

Stockton on Tees Borough Council (the Council) remains committed to working collaboratively with all partners and stakeholders to improve the lives of people who have mental health needs and look forward to working alongside local organisations to reflect on the specific recommendations within the Healthwatch report for how they can be implemented in the future.

The 4 priorities in the recently published update of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2021-2025 mirror several the recommendations identified in the report from Healthwatch: ensuring people have the right level of support at the right time, partnership working with the NHS to ensure improved services and working collaboratively with VCSE partners to effectively respond to the needs of the people in the borough.

Alongside the work currently being undertaken to review our holistic approach to engagement across Adult Social Care, including the establishment of a Mental Health Forum, the Council is well placed to move this agenda forwards.

The VCSE sector is happy to support the four priorities in the Council's adult care strategy 2021-25:

- To provide support to people to prevent, reduce or delay the need for ongoing support and maximise their independence
- To ensure people can get the right level and type of support at the right time
- To develop and support our staff and to support providers of social care services to develop and support their staff
- To work with, and within, communities

Our approach is to support and facilitate collaboration and co-production between service providers, and between providers and members of the community. The establishment of a multi-agency, multi-sector mental health forum will enable a clear focus on therapies, joined-up service delivery in communities, and awareness-raising to all members of the community.

Summary:

Work will begin in January 2022 to begin discussions between providers and local communities to enable collaborative approaches to be imbedded across Stockton to ensure anyone requiring mental health support can be supported in a timely manner with access to the right care in the right place. This is an exciting time for partners working across Stockton and resources provided by NHSE will support the implementation to this.

Our joint commitment across Voluntary Services, Local Authority and NHS is:

Our Stockton commitment is:

- To continue working collaboratively to overcome the barriers faced by our local communities in accessing and receiving mental health support. We will do this by developing a working group which will meet regularly including the development of the Mental Health Forum putting together an action plan for this.
- To co-produce our new ways of working with representation from local people across Stockton
- To pull together as partners to deliver joint care and intervention which is delivered in the heart of our local communities

- To further raise awareness of what mental health support is available within Stockton and how to access services.