

# Community Wellbeing Champions Project

Health and Wellbeing Board  
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Background

# Context

- Set up in 2021 during Covid-19 pandemic
- Covid spotlighted and worsened health inequalities
- Leicester became area of 'enduring transmission'
- Environment of misinformation and mistrust
- Engagement and relationships needed strengthening
- Community champions – 'best practice' approach

# Aims

- Tackle health inequities and achieving better physical and mental health and wellbeing for everyone
- Reach the public with health promotion and protection messages and services
- Gain better quality insight into health and wellbeing needs and challenges in having them met

# Approach

- Create a network of Community Wellbeing Champions drawn from across Leicester's diverse communities
- Communication, information sharing, empowerment
- Engagement, research, increasing understanding
- Training, upskilling, increasing resources
- Connecting, collaborating, increasing impact

# Principles

- People, communities, and relationships
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
- Ladder of participation/engagement
- Proportionate universalism
- Anti-oppressive practice
- Open, flexible, inclusive

Champions

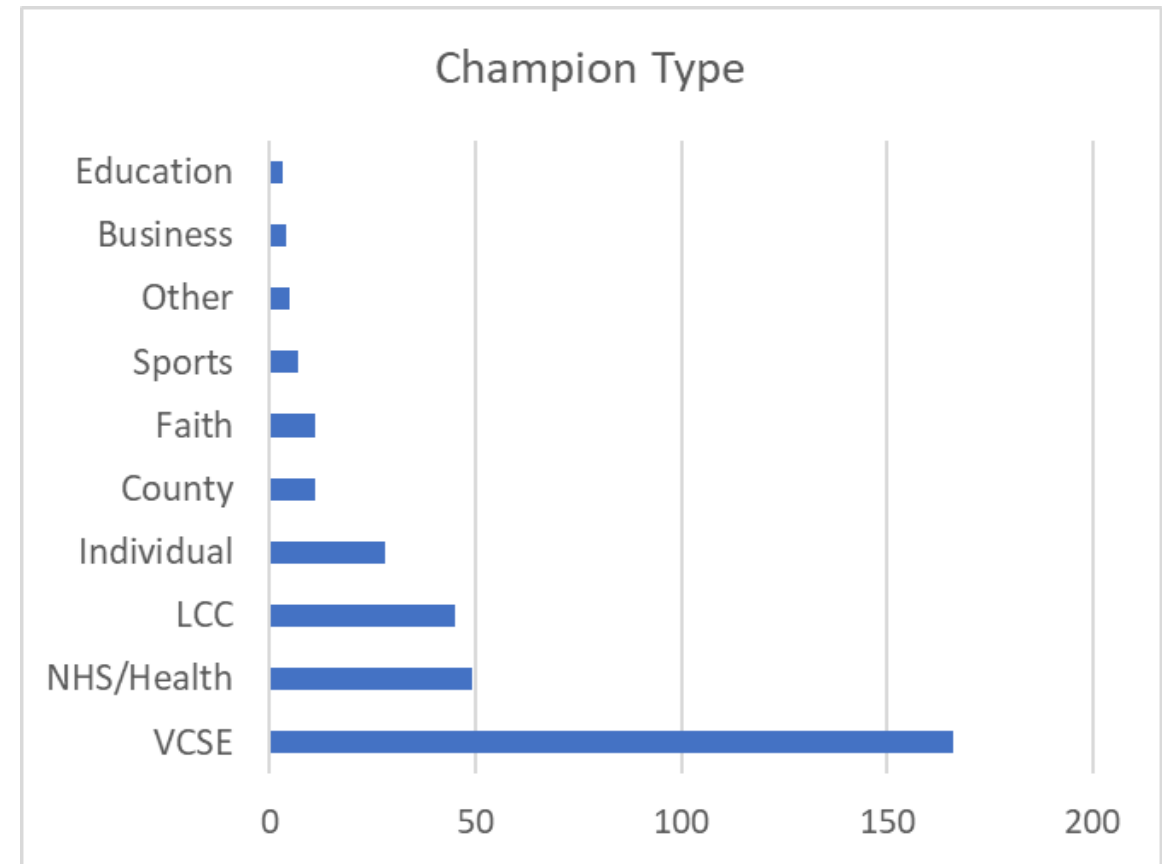


# Community Wellbeing Champions

- Organisations and individuals that promote and support people's health and wellbeing at a community level
- Includes:
  - VCSE sector and faith organisations
  - Other organisations such as sports clubs and businesses
  - Trusted community figures and passionate individuals
  - Professionals, practitioners, and partners

# Leicester CWC Network

- Public Health community engagement partnership
- Mailing list (at 20.12.23)= 329 members
- At least 145 organisations
- Community figures (VCSE, faith, etc.) = 66%



# Partnership 'landscape'

## CITY

- VCSE & faith sector engagement team/mailing list (LCC)
- Anti-Poverty Network (LCC with VAL)

