



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date</b>	15 July 2019
<b>Report title</b>	Developing Service User and Citizen Engagement within the WMCA Thrive Programmes
<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	Councillor Izzi Seccombe - Wellbeing
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	

**Recommendation(s) for action or decision:**

**The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:**

- (1) Consider the proposals to develop the citizen and service user engagement across the Thrive Programmes.
- (2) Recommend the proposal for citizen and service user engagement across the Thrive Programmes to the WMCA Wellbeing Board

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and proposals to develop the citizen and service user engagement started by the Mental Health Commission Citizens' Jury.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Citizens' Jury was established in 2016 and was a key part of the Mental Health Commission. The Citizens' Jury members were people with lived experience of mental health issues (as service users or carers). The recommendations made by the Citizen's Jury informed the work of the Mental Health Commission and the commitments made in the Thrive Action Plan.

- 2.2 Since the publication of the Thrive Action Plan in 2017 a number of programmes have been established to implement the commitments made. Within the WMCA PSR Directorate the Thrive Programmes are:

- Thrive into Work
- Thrive at Work
- Mental Health Awareness
- West Midlands on the Move including Include Me West Midlands (which extends to physical as well as mental health and include me, disability)
- Mental Health and Justice

- 2.3 The Housing First Programme has also been established working with Homelessness Task Force, seven local authorities, housing providers and homelessness charities in the region.

## **3. Proposals to Develop Citizen Engagement**

- 3.1 At the beginning of May 2019 members of the Citizen's Jury were invited to a meeting to feedback on the progress in implementing these programmes and to consider how to develop the Citizen Engagement within the Thrive Programmes.

- 3.2 The feedback from the Citizen's Jury Members about the Thrive Programmes was very positive. However, it was recognised that during the start-up and implementation phase, while individual programmes have developed their engagement mechanisms, there had not been a wider engagement strategy across the Thrive Programmes.

- 3.3 During the meeting with the Citizen Jury Members it was agreed that:

- The people who have been involved in the Citizens' Jury have, individually and collectively, a unique understanding and perspective on the work of the Mental Health Commission and Thrive Programmes.
- The Citizens' Jury had completed it work, but the individual members who attended the meeting were keen to stay involved with the Thrive Programmes.
- The focus of this engagement should remain with the Thrive Programmes and mental health
- There could be opportunities for different levels of involvement with citizen's / service users

3.4 The proposal below to develop citizen and service user engagement across the Thrive Programmes has been co-produced with 7 Citizens' Jury Members and service users involved in the Thrive Programmes who have formed the Interim Independent Advisory Group.

#### **4. Public Information about the Thrive Programmes**

4.1 Information about the different Thrive programmes is currently available through programme website, the WMCA website and Board reports. It is proposed that a Thrive Programme page is developed on the WMCA website that provides a summary of the different programmes, the areas the programmes serve and the outcomes to date.

#### **5. Thrive Champions / Ambassadors**

5.1 Initially 34 - 40 volunteer Thrive Ambassadors will be sought from across the WMCA region including constituent and non-constituent local authority areas. In the first stage, the role of Thrive Ambassador will be open to the winners of the Thrive Mental Health Stars Awards. Where there are vacant roles the relevant Local Authorities will be invited to nominate Ambassadors. The process will also take into account the diversity of the Thrive Ambassadors.

5.2 The role of the Thrive Ambassador will be to raise awareness and encourage individuals and organisations to support the relevant Thrive Programmes. If a Thrive Ambassador does not have another way to claim expenses, she / he will be able to claim out of pocket expenses for attending meetings to or will be able to use a travel card provided by the WMCA for this purpose. There will be a maximum amount of expenses that can be claimed per quarter. If a member of staff wants to become a Thrive Ambassador as part of their employed role they will need approval from their line manager and will claim any expenses through their employer.

