

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD – 9th DECEMBER 2021

TITLE: SUICIDE PREVENTION UPDATE DECEMBER 2021

REPORT OF: LIZ NOAKES, DIRECTOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR KELLY MIDDLETON

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

This report updates the Health & Wellbeing Board on the efforts of the collaborative work, led by the Public Health team to prevent suicide across Telford & Wrekin, and support those who are affected by suicidal thoughts, or suicide of a loved one.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board receive this paper, and support the continued work within the Council, and across boundaries with partners, to reduce the impact of suicide in Telford & Wrekin

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective (s)?	
	Yes	
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Proposals are informed by data that allows targeting of specific high-risk groups such as men
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Action plan and strategy refresh due by March 2022	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	T&W Council were awarded £48,000 per year for 3 years (21/22-23/24) from Wave 3 NHSE/I suicide prevention funds. A bid for further funding of £25,000 for next 2 years has recently been made. This funding is in place to support the Telford & Wrekin Suicide Prevention Action Plan. TAS 1.2.21
LEGAL ISSUES	No	

OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	Opportunities for additional funding that have been applied are detailed in Part B
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	All offers are universal, and assume residence in any ward within Telford & Wrekin

4. PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4.1 Update on progress of the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Suicide Prevention Network, and Telford & Wrekin Local Action Group

During previous mental health priority updates, the Telford & Wrekin Suicide Prevention Action Plan has been shared with the Board. Below is a progress update against the core sections of the current action plan:

- **Partnership working** – the range of partners on both the Telford & Wrekin Suicide Prevention Local Action Group (local partnership that implement county-wide strategy and supports local community members) and the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Suicide Prevention Network (cross-county partnership group that sets strategic direction) has been extended to encompass all key agencies, and routes of communication have been reviewed
- **Championing Suicide Prevention within the Council** – Cllr Kelly Middleton has instigated a route to provide virtual training for locally elected councillors in mental health awareness and suicide prevention, whilst Zero Suicide Alliance training is recommended for all Council employees no Ollie
- **Understand the local picture** – as detailed below, the Real Time Surveillance system is now about to go live, providing a much more in-depth picture, and supporting other exercises, such as suicide audits
- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** – it was identified that data concerning suicides did not routinely feature in the JSNA, this has since been rectified and appears in Chapter 4 ‘Staying Safe’
- **Enhance the training offer** – a training needs assessment was completed and recommendations have been acted on (see 4.3)
- **Enhance support for those affected** – work on this has been taken forwards by the wider network, and bereavement officers are now in place (see 4.2) and additional funding to increase this offer has also been applied for (see 4.5)
- **Enhance support for those at risk** – The Local Action Group has run multiple successful events, such as Project 94, that have enabled people at risk to access support acutely and find a way to keep this support longer term. Work has also been undertaken to identify groups with specific needs around suicide prevention e.g. Children & Young People, LGBT and link with organisations that have the skills and knowledge to provide this tailored support

The group are currently working on the idea of 'postvention' as a specific need for those affected by suicide bereavement, encompassing the specific needs around support that someone bereaved by suicide has compared to someone bereaved for different reasons. Postvention is also a core part of the suicide prevention strategy.

The county-wide Suicide Prevention Strategy is currently being refreshed by the Suicide Prevention Network, ready for March 2022. The Telford & Wrekin Local Action Group are also working on a refreshed action plan to sit alongside this. This will include:

- Postvention and bereavement support as a core part of the offer
- A continued focus on providing high-quality training for a variety of frontline workers, including health colleagues at all points of the pathway
- A continued strengthening of the universal offer for all of Telford & Wrekin's residents
- Tailored support for the following high-risk groups
 - Men
 - Children and Young People
 - Those already accessing mental health services
 - Those engaged with the criminal justice and probation systems
 - Personal characteristics e.g. neurodiverse groups, LGBTQ+ people, BAME groups, carers, domestic abuse survivors

Spotlight: Project 94

On 11th September 2021, Project 94 took place in Southwater Square. This event involved laying out 94 pairs of shoes, to represent the 94 male lives lost every week to suicide in the UK, as well as a collection of talking point stalls. The event was a great success, with good levels of community engagement and multiple testimonials provided to Council staff and partners that demonstrated the impact of both the project, and the suicide prevention activity taking place more widely

4.2 Bereavement Support Offer

In January 2021, utilising NHSE/I Wave 3 suicide prevention monies, two dedicated community-based bereavement support officers were put in post, providing 1.2 WTE capacity to support those across the County who have been bereaved by suicide. One officer supports Telford & Wrekin residents from their base in Telford MIND, whilst the other works with Shropshire Mental Health Support Services. These officers act as points of contact and support and advocate for those bereaved by suicide, recognising the enhanced suicide risk that this group experiences. This model operates on a principle similar to that seen with social prescribing.

