

**Becoming Compassionate Maidstone**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Final Decision-Maker</b>               | Policy and Resources Committee                                    |
| <b>Lead Head of Service</b>               | Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy,<br>Communications and Governance |
| <b>Lead Officer and Report<br/>Author</b> | Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager                       |
| <b>Classification</b>                     | Public  |
| <b>Wards affected</b>                     | All   |

**Executive Summary**

The Council has been invited to support Heart of Kent hospice in achieving Compassionate City status by adopting the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.

**Purpose of Report**

Decision

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the Council endorse the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone',
2. That Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.

**Timetable**

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Meeting</b>                 | <b>Date</b>     |
| Policy and Resources Committee | 22 January 2020 |

# Becoming Compassionate Maidstone

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue                                 | Implications  | Sign-off                              |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b> | <p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Safe, Clean and Green.</li> <li>• Homes and Communities.</li> <li>• A Thriving Place.</li> </ul> <p>Accepting the recommendations will support the Council's Vision:</p> <p><i>"Maidstone: a vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential."</i></p> <p>It will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve the following priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Homes and Communities.</li> </ul>  | <p>Policy and Information Manager</p> |
| <b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>       | <p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage is Respected.</li> <li>• Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced.</li> <li>• Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved.</li> <li>• Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected.</li> </ul> <p>The report recommendations support the achievements of the cross-cutting objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced.</li> <li>• Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved.</li> </ul> <p>As achievement of the Compassionate Cities Charter demonstrates that the borough is fostering organisations and communities that facilitate, support and care for one another</p> | <p>Policy and Information Manager</p> |

|                                    |  |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
|                                    | especially those with or supporting those with life-threatening and life-limiting illness, chronic disability, frail, ageing and dementia, grief and bereavement, and the trials and burdens of long term care. It's also a borough that recognises that these people in the community have lifestyles that are commonly socially hidden and disenfranchised from the wider society.   |  |
| <b>Risk Management</b>             | The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at 4.4. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.  | Policy and Information Manger            |
| <b>Financial</b>                   | The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.  | [Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]     |
| <b>Staffing</b>                    | We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.   | Policy and Information Manager           |
| <b>Legal</b>                       | Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities in England a general power of competence to do anything that individuals may do. The general power applies to things that an individual may do even though they are in nature, extent or otherwise unlike anything the Council may do apart from Section 1. The proposed adoption of the Compassionate City Charter principles is in exercise of the general power. Although Section 2 of the Act sets boundaries to the general power, the proposal falls within those boundaries. | Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS |
| <b>Privacy and Data Protection</b> | Accepting the recommendations may increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.  | Policy and Information Team              |
| <b>Equalities</b>                  | Accepting the recommendations will have a positive impact on those often more marginalised communities within Maidstone.   | Policy & Information Manager             |
| <b>Public</b>                      | We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or  | Public Health                            |

|                           |                      |                                |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Health</b>             | that of individuals. | Officer                        |
| <b>Crime and Disorder</b> | No Impact            | Policy and Information Manager |
| <b>Procurement</b>        | No Impact            | Policy and Information Manager |

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly encourage, facilitate, support and celebrate care for one another during life's most testing moments and experiences, especially those pertaining to life-threatening and life-limiting illness, chronic disability, frail ageing and dementia, grief and bereavement, and the trials and burdens of long term care. Its communities care for one another at times of crisis and loss and recognise it is not simply a task solely for health and social services but is everyone's responsibility. The Compassionate City Charter was developed by Professor Alan Kellehear and Dr Julian Abel.
- 2.2 People who live with life-threatening or life limiting illness, their caregivers, and the bereaved are segmented social groups, forced to experience lifestyles that are commonly socially hidden and disenfranchised from the wider society. Outside of the health services that deal specifically with their immediate problems, these populations suffer from a range of other troubles that are separate but linked to their health conditions or social circumstances.
- 2.3 Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly recognise these populations, and these needs and troubles, and seek to enlist all the major sectors of a community to help support them and reduce the negative social, psychological and medical impact of serious illness, caregiving, and bereavement.
- 2.4 Compassionate communities do not take the place of social care. Rather, they have three components.
  - a) Through making the most of the supportive networks of family, friends and neighbours; people build care and connectedness, love and laughter, sharing companionship and values. Some of this task is related to caring and some is increasing a sense of belonging in communities.
  - b) Building networks of support for the routine matters of life, shopping, cooking, cleaning, looking after the garden and pets, providing lifts.
  - c) Linking to community activity, such as choir, walking groups, men's sheds, talking cafes and other interest groups where people can make friendships and share life's events.

- 2.5 Together, compassionate communities help to reduce isolation and loneliness and bring a sense of belonging into what is sometimes a disconnected society.
- 2.6 In September 2019 the Council was approached by the Chief Executive of the Heart of Kent Hospice to partner with them on a project to lead Maidstone to become the first town or city in the South East of England recognised as having official Compassionate status.
- 2.7 Areas with current Compassionate City status and those that are in progress are listed below.

