

## **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER: MAYOR CHRIS COOKE**

**DATE OF MEETING: 29 November 2023**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members on areas of activity within my portfolio including performance against strategic priorities.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**Strategic Priority: *We will work to address the causes of vulnerability and inequalities in Middlesbrough and safeguard and support those made vulnerable.***

#### **Health Inequalities Panel**

Health inequality across Middlesbrough is a significant issue as noted in my previous Executive Report to Council on 18/09/23. The make-up of the panel is now complete with the first of the regular meetings taking place on 23/10/23. The first meeting centred upon drilling into the optics of health data for the respective wards. We are currently in the process of collating the available community groups and activities so that we can provide greater awareness to the residents of the opportunities available to enhance nutritional, physical and mental health. We also seek to invite a representative from local schools so that we can work collaboratively at tackling health inequality across young people.

#### **Illegal vapes**

There has been a worrying rise in children collapsing in schools after using vapes that are suspected to contain drugs. Several vapes have been seized from a school in Middlesbrough that is currently being tested for Class B substances. Young people are purchasing vapes through unregulated means such as Snapchat which has resulted in young people consuming vapes with little to no information in what it contains. Parents and carers are asked to be vigilant and proactive in protecting and regulating the safety and health of our young people. The police are currently collaborating with schools to share intelligence on this matter and urge anyone with information on individuals supplying illegal vapes to call Cleveland Police 101.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### **MHA Communities Teesside 80th Birthday**

An event was held at MHA Montpellier Manor Care Home to celebrate MHA turning 80. The day included a special memorial service and bench paying tribute to remember those they have lost, followed by a celebration with entertainment with drinks and nibbles. During the event, I also had an opportunity to take a tour around Montpellier Manor Care Home where I observed the small touches that made residents feel welcomed and at home.



### **Dementia Friends Celebration**

This event celebrated organisations joining or renewing their commitment to being Dementia Friends. Dementia Friends ensures that organisations are trained to interact with people with dementia in a way in which they feel valued, understood and supported.

A powerful and emotive speech was delivered by a wife who is caring for her husband with dementia. She drew upon the daily challenges she faces and the difficulty of seeing the person you know change so significantly. Often the carer behind the person with dementia is lost so it was incredibly important, to hear her experience. The speech also reaffirmed the importance of support groups to alleviate the pressures faced by carers.



## Headlight Project Workshop

The Headlight Project work to provide counselling to those bereaved by suicide and preventative and education training. They explored how grief by suicide has a different dimension to other forms of grief. The Headlight Project therefore provide specific counselling that addresses those unique feelings and needs. The North East has the highest suicide rate in England and is colloquially known as the suicide capital. In response, the Headlight Project works across the community from schools to workplaces to raise awareness. The Headlight Project are currently working closely with Middlesbrough Council to raise awareness around 'Blue Monday' which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January which statistically is the day with the highest number of suicides.



NAME: Chris Cooke

DATE: 02/11/23