BRIEFING NOTE FOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

11 MARCH 2025

PURPOSE OF THE BRIEFING NOTE

Tendring has higher than average levels of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and childhood Asthma. COPD is a long-term condition makes breathing more difficult, and can make everyday tasks a challenge.

Singing for Lung Health, delivered by the Musical Breath is a group based arts in health intervention with the goal of improving the quality of life of people with a chronic lung condition, as well as providing tools for the self management of breathlessness.

It is proposed to deliver a twelve month pilot in Tendring, to be funded using the Public Health Grant. The grant is provided each year and therefore it is proposed to allocate some of the money in year (for example to this project) to show spend on the grant.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Latest figures show that the rates of COPD in Tendring are 3%, this is higher than the Essex rate of 1.86%). There is currently no cure for COPD, but treatment can help slow the progression of the condition and control the symptoms.

Due to the difficulties in breathing, moving around can be difficult and confidence to leave the safety of the home can diminish. This can lead to isolation, which in turn can impact on mental health. Exercise and the use of breathing techniques can be helpful in controlling symptoms.

The North East Essex Health Alliance is developing a Place Partnership Approach which recognises people access most of their health and care services in the place where they live, including the support to stay well.

The Approach focusses on how the community, statutory and voluntary sector can work together to understand the issues, interconnections and relationships, so as to coordinate action and investment to improve the quality of life for those communities.

The Alliance sees the drivers of the 5 key health conditions (which includes COPD and childhood asthma) as wider determinants including loneliness and social isolation, which have a very significant detrimental effect on people's health.

Asthma and Lung UK state that there is increasing evidence that singing regularly as part of a group is good for general health and wellbeing, and it seems to be especially good at improving quality of life for those living with a lung condition.

It is proposed to pilot a twelve month Singing for Lung Health initiative, through the creation of a bespoke choir, or integration into an existing community choir, depending on severity of symptoms for those with COPD or severe respiratory conditions.

As a new initiative, this is the first time the proposal has been brought to Management Team.

This project is within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It is included in the section on improving long term conditions and prevention management as part of the delivery plan and the project is described as

'Work with local community choirs to support those living with certain respiratory conditions to lead fulfilled and independent lives'. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently out to consultation although it is proposed to undertake this project during the consultation period as it allows for effective spend of the Public Health Grant, there is significant demand for this type of activity and it is of relatively low financial value.

CURRENT POSITION

There are currently no Singing for Lung Health initiatives in Tendring.

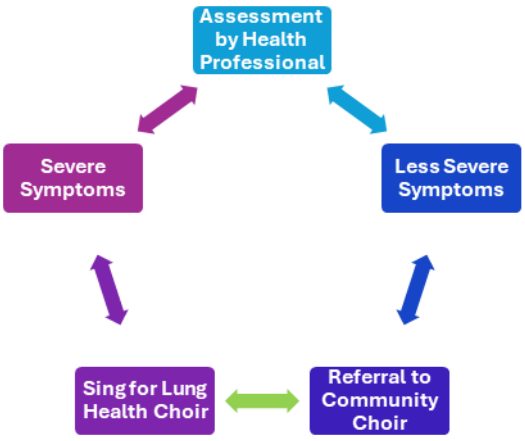
PROPOSAL

This Briefing Note is to inform Management Team and describes the proposal.

The proposal is to have a twelve month pilot in areas of Tendring, for one Sing for Lung Health Choir and the integration into a maximum of two existing choirs with funding from the Public Health Grant.

Existing Community Choir Leaders will be invited to apply for a grant to receive training through a provider, in order to deliver a bespoke choir for those with severe conditions, or to facilitate the integration of those with less severe conditions into an existing community choir. Training is essential so that there is an understanding of how lung conditions may impact participants and how to accommodate them, particularly if integrating into an existing choir.

Referrals can be made from Social Prescribers and health professionals, including the Respiratory Rehabilitation Team. It is essential that a referral is made, so that the health professional can guide the participant to which choir is most appropriate, based on their knowledge of the severity of their condition. Participants can move choirs should their symptoms improve or worsen.



Early discussions with colleagues from the Health Alliance have taken place, and they are supportive of this pilot.

Estimate of Costs

Sing for Lung Health Choir

Training for Choir Leader (based on Musical Breath)	£550
Cost for room hire @£50 per session (based on 48 weeks in the year)	£2'400
Payment for Choir Leader @ £50 per hour 1.5 hour session (inc social interaction and hall set up and clear)	£3'600

Total	**£6'550**

Integration into Community Choir

Training for choir leader (max 2 community choirs)	£1,100
Subsidy cost @ £2 per participant and for a maximum total of 25 participants over a period of 48 weeks.	£4'800
Total	**£5'900**

Total 12 month pilot for 1 x Sing for Lung Health Choir and integration into 2 existing Community Choirs **£12,450**

In order to add value to the pilot, participants will be required to pay £2.00 per session for the Sing for Lung Health Choir. The income generated can be used to fund tea/coffee for participants and may assist with future sustainability. For those referred into an existing choir, the pilot will contribute £2.00 per participant towards the usual fee charged by the choir. However, any decision to charge a fee should be made by the provider.