Referrals for this service are received from a variety of sources, including direct referral by police/coroner's team/health professionals, identification via the Real Time Surveillance system (see 4.4) or self-referral. It remains closely linked with other services on offer, such

as West Mercia Police's Help Is At Hand resource, but is a community resource for those who do not feel able to access help elsewhere.

This service has the potential to positively impact huge numbers of Telford & Wrekin residents. Between 2016 and 2018, 44 Telford & Wrekin residents died by suicide, and we anticipate each of these people has around 10 close contacts who may need to access support from the bereavement officers, based on calculations in Office for Health Improvement and Disparities guidance.

4.3 Training

The training offer across Telford & Wrekin has been enhanced this year, with the following courses on offer:

- 3 x Shropshire Joint Training Suicide Prevention Awareness for frontline practitioners (includes partner agencies and VCSE colleagues) – 75 places available, 2 further booked for early 2022
- 3 x SPEAK (Suicide Prevention Explore Ask Keep-safe) sessions facilitated by Papyrus (including how to approach safety planning) for frontline practitioners – 70 places available, must have completed the Shropshire Joint Training course prior
- 2 x Self-Harm training sessions facilitated by Harmless primarily for education partners – 50 places available, 2 further for March 2022
- 1 x ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) sessions facilitated by Papyrus with specifically selected participants who work with high-risk clients and have completed previous training offers – 25 places available in January 2022
- 3 x Samaritans listening skills training sessions for VCSE partners – 25 places available per session

A bespoke training session was provided for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin GPs on September 15th 2021 (approximately 150 attendees). This covered the basics of service provision across the county, where to refer or signpost people in need and how to access further training/information if required.

The Zero Suicide Alliance packages are also being widely promoted through Ollie, and is recommended for all staff with access. This package is also being promoted verbally for partners outside of the Council and feedback on the content and usefulness is good.

4.4 Real-time Surveillance

Telford & Wrekin Council Public Health team has been working in partnership with West Mercia Police, Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust, Shropshire Council Public Health and the Coroners Office to implement, a Real Time Surveillance system since January 2021, with a go live date of December 2021. This system aims to integrate data from partners, allowing early identification of suspected suicides. This will benefit the community by ensuring that the bereavement support officers discussed above can be contacted early, and those affected signposted to appropriate help and support early in the process (within 72 hours of referral), with the need for self-identification and referral. It will also allow for more accurate reporting

of the burden of suicide across Shropshire, and identification of related factors common to suicides in our local population for which future interventions can be put in place.

The police will act as the lead data entrant at the point of a suspected suicide, with other partners adding data as it becomes available. This surveillance system has been developed to work fully online, powered by Stigma Statistics (a licensed company) with the appropriate data sharing agreements in place, and any referrals of next of kin made by the service require consent from that person in order to be completed.

The platform will be initially trialled for 6 months just looking at suicides, allowing for identification and addressing of any issues raised, and giving adequate time for partners to become familiar with the system. Following this, there may be scope to expand the surveillance to include possible drug-related deaths, and incorporation of information from VCSE partners.

4.5 Additional Funding Opportunities – In Progress

Support After Suicide Partnership Fund 2021/22

Funding has been applied for that will enhance the offer already in place following successful use of the NHSE/I Wave 3 suicide prevention monies to create a specific suicide bereavement support offer across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. This will include: extending the current offer of two part-time bereavement officers, increasing capacity from 1.2 WTE to 1.5 WTE, giving an additional 11 hours of capacity; developing a tiered approach to trauma-informed support and counselling for people bereaved by suicide including bespoke training; extending this bespoke offer to children, young people and families; developing a peer-support group; creating a dedicated Suicide Prevention and Postvention post.

A presentation to NHS England is being made as part of this funding application on November 30th 2021, and a decision on this funding should be in place by January 2022.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

None.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

HWB Mental Health Update Report Sept 2019

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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