

**Report to:**

## **ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Relevant Officer:**

Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

**Date of Meeting:**

13 February 2019

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION UPDATE**

#### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To receive an update on the ongoing work regarding suicide prevention following a previous recommendation of the Committee that a 'zero' suicide target should be adopted in Blackpool.

#### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and highlight any areas for further scrutiny which will be reported back as appropriate.

#### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and highlight any areas for further scrutiny which will be reported back as appropriate.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

#### **4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

#### **5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

#### **6.0 Background information**

#### **6.0 Public Health Directorate updates**

## 6.1 Suicide Prevention Update

- 6.1.1 Locally, the suicide rate has come down - 14.0 per 100,000 for the period 2015-17 which equates to 51 deaths (previously 15.9 per 100,000 for the period 2014-16, which equates to 57 deaths).
- 6.1.2 It is worth noting that there has been a change to how verdicts are recorded at inquests. The High Court recently ruled that the civil standard of proof (on the balance of probabilities) should now be used by coroners in reaching a conclusion of suicide at inquest, rather than using the criminal standard (beyond all reasonable doubt). This has been welcomed by organisations such as the Samaritans and Papyrus. The new ruling means that there will be more deaths recorded as suicides, which will provide a more accurate picture of the numbers of people taking their own lives. Our overall rate may not necessarily increase as the current data captures the mortality rate from suicide and 'injury of undetermined intent'. The Office for National Statistics definition of suicide includes deaths given an underlying cause of intentional self-harm or an injury/poisoning of undetermined intent. The assumption is already made that most injuries and poisonings of undetermined intent are cases where the harm was self-inflicted but there was insufficient evidence to prove that the deceased deliberately intended to kill themselves.
- 6.1.3 Suicide prevention work is progressing under the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS) Suicide Prevention Logic Model. The main aims of the plan are reduction in suicides, reduction in levels of self-harm and improved outcomes for those affected by suicide. Local Authority Public Health teams are leading on the prevention strand of the plan. NHS England monies have been awarded to fund elements of the plan.
- 6.1.4 Key progress to date:
- Since 2016, approximately 600 people living or working in Blackpool have been trained in an evidence-based suicide prevention programme (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) NHS England monies will fund further training in education, community and workplace settings;
  - Sign-up to Zero Suicide Alliance – formal application has been completed by ICS suicide prevention programme lead and awaiting confirmation;
  - Bereaved by suicide pathway – service mapping, gap analysis and consultation with people with lived experience has been completed and a draft pathway is now in development;
  - Scoping work and consultation has begun to look at better pathways for people with both mental health and substance misuse issues. A dual diagnosis summit

was held in November 2018, with Lancashire Care Foundation Trust and other mental health and substance misuse treatment providers across the ICS footprint represented;

- Task and finish group established to scope accredited debt advice services across the area and identify gaps;
- Lancaster University Beacon Technology (Computer Science) solutions are being explored to target high risk locations and a Computer Science researcher has been allocated to support the project, with match funded by the ICS Digital Health Workstream;
- Offender MH Pathway Task and Finish established to review the current pathway for offenders entering custody and on release to ensure a smooth transition and continued care;
- Self-harm care and suicide prevention workshop planned for February – will look at establishing robust care pathways for ;
- Real-time surveillance is being implemented and a post-incident response policy has been developed, with training planed for public health and other relevant agencies. Previous suicide audits in Blackpool have identified public places where a person has taken their own life. Signage with the Samaritans helpline has been introduced at a number of sites, for example, Talbot multi-storey car park, West St Car Park and along the parts of the promenade;
- Street Therapy - therapist now employed through Blackpool Fulfilling Lives and building therapeutic relationships with vulnerable people out on the street
- Time to Change – the national anti-stigma campaign is being implemented locally. A number of campaign activities have been delivered by champions with lived experience of mental ill health. Ninety-one champions living or working in Blackpool have registered. Six organisations have signed the employers pledge and 2 are pending;
- GET VOCAL campaign was launched in October 2018 and is currently being rolled-out. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of evidence-based ways of improving personal wellbeing;
- Joint post with Better Start developing interventions to improve male mental health, for example, Men’s Sheds. Post holder is now in place and a men’s health consultation event is planned, which will consider what can be done to improve the physical and mental health inequalities experienced by men in Blackpool. The

results of this will feed into a men's health conference planned for June.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Legal considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Human resources considerations:**

9.1 Not Applicable.

**10.0 Equalities considerations:**

10.1 Not Applicable.

**11.0 Financial considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Risk management considerations:**

12.1 Not Applicable.

**13.0 Ethical considerations:**

13.1 Not Applicable.

**14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

14.1 Not Applicable.

**15.0 Background papers:**

15.1 Not Applicable.