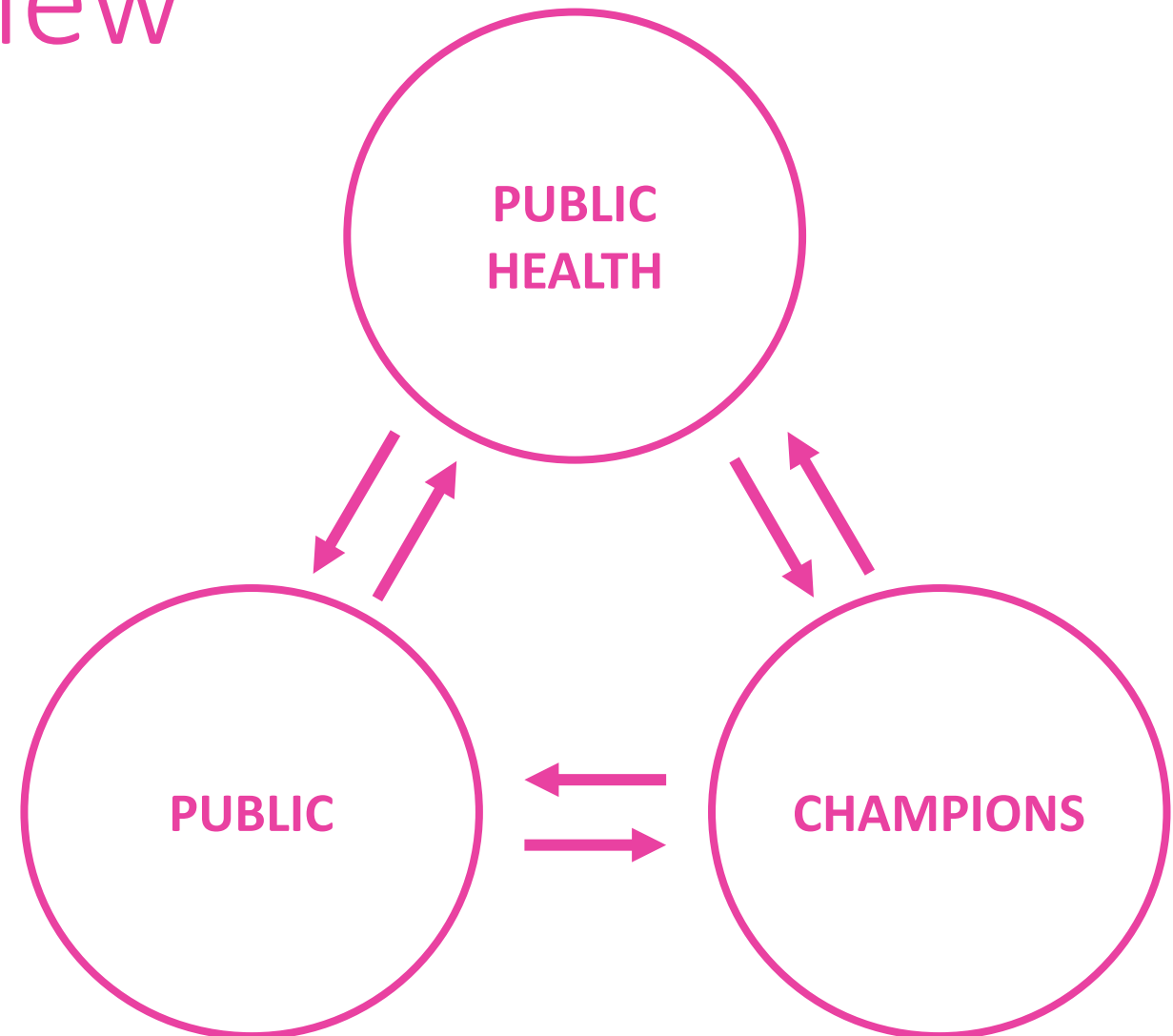
## CITY, COUNTY, AND RUTLAND

- VCSE Alliance (ICB)
- Better Mental Health For All Network (LPT with VCSE)

Engagement

# Engagement overview

- Three dimensions:
  - Engaging directly with the public
  - Engaging with champions to reach the public
  - Engaging with champions in their own right
- Two-way relationships and communication



# Community engagement

- 'How Are You, Leicester?' health & wellbeing survey 2022
- Community events – information stalls promoting range of Public Health services and messages
- Engagement for Public Health programmes:
  - Sexual health services recommissioning consultation
  - Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight survey
  - Gambling Harms Needs Assessment

# Champion engagement

- Network emails: weekly round-up and ad-hoc extras for specific purposes (e.g., funding opportunities)
- Monthly online forum: open sessions covering range of health and wellbeing subjects; 13 held covering 30 topics
- In-person conferences: 3 held, 1 upcoming (February)
- Attendance at partners' networking events
- Issue-specific engagement: e.g. cost-of-living impact

Achievements



# Outputs

- How are you, Leicester? consultation
- Network forums and conferences
- Covid-19 Vaccine Confidence Programme
- Help Leicester Stay Warm/Connected
- Cost-of-Living crisis – engagement for Incident Management Team
- Super Vaccinator Project
- Facilitating Public Health engagement (champions and residents)
- Facilitating cross-network connections

# Impact

- Difficulty of measuring outcomes – direct v indirect
- Improving reach – organisations and public
- Increasing engagement with/from underheard and underserved
- Raising Public Health's profile – foundation for building trust
- Increasing connectivity – e.g. link training with Champion
