 2005). Loneliness can impact on health in many ways and the harm it does has been likened to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. People experiencing loneliness are more likely to suffer from mental health problems and dementia.

2.3 At the national level, the issue of loneliness in the population was highlighted by the work of the late Jo Cox, MP with the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness set up after her death. The report 'Combating loneliness one conversation at a time' was a result of the Commission's work and made many recommendations that informed the Government's strategy for tackling loneliness, published in October 2018. The national strategy includes a review of the evidence base of what works in terms of interventions to address loneliness, but also focuses on inspiring societal change, awareness raising and tackling stigma associated with loneliness. HM Government has also made a commitment of £20 million to support voluntary, community and charitable organisations to tackle loneliness.

2.4 In parallel, the 'Campaign to End Loneliness' is a network of national, regional and local organisations and individuals working through community action, good practice, research and policy to tackle loneliness in older age.

2.5 Locally, there are 50,000 people over the age of 65 in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough who may be at risk of loneliness. This data is based on the number of single occupancy households in the population aged over 65. Many older people can go a month or more without talking to a friend, family member or neighbour.

2.6 The public health led 'Ageing Well' steering group has identified loneliness and social isolation as a key priority – and as part of its work has supported the County Council's communication team to develop the '#50000reasons' Christmas campaign.

2.7 Funding of £10K was provided by the National Campaign to End Loneliness and the campaign was shaped with support and involvement from a range of organisations; Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Peterborough City Council (PCC), District councils, local NHS and voluntary organisations including the Health and Wellbeing Network, Care Network and Age UK.

2.8   The campaign provided tips and advice to encourage people to make small acts of kindness that can have a big impact on the 50,000 older people at risk of loneliness across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

2.9   An integrated communications approach was used to promote the campaign from its launch on 10th December 2018, involving traditional media, partner channels and social and digital media. Partners received a toolkit including articles, social media, graphics and videos. The social media campaign included Facebook and Twitter, from which regular tweets and messages were sent out. The campaign also has a web page with information including tips on what individuals can do to help and support older people who may be experiencing loneliness and a community toolkit, developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council for tackling social isolation and loneliness. The toolkit includes case studies as real-life examples of what communities can do, for example; the Haslingfield and Harlton luncheon.

3.   MAIN ISSUES

3.1   The response to the launch of the #50000reasons campaign has been measured mostly through statistics obtained from social media usage. It is of course difficult to know the geographical reach of the campaign through analysis of social media data as the campaign materials are accessible by anyone, anywhere with an internet connection.

3.2   The following data shows the social media impact of the campaign between 10th December 2018 and 3rd January 2019. The figures are for the CCC account only. Reach will be much higher as it was shared with partners across their channels.

3.3   **Facebook**

- Facebook posts reached 30,902 accounts with 650 clicks, likes and shares.
- Facebook Ad (Cost £100.00) reached 10,027 accounts with 328 clicks, likes and shares
- Video on Facebook was watched 5000 times

3.4   **Twitter**

Estimated statistics of the #50000reasons hashtag according to Tweet Reach analytical tool:

- 155 tweets,
- 87 contributors,
- 1.9 million potential account impressions.
- An estimated 800,000 accounts could have been reached.

The twitter figures are high due to two key influencers with large audiences who shared the messages. The top 'retweeter' had 217,000 followers.

3.5   **CCC website**
652 page views (excludes CCC staff) to the website.

3.6 **Television**

The campaign also received good local media coverage including a feature on 'Look East', aired on 14 December. Typical 'Look East' audience is 250,000 to 300,000 per episode.

3.7 **Radio**

Radio Cambridgeshire had two features for the campaign - one on the Breakfast Show and one on the Jeremy Sallis Show. Audience figures are not readily available but BBC Radio Cambridgeshire generally has 40,000 – 60,000 listeners to the breakfast show.

3.8 **Next steps**

The #50000reasons campaign was the 'first peak' in the overall ambition to raise awareness and promote resources to tackle loneliness. A second peak for this campaign is now being planned by the team in order to continue the momentum, spread the messages further and to potentially reach out to cover issues of loneliness and isolation across all ages. This ties in with national evidence showing that even within young people aged 16-24, 59% experience loneliness at some point.
Going forward, it will be important to ensure that the messages for this campaign are consistent, and the toolkit is designed for this purpose.

3.9 A consensus statement for the campaign is being finalised and will be used as a precursor to a pledge for individuals and organisations to sign up to. This will help to focus the messages for the campaign and prompt people to take action and organisations to create opportunities and/or join in with community events to tackle loneliness.

The second peak to promote the campaign will aim to bring organisations and communities together at events to promote the messages and sign the pledge.

3.10 It is clear all sectors have a role to play in addressing loneliness locally yet strong leadership to drive collaborative efforts is currently not established. The campaign also needs to be embedded in clinical and organisational networks and support to achieve this would be welcome.

3.11 Local data on loneliness is lacking and therefore evaluation of the impact of the campaign will be difficult apart from data obtained from social media viewings, tweets, retweets and sharing messages. Ideally a population based survey would have been attempted prior to the campaign and at some stage during or after the campaign to measure the impact and reach of the campaign messages and to understand who is affected by loneliness and/or social isolation and how big a problem this is locally.

3.12 There is a commitment to map community and organisational interventions across the county to identify existing good practice, for example the work carried out through 'supported housing' . This would provide a comprehensive picture of what is currently available and where this support is provided. A mapping exercise will help us to identify gaps and will be a first step in developing a strategy to address loneliness locally.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

4.1 The campaign to end loneliness is relevant to priorities 2, 4, and 6 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- Priority 2: Support older people to be independent, safe and well.
- Priority 4: Create a safe environment and help to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.
- Priority 6: Work together effectively.

5. SOURCES

Source Documents	Location
The local campaign to end loneliness, information and resources can be found at the following web address:	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/be-well/resources-and-campaigns/50-000-reasons/
Video 50,000 reasons:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhXHRc7Lbj0&feature=youtu.be
HM Government Strategy for ending Loneliness:	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/750909/6.4882_DCMS_Loneliness_Strategy_web_Update.pdf