

January 2014

Local Authorities Mental Health Challenge

Leicester councillors have signed a pledge to promote mental health across Leicester recognising the key role the council can play in helping tackle this important issue. (Picture shows Councillors Cooke and Palmer signing the pledge)



Mental health problems are common with 1 in 6 people experiencing a mental health problem in any given year. People with a severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK. The pledge highlights the key role the council and councillors can play, as there is often a circular relationship between mental health and issues such as housing, employment, family problems or debt.

The council has signed up to the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge led by a range of mental health groups including: Centre for Mental Health; Mental Health Foundation; Mind; Rethink Mental Illness; Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.

Improving mental health is a key priority for the city council though the health and wellbeing strategy. This pledge shows councillors have a key role in promoting good mental health and encouraging people to talk more about mental health and wellbeing.

Councillors signed a pledge committing to:

1. Appoint an elected member as “mental health champion” across the council.
2. Identify a “lead officer” for mental health to link in with colleagues across the council.
3. Follow the implementation framework for the mental health strategy where it is relevant to the council’s work and local needs.
4. Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community.
5. Work with the NHS to integrate health and social care support.
6. Promote wellbeing and initiate and support action on public mental health.
7. Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community and to tackle stigma.
8. Encourage positive mental health in our schools, colleges and workplaces.
9. Proactively engage and listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.
10. Sign up to the Time to Change pledge.