- Strengthening crisis response infrastructure – e.g. cost of living
- Influencing practice – approaches to engagement

# Learning

- City has many community assets, but more needed for ‘gaps’
- Growing demand for support, increasingly complex needs
- Volunteer recruitment and retention is a challenge
- Information-sharing and communication vitally important
- ‘Soft’ engagement needed to build relationships and trust
- Initiatives have impact but must be tailored and sustained
- Funding criteria, process, etc. not always helpful to partners

Looking Ahead

# Development points and challenges

- Increasing presence and profile in communities
- Expanding network coverage – unreached groups/areas
- Strengthening insight gathering, sharing, and use
- Increasing training and information resources
- Developing equitable engagement and funding framework
- Strengthening joint-working with partner networks
- Exploring introduction of Volunteer CWC roles

# Resourcing

- CWC Team = Project Manager and Programme Officer
- Capacity can be an issue – small team
- Public Health core budget
- Covers CWC Team and engagement costs
- Currently funded until March 2026
- Consideration needed on maintaining work and impact

# Recommendations

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- Board notes the project's progress and achievements
- Board considers response to development points/challenges:
  - Using insight to make a meaningful impact on health inequity
  - Achieving sustainable, equitable, simplified funding processes
  - Boosting capacity now and sustaining the work for the future
- Board advises on other considerations/needs/links for supporting delivery of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy



Questions

# Contacts

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