Improving mental health in local communities - the role of councils

Sarah Pickup
Deputy Chief Executive
Local Government Association

20 September 2017
Community Mental Health

Easy to focus illness, rather than how to keep communities mentally well.

Community mental wellbeing means being cared for, being able to access green space, having a job, having a secure right-sized and pleasant place to live, having a community to be part of, being healthy, etc.
Role of Councils

Councils have statutory and non-statutory duties on mental health:

- Social Care
- Public health
- Housing
- Education and children
- Community safety
- Parks and green spaces
- Culture and leisure
Prevention and early intervention

Need greater focus of policy and resources on prevention and early intervention.

10-15% older people in acute loneliness.
Over half all mental health starts before the age of 14.

PHE Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.
Resilience

Enabling every day resilience and mental wellbeing also important.

Key role of employers, educators, those working in public services, health visitors, care workers, etc.

Ensuring the environment and circumstances gives people the best change to be mentally well.
Interlocking policies

Supported housing – providing a step-down home and support out of hospital – future funding uncertain.

Personalisation of care, personal budgets and direct payments – impact of lack of funding of social care?

Planning and housing powers
Children and Schools

Challenges in CAMHS – need school, community and mental wellness focus in new Green Paper

Importance of education in mental health and wellbeing

Trained teachers aware of signs and can give support

Embedding mental health and wellbeing
• LGA report: Being Mindful of Mental Health, launched July 2017
https://www.local.gov.uk/being-mindful-mental-health-role-local-government-mental-health-and-wellbeing

• PHE support on mental wellbeing
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/prevention-concordat-for-better-mental-health

• National Children and Adult Services Conference (NCASC) in 11-13 October in Bournemouth
https://www.local.gov.uk/events