

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

QUESTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

COUNCIL – 23 NOVEMBER 2022

QUESTION E

Councillor Slinger to ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“In light of the campaign by the Mental Health Foundation to raise awareness of the growing problem of loneliness, and of the ‘Boost Your Health Esteem’ campaign being run by the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System:

- a) does the Council plan to take part in any projects designed to tackle loneliness within Rugby Borough?
- b) has the Council made any assessment of whether its service users are suffering from loneliness?
- c) has the Council made any assessment of what capabilities it has, as a service-provider, to help people overcome loneliness?”

Councillor Lowe, to reply as follows:

"The Council is aware of the various campaigns that seek to support people with concerns for health and wellbeing including the mentioned Loneliness campaigns.

I am pleased to confirm the Council have a variety of projects that are currently being delivered through the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum and Sport and Recreation Services that are directly and indirectly supporting residents who may be suffering from loneliness.

At Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, the following projects are currently taking place with the remit of tackling loneliness:

- The Good Times – This project supports adults living with dementia and their carers
- The Express Group – A social prescription project receives GP referrals of individuals who identify themselves to the GP as lonely and is run in partnership with the Benn Partnership Centre.
- Sheltered Housing Workshops - Arts and Crafts workshops are delivered across Rugby Borough Council’s sheltered housing accommodation that look to engage local communities and increase social wellbeing between residents.
- “Warm Hub Drop-ins” – New sessions are starting in December on Tuesday afternoons with open sessions where residents can drop in, have refreshment and engage in light activities such as crafts, board games and puzzles.

- Rugby Art Gallery and Museum also work in partnership with Barnados delivering mother and baby sessions for new parents and mother and toddler with outreach sessions to support local mothers who may be feeling lonely and isolated.

The Borough's Sport and Recreation team supports a series of locally led volunteer health walks where residents can engage with friendly groups who access various open spaces across the borough.

Whilst not specifically targeting loneliness, the Council supports a number of volunteer groups across the Borough, including our parks and open spaces helping to manage local spaces, encouraging individuals to engage with projects and participate in leisure and wellbeing activities.

With reference to the Mental Health Foundation, the Communications team will utilise its social media channels to share campaigns across the Borough, including campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week that occurs annually in May.

The Council's Communities and Homes team continues to work with WCAVA and the voluntary sector to promote opportunities across the borough for sessions.

This includes engagement and communication with organisations such as Compassionate Communities and Age UK whereby Council officers and facilities are utilised to support service delivery to the residents."