Committed:

- Frome, Somerset, UK (pop. 25,000).
- Plymouth, UK (pop. 235,000).
- Limerick, Republic of Ireland (pop. 100,000).
- Londonderry (NI) UK (pop. 230,000).
- Inverclyde, Scotland (pop. 82,000).
- Vic, Spain (pop. 42,000).
- Seville, Spain (pop. 750,000).
- Burlington, Toronto, Canada (pop. 175,000).
- New Washington, Vancouver, Canada.
- Kozhikode aka Calicut, India (pop. 400,000).

In progress (UK):

- Medway (enquiries).
- Birmingham (being lobbied).
- Edinburgh (enquiries).
- Sheffield (Mayor and DPH agreed pending further talks).

- 2.8 Maidstone has the size, ambition and organisational networks to become a Compassionate Borough. As the County Town of Kent, Maidstone would be pledging its support for everyone in its community affected by illness, long term health issues, dying, death, bereavement and loss.
- 2.9 In the Summer this year, Elmer's Big Heart of Kent Parade will reach schools, workplaces and the wider community through the delivery of a major public art trail in Maidstone led by Heart of Kent Hospice. The trail will raise awareness and open conversations about dying, death, bereavement and loss. The trail will create an excellent window of opportunity from which to launch Maidstone as a 'Compassionate Maidstone' in 2021.
- 2.10 At the same time, Heart of Kent Hospice is rolling out a Compassionate Neighbours project in Maidstone in 2020 which will further support the profile of Maidstone as a Compassionate Borough.
- 2.11 To be recognised as a Compassionate Borough, Maidstone would need to formally adopt the 13 principles in the Compassionate "City" Charter. It is worth noting when reviewing it that the Charter was written to be used worldwide. It can be seen at appendix one.

- 2.12 To adopt these principles an action plan will need to be delivered by partner organisations across the borough. Some work has already been started by Heart of Kent Hospice on this and it can be seen at appendix two.
- 2.13 This will require support and commitment from across the Council to ensure that the actions are embedded throughout the organisation, the services we deliver and the relationships we have with partners. It is not envisaged that any extra support will be required. A majority of the support will come from the Policy and Information team, but this will be absorbed by current posts.
- 

### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 That the Committee approves the recommendations to support the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone'. That Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.
- 3.2 The Committee may choose to approve the recommendation to support the ambition to become a 'Compassionate Maidstone'; however, they may want to limit the support of Officers and Members to the project. This is not recommended however as the Compassionate project relies on leading organisations such as the Council embedding a compassionate approach within its own organisation and utilising all of its networks to achieve Compassionate Borough Status.
- 3.3 The Committee could reject the recommendations to support the ambition to adopt the Compassionate City Charter and become 'Compassionate Maidstone'. This is not recommended as adopting Compassionate status aligns and supports the Council in delivering its vision, priorities and cross cutting objectives.
- 

### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the Committee approves the recommendations to support the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone' and that Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.
- 4.2 Achieving Compassionate status aligns and supports the Council's Vision:
- "Maidstone: a vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential."*
- 4.3 Particular links can be drawn with the following priority:
- Homes and Communities

And the cross-cutting objectives

- Health inequalities are addressed and reduced.
  - Deprivation is reduced and social mobility is improved.
- 

## **5. RISK**

- 5.1 There is no significant risk attached to this recommendation but there is the risk that officer and Member time will be invested but Compassionate status is not achieved. This can be mitigated by all representatives of the Council giving their full commitment and resources available to the project and maintaining strong communication throughout the project.
- 5.2 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.
- 

## **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 If Policy and Resources Committee agree the recommendation to support the ambition to become a 'Compassionate Maidstone', the Policy and Information team will work with the Heart of Kent Hospice to identify key actions the Council will own and other support it can provide.
- 6.2 Heart of Kent Hospice would apply to Public Health Palliative Care International for Maidstone to become listed a committed Compassionate Borough on its website.
- 6.3 Heart of Kent Hospice would host a conference in Maidstone in 2020 for schools, places of worship, GP surgeries, solicitors and charities and many other organisations and groups from across the community to unite work towards Maidstone having an End of Life Compassionate Network. That network would sign up to work towards the key objectives of the Compassionate City Charter formally adopted by Maidstone Borough Council.
- 6.4 A web page would be developed by Heart of Kent Hospice to provide a focal point for information on aspirations, activities and actions towards the aims of the charter.
- 6.5 A Maidstone-wide steering group including the Council will be responsible for monitoring progress and supporting delivery of the work.
- 

## **7. REPORT APPENDICES**

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- *Appendix 1: Compassionate Cities Charter.*
  - *Appendix 2: Maidstone a Compassionate City Objectives.*
- 

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.