

# **North Somerset Council**

## **REPORT TO THE HEALTH AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY PANEL**

**DATE OF MEETING: THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE**

**SUBJECT OF REPORT: UPDATE ON SUICIDE PREVENTION WORK**

**TOWN OR PARISH: BOTH**

**OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: JONATHAN ROBERTS AND HELEN YEO**

**KEY DECISION: NO**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to note the content of this report and consider the role of HOSP in overseeing the North Somerset Suicide prevention Action Plan.

#### **1. SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide HOSP with an update on the suicide prevention work being conducted in North Somerset.

#### **2. POLICY**

Nationally there is an ambition to reduce the national suicide rate by 10% by 2020/21. The North Somerset Suicide Prevention Steering Group believes that one suicide is too many. The overall aim of the suicide prevention work we do locally is to reduce the number of suicides to as close to zero as possible by bringing together key agencies to facilitate cross-working and to improve awareness around suicide prevention.

The Secretary of State, in his ministerial foreword to the progress report, on the Suicide Prevention Strategy said he wishes to ensure that every very local authority has a multi-agency suicide prevention plan in 2017, with agreed priorities and actions.

North Somerset has a multi-agency action plan which has been in place since 2015 and is currently being refreshed. The plan will take into account the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, guidance on suicide prevention from Public Health England and the House of Commons Health Committee report on suicide prevention, please see links to these reports at the end of this report.

#### **3. DETAILS**

Overall the suicide rate in North Somerset has reduced from a high of 14.1 per 100,000 (74 deaths and statistically higher than England) in 2008-2010 to 8.7 per 100,000 (48 deaths, not different to England) in 2013-2015. Similar to the national picture men are more likely

to die from suicide than females. 33% of people who die from suicide are female compared to 28% of suicides in the South West and 24% across England.

In June 2015 the North Somerset Suicide Prevention Steering Group is jointly chaired by Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group and has representation from Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership, the Police, mental health charities such as 1in4 People and the Samaritans and lay members with experience of mental health problems.

The work of the group is guided by our multi-agency action plan which was developed in line with the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. Outlined below are our key achievements to date:

- Setting up a suicide bereavement support group in Weston-super-Mare. The group is run by someone bereaved by suicide and is part of the national Survivor of Bereavement by Suicide charity.
- Successfully securing funding from Public Health England and North Somerset Future in Mind to train our local workforce in suicide prevention. To date over 140 people have been trained in suicide prevention with a further 200 people planned to be trained in the next two years.
- Agreeing a West of England joint suicide audit method and analysis with the coroner's office. This is a key development and means that in the future we will receive timely information making it easier for us to spot any trends and local patterns in suicides.
- Undertaking a series of campaigns and events to raise awareness about mental health and the services that are available to support people. Our next major event is 'Walking out of Darkness' in Weston-super-Mare on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The event incorporates a walk and a mental health festival showcasing local and national charities and services.
- Doctor Mike Jenkins who sits on the Suicide Prevention Steering group ran a workshop for over 40 North Somerset doctors to raise awareness of suicide prevention and discuss the management of suicide within primary care.

A review has been undertaken looking at the House of Commons Health Committee report on suicide prevention. We looked at current provision against their recommendations and identified areas of future work that we wish to build into our action plan. Areas of future development include widening current training around suicide prevention to GP's and other practice staff, launching Connect 5 training in North Somerset, the development of a coroner liaison service for those bereaved by suicide and ensuring that information about mental health services on North Somerset Online Directory is up to date and relevant.

One of the key recommendations for the House of Commons Health Committee Report is that the Health Overview Scrutiny Panel should be involved in the effective implementation of local authority plans. As noted at the beginning of this report we ask HOSP to consider their role in overseeing the North Somerset Suicide prevention Action Plan

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

We are in the early stages of the consultation and plan to consult on the development of the action plan with the following groups:

- North Somerset Suicide Prevention Steering group
- North Somerset LGBT Forum
- Community groups in areas with high levels of mental health needs
- North Somerset Disability Forum

- North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Network
- North Somerset Men's Health Forum
- North Somerset Children's Future in Mind Strategy Group
- Weston-super-Mare Survivors of bereaved by suicide support group

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Currently there are no dedicated funding streams for suicide prevention so work is delivered within organisations existing budgets.

As part of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy funding has been announced from 2017/18 and we will work with NHS England and North Somerset CCG to allocate funding appropriately.

## **6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

Currently suicide rates in North Somerset are similar to rates in England, but we are not complacent and in our view one suicide is too many. By not developing a cross agency action plan we feel that we risk a number of potentially avoidable deaths.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

The work programme will take into account diversity and equality issues by consulting with key groups, see section 4.

## **8. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

An effective work programme around suicide prevention will assist the council and its partners to address the challenges in the areas of mental health and deliver its public health outcomes.

## **9. OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Not applicable

## **AUTHOR**

Helen Yeo Advanced Health Improvement Specialist and Jonathan Roberts Consultant in Public Health.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Suicide Prevention: Developing a local Action plan. Public Health England 2016.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/suicide-prevention-developing-a-local-action-plan>

House of Commons Health Committee. 'Suicide Prevention'. Sixth Report of Session 2016/17.  
<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhealth/1087/1087.pdf>

Preventing suicide in England: Third progress report of the cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/582117/Suicide\\_report\\_2016\\_A.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/582117/Suicide_report_2016_A.pdf)

Mapping current North Somerset suicide prevention work against the House of Commons Health Committee Report on Suicide Prevention.



Health Committee  
interim report recom