This will help to add value to the pilot and make it more sustainable for the future. This will also test, whether payment is likely to be a barrier to participants, enabling an assessment to be made before the pilot ends.

Although the above figures have been based on the cost of training by Musical Breath, a request for quotations will go out to any other providers that can meet the requirements of this pilot.

Choir Leaders would be able to bid for the funds identified as part of an open call invitation process.

The two community choirs must be located in different areas of the District.

At the end of the pilot evaluation will be undertaken to assess the following:

Sing for Lung Health Choir over the 12 month pilot

1. Number of attendees
2. Retention of participants (%)
3. Reason for drop out
4. Referral routes
5. Measure of improved Symptoms (Quantitative and Qualitive)
6. How many participants were able to move into an existing choir

Integration into existing choir

1. Number of attendees
2. Retention of participants (%)
3. Reason for drop out
4. Referral routes
5. Measure of improved Symptoms (Quantitative and Qualitive)
6. How many participants moved into the Sing for Lung Health Choir

DELIVERING CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This pilot addresses the themes within the Corporate Plan-

- Pride in our area and services to residents.
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities

Improving Long Term Condition Prevention and Management is a priority and this project is detailed in the delivery plan in the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Previous relevant decisions:

Report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder - A.7 - External Funding Review which sets out a framework for allocation of funding

Decision - Cabinet Members' Items - Report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder - A.7 - External Funding Review

Portfolio Holder decision to accept £54,000 and sign the associated Memorandum of Understanding provided by Essex County Council for a Public Health Practitioner Post (£20,000) and provision of a health grant (£34,000) to promote health and wellbeing priorities.

Decision - Acceptance of funding from Essex County Council for the Public Health Practitioner post and agreement to sign the related Memorandum of Understanding

KEY GOVERNANCE ISSUES AND/OR DIRECT LINKS TO OTHER MATTERS

An open call process will be used to invite community choir leaders to participate in this pilot.

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

A discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships has identified that in principle they are supportive of this type of approach and in particular was interested in how to strengthen referral from health partners for individuals to access the service.

FINANCE, RESOURCES & CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS

The project will be funded using the Public Health Grant and there are sufficient funds within the grant to fully support this project.

The Public Health Improvement Coordinator will lead on this project and once off the ground, will hold meetings with providers to assess the success of the pilot. It will be the responsibility of the providers to pull together data for evaluation and provide this to TDC. Data received will not include any personal identifiable information.

LEGAL DUTIES, POWERS & RESTRICTIONS (EXISTING, NEW RESPONSIBILITIES OR EMERGING)

The MOU provided with the grant funding from ECC sets out the conditions under which the grant can be spent.

The grant is allowed to be spent on voluntary and community organisations and can be spent on health and wellbeing priorities in the local area as it pertains to the

- Agenda on the public health business plan, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and local health

and wellbeing strategy
- Reducing health inequality via the wider determinants of health
- Supporting long term independence

And also helps deliver multiple rather than single outcomes

Use of the funding for singing for lung health meets these requirements as mental health is a key area of focus and singing for lung health will address social isolation which is a key driver of poor mental health. In addition, a key area is addressing smoking although importantly this includes fewer exacerbations and prevention of admissions in respect of issues associated with smoking which would include COPD.

This project is within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It is included in the section on improving long term conditions and prevention management as part of the delivery plan and the project is described as 'Work with local community choirs to support those living with certain respiratory conditions to lead fulfilled and independent lives'. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently out to consultation although it is proposed to undertake this project during the consultation period as it allows for effective spend of the Public Health Grant, there is significant demand for this type of activity and it is of relatively low financial value.

The project addresses inequality via a wider determinants approach as a key wider determinant is social isolation and loneliness and the scheme seeks to address this. In addition, it helps to support long term independence as it seeks to provide support around long term conditions.

The project also addresses multiple outcomes as it seeks to help address the effects of long term conditions and improve outcomes and in addition seeks to address social isolation and loneliness as people come together with likeminded individuals.

The power to undertake the activity to support the project is with the Localism Act 2011 which provides for a general power of competence to do something that any individual could do.

ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

Financial – If the project cannot be delivered for the allocated cost. **Mitigation:** The duration of the pilot will be reduced to ensure it remains on budget.
Service Delivery This project is not being delivered directly by TDC staff, but by external providers
Safety: Funding has been set aside for relevant suitable training
Reputation: If the pilot is a success but is not able to continue due to lack of funds**. Mitigation:** If there are proven long term condition benefits, then funding from health partners can be sought for the Sing for Lung Health Choir.
Integration into Community Choirs via referrals can still be made, for those with less severe symptoms, however the provision of subsidy for the participant could be removed.

NEXT STEPS & MILESTONES

Project implementation and evaluation monitoring.

APPENDICES

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