

Item 4

30th January 2020



Glasgow City Council

Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement
City Policy Committee

Report by Councillor Allan Gow, Convener, Men's Mental
Health Working Group

Contact: Allan Gow Ext: 74238

MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH WORKING GROUP

Purpose of Report:

The report provides an update to the Elected Members of the WECCE on the recent consultations with third sector service providers in the field of Men's Mental Health.

Recommendations:

Committee is asked to:

- Note the outcomes of the consultations.
- Refer this paper to the political groups in the Council for their consideration and further development.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report seeks to update WECCE on progress made by the Men's Mental Health Working Group.

2 Background

- 2.1 With reference to the minutes of the Council of 31st October 2019 when it agreed to establish a short life cross party working group to establish how best Council might support grass-roots and community efforts to look at mental health and related support services through the lens of combating toxic masculinity and that Council further instructed that this working group report to the Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement City Policy Committee by February 2020, there was submitted a report by the Director of Governance and Solicitor to the Council setting out the arrangements for the establishment and Terms of Reference of the working group.

- 2.2 After discussion, the working group

(a) noted the report and the membership of the Working Group, as follows:-
Councillor Allan Gow (Convener), Councillor Euan Blockley, Councillor Michael Cullen, Bailie Annette Christie, Councillor Gary Gray, Councillor Maggie McTernan, Bailie Russell Robertson and Councillor Allan Young; and

(b) approved the terms of reference of this Working Group, as follows:-
"to establish how best the Council might support grass-roots and community efforts to look at mental health and related support services through the lens of combating toxic masculinity.

3 Progress

- 3.1 Two sessions were held, supported by senior officers from Committee Services, Human Relations and from Glasgow HSCP. Three organisations agreed to attend the sessions and these were Brothers In Arms (Dan Proverbs), The Coach House Trust (Don Jamieson) and Mind the Men (Gary McDonald and John Baines).
- 3.2 Each session was open and informal, allowing the groups to share their journey from creation to active operation and to allow members and officers to seek additional information.
- 3.3 Each organisation had a slightly different model of service and their journey from concept to operation was different and varied. Their positive impact in assisting men who sought their help was, however, self-evident and substantive.

3.4 There were a number of points made in regard to potential for the Council and partners to assist grass roots organisations in their early days and there were similarities across the organisations:

- “Crisis” services were often available (e.g. Samaritans), however “prevention” services were much harder to find.
- Groups were often using word of mouth to make their service known. This could be assisted by the Council, NHS & Housing partners considering use of their own social media platforms to make citizens aware of the services, perhaps also enhanced by ward level “community What’s on” sections being developed or enhanced where existing.
- Access to physical meeting space, particularly in the early stages of development, was an issue. In some communities, there are no alternatives to Council, NHS & Housing partner assets but the cost of access and time taken for lets was sometimes a barrier. Could the Council, NHS & Housing partners consider a streamlined process with reduced (or nil) cost for start-ups?
- Could there be an obvious “contact point” within the NHS & HSCP for organisations to make themselves known to & potentially have a single access route to provide information & data about themselves and their meeting times, venues etc? This would also allow the partners to have awareness of these local efforts, as often the statutory agencies were not aware.
- Could the statutory partners make service users aware of local groups through display board posters and “fliers” being allowed, but also make specific efforts to those service users actively seeking assistance with mental ill health?
- Volunteer time for all of the groups was an issue, and it is rightly focussed on “running” their groups. Could there be a central support officer for things like “flyer” leaflets & other advertising media who could assist? This would potentially involve cost for the Council.
- Social media platforms appear to be highly effective ways of reaching men. Can the partners use their platforms to “like”, retweet etc, thereby extending the reach yet further?
- Peer support models were highly effective, across all age ranges. Would the Council & partners potentially consider supporting these by training more staff in the “See Me” campaign and encourage staff to become involved in the peer support groups too?
- Could the agency partners “major theme” information on local groups within their workforces? This would raise both awareness and reach of the local prevention of mental ill health groups very substantially.
- Could the Council & partners consider assisting the roll out of digital support for both communities and employees? Having an app on a workplace phone or tablet may be a quick & easy way to access support.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 It is clear that these organisations – and many others across the city – are working hard to help those in need and are supporting thousands of men in the process. One life saved makes all of the effort worthwhile.
- 4.2 It is also clear that the Council may be in a position to do more to assist - through our established formal partnerships, our employees and our existing public facing media outlets. The Council could also consider how to maximise the effect of its own internal efforts by seeking to assist trained employees to support local groups.
- 4.3 The Council and its partners might also wish to consider having a “streamlined” process for short term local group support to allow access to meeting spaces and potential waiving/reduction of cost, reconsidering the balance between bureaucracy & financial risk.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: No direct implications. Any developments will be contingent on funding approval.

Legal: The report raises no new legal issues

Personnel: There are no direct personnel implications

Procurement: There are no procurement issues

Council Strategic Plan:

Resilient and empowered neighbourhood Citizens can influence how services are developed to meet the needs of the community.

A well governed city that listens and responds Groups supporting thousands of men across the city are suggesting ways in which the Council and its partners can assist. A positive response will send a powerful support signal to our communities.

A healthier city Mental ill health affects all ages and all social classes. It is vital that there is open access to support for those in need.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

None

Equality Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

Yes

- Improve economic & wellbeing outcomes for people with protected characteristics
- Improve access to local services by people with protected characteristics

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

No impacts identified.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

None

Social:

None

Economic:

None

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

No data protection impacts identified as a result of this report.

7 Recommendations

Committee is asked to:

- Note the outcome from the sessions undertaken.
- Refer this paper to the political groups in the Council for their consideration and further development.