5.3 A role description will set out the purpose and responsibilities of the Thrive Ambassadors. This will include that Thrive Ambassador is a non-political role. To ensure that an accurate and consistent message about the programmes is promoted, Thrive Ambassadors will be asked to attend an induction meeting with the Thrive Programme Managers. Once their induction has been completed Thrive Ambassadors will be sent links to online briefing packs.

5.4 In addition to the volunteer role described above, Local Authority Mental Health Member Ambassadors will be invited attend the induction and incorporate the Thrive Programmes into their wider role as elected members.

#### **6. Thrive Independent Advisory Panel**

6.1 The members of the Citizens' Jury and service users involved in the Thrive Programmes will be invited to become members of the Thrive Independent Advisory Panel (IAP). As a group the members of the Citizens' Jury have a unique understanding of the values and aims of the Mental Health Commission and it is important that this knowledge and experience is retained.

- 6.2 Terms of reference and roles descriptions will be developed and there will be a maximum of 12 members. In the event there are vacant places additional members will be recruited. Members of the IAP will have lived experience of mental health services as a user or carer and be able to demonstrate their ability to engage at a strategic level. The membership of the IAP will aim to reflect the diversity across the WMCA region. (Constituent and Non-Constituent members) Members of the IAP will be asked to express an interest in becoming the Chair of the IAP. The Chair of the IAP will be appointed by the Implementation Director Mental Health, Wellbeing and Radical Prevention.
- 6.3 The IAP will have oversight of the citizen / service user engagement and contribute to the development of policy and practice across the Thrive Programmes. In recognition of the expertise that IAP members provide, in addition to out of pocket expense IAP members will be able to claim an involvement allowance for attending each full day meeting. This will be benchmarked across other involvement payments in other organisations. IAP members will have access to advice to make an informed decision regarding claiming the involvement allowance as this may have implications benefits and tax returns.
- 6.4 The IAP will meet quarterly and members may become involved in specific areas of work in addition to these meetings.

## **7. Include Me West Midlands Champions and Advisory Panel**

- 7.1 Working to a similar process and format, [the Include Me West Midlands Report](#) sets out ambitions to establish a Citizens Network working on the co-design, co-production and co-evaluation as being advocates for a more inclusive approach to sport and physical activity provision.
- 7.2 The network aims to provide the co-design, production and evaluation route and bringing together the disability organisations and sport organisations and having an ambassadors group. The aim is to operate on a similar platform to Thrive and where possible connect representation, issues and best practice ensuring there is consistency in line with emerging policy.

## **8. Developing a WMCA Volunteering and Involvement Policy**

- 8.1 There are a number of different engagement mechanisms being used across the WMCA and it is recognised that while different approaches are appropriate for different services it would be helpful to develop a WMCA policy.
- 8.2 The policy will be developed with colleagues finance, HR and legal to ensure that where relevant WMCA volunteering and engagement activity considers the following issues:
- Safeguarding
  - Personal data
  - Induction
  - Expenses / involvement allowance
  - Training and development
  - Risk of incurring employment rights

- Volunteering / involvement roles are non-party political

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the proposals within this report. The Mental Health Commission has a budget of £10k to develop service user and citizen engagement across the Thrive Programmes.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1 There are no immediate legal implications flowing from the contents of this report.

## **11. Equalities Implications**

- 11.1 The Thrive Ambassadors and members of the Thrive IAP will come from across the WMCA region. Individuals will be identified based on their skills and experience and will also take into account the need to consider the protected characteristics.

## **12. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 12.1 The approach to citizen and service user engagement across the WMCA Thrive Programmes does not have any direct implications on the investment decisions made by the WMCA and partners. However, the establishment of the Thrive Ambassador role and the IAP supports the aims of the Inclusive Growth Priorities particularly regarding Power, Influence and Participation and Health and Wellbeing.

## **13. Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

- 13.1 The citizen and service user engagement approach proposed in this report applies to the WMCA constituent and Non-constituent member local authority areas.

## **14. Other Implications**

- 14.1 None

## **15. Schedule of Background Papers**

- 15.1 Mental Health Commission Thrive Action Plan  
Include Me West Midlands Report