

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) held at 11.00
am on Wednesday, 25 July 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor D Gannon (Chair)
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor D Kershaw
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor T Mayer
Councillor C Miks
Councillor D Skinner

Co-Opted Members: David Spurgeon

Other Members: Councillor F Abbott, Cabinet Member for Adult Services

Employees (by Directorate)

V Castree, Place Directorate
J Essex, People Directorate
J Fowles, People Directorate
L Gaulton, People Directorate
J Grainger, People Directorate
L Knight, Place Directorate

Apologies: Councillor R Ali and J Clifford

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th April, 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Suicide Prevention

The Board considered a report of Liz Gaulton, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, which provided an update on progress with the Suicide Prevention Strategy ('Not one more/ one is enough') which had been approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board at their meeting on 28th November, 2016; informed of the proposed year two implementation actions for the Coventry Suicide Prevention Multi-Agency Steering Group; and outlined the progress and proposals for suicide prevention funding in the Coventry and Warwickshire STP footprint. A copy of the strategy was set out at an appendix to the report.

Councillor Abbott, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, attended the meeting for the consideration of this item along with Aisha Minhas, Dr Richard Onyon GP and Justine Richards, all Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT), Alex Cotton, It Takes Balls to Talk (CWPT) and Steven Hill, MIND.

The report indicated that the strategy was designed to harmonise with the aims and approaches of the West Midlands Mental Health Commission and with the strategic aims of Warwickshire. Coventry had adopted a zero suicide goal based on the understanding that suicide was preventable in the overwhelming number of cases. Coventry's approach was based on Department of Health 2012 guidance; the Canadian Suicide Safer Community model of gatekeeper/ sentinels who can identify risk and intervene; and a locally appropriate approach rooted in Marmot.

The Board were informed of the key highlights for the year one strategic priorities which were the establishment of an active multi-agency steering group; hosting two workshops to share best practice, local data and local excellence; supporting an event at a Wasps Home match for World Suicide prevention day; facilitating the training of 50 champions and volunteers in level one suicide prevention; planning Suicide awareness training for members; developing online training for Council staff; and working with Network Rail to reduce the risk around an identified hotspot.

The report provided information on the audit of all the paper Coroner records where the cause of death was noted as suicide in Coventry from January to December 2017. The data showed 30 recorded deaths in the city during this period which was significantly lower than the national average across England. Of these, most were male, reflecting the national picture. The highest risk age bracket was 32-41. The Board noted that ethnicity was very poorly recorded making analysis in this area impossible.

Nearly half of the individuals had visited their GP in their last six months and these visits may have been cries for help so it was recommended that work to undertaken with GPs to ensure that they were able to spot the signs that someone could be suicidal. The Board were informed that 60% of the victims had a previous mental health concern.

Detailed information was provided on recent events and activities for the 'It Takes Balls to Talk' project, a community interest group which trained volunteers to engage men at sporting events in meaningful conversations about mental health and suicide. They also carried out training in suicide awareness and level one prevention among male culture occupations. Recent events had been held at local Rugby Clubs and Brandon Golf Club; attendance at both Coventry and Warwickshire universities which had led to an increase in self-referral to Student Support Services; both the Police and the Fire Service had participated in suicide awareness training; and contact had been made with Jaguar Land Rover about future opportunities for their workplace.

The report also referred to the work of Coventry and Warwickshire MIND. In October 2017 schools across Coventry and Warwickshire screened a short film named S-word. The film had been created with assistance from MIND to raise awareness of suicide and to break down the silence and stigma around mental

health. MIND worked with 10 schools between 9th to 13th October and reached over 1000 pupils, 100 parents and carers and 50 students teaching staff. Additional information was provided on the recent training delivered by MIND.

With reference to funding, Coventry and Warwickshire's STP proposal for Suicide Prevention funding had secured £351,000 per annum for 2018/19 and 2019/20 which would be used to address the following priorities across the footprint:

Reducing the risk of suicide in high risk groups

Reducing the Impact of Suicide

Improving data and evidence

Working together.

Further information was provided on the proposals for each of these priorities.

The Scrutiny Board questioned the officers and representative present on a number of issues and responses were provided, matters raised included:

- Concerns that there is a crisis around mental health within the health service and how would the additional funding be used to avoid such crisis
- Support for the MIND bus which goes out into local communities
- Further details about the waiting times for support and assistance
- Further information about the identification of individuals at risk of suicide, including social media and the opportunities for paid search campaigns to raise awareness and signposting of where help can be accessed
- Further details about the Crisis Cafes to be set up in South Warwickshire
- The potential to work with the Advice Centre teams who are often dealing with people in crisis
- The suggestion of having Community Champions to get the important messages out into the community
- The importance of ensuring that staff who work in small community organisations know how to access support for their clients
- In light of the data that revealed during an economic crisis there was a peak in suicides, would the service be flexible to cope if there was another recession
- Concerns about social media sites which inform how to commit suicide
- Learning from best practice
- The importance of working with the local faith groups
- The percentage of GP appointments where mental health issues are discussed and the sign posting of patients to other support services
- Whether there was an intention to open a crisis café in Coventry
- The option of using Council infrastructure to publicise mental health support services, for example the totems, around the city or attaching notices to bins.

Members were offered the opportunity to go out on the Street Triage to see how people with problems were being supported.

The Chair, Councillor Gannon congratulated Alex Cotton on her recent award of an MBE for her services to mental health.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The progress update for the Suicide Prevention Strategy be noted and its ongoing delivery be supported.**
- (2) The proposals outlined as part of the funding for suicide prevention among middle aged men in Coventry and Warwickshire be supported.**
- (3) GPs be encouraged to collect and share details of ethnicity on patient information to allow for identification and consideration of suicide issues in specific communities.**
- (4) The Steering Group be requested to consider the inclusion of working with different Faith Groups in the Suicide Prevention Strategy.**
- (5) Consideration to be given to the use of Council infrastructure ie the totems around the city, to raise awareness of where to go for support when feeling suicidal.**
- (6) Consideration to be given to using paid search campaigns to raise awareness and correct signposting of where help and support can be accessed.**
- (7) Officers to look at the use of the wording ‘suicide-safer communities’ which is contained within the strategy.**

4. Work Programme 2018-19

The Scrutiny Board considered their work programme for the new municipal year, which included items carried forward from the previous year. The briefing note also set out the items put forward for possible inclusion in the Board’s work programme from the All Member Informal Scrutiny Meeting on 18th June, 2018.

The Board were informed of the need for an additional meeting and workshop to be held in September to consider Adult Social Care.

It was suggested that a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider issues around mental health and Councillors Gannon and Hetherton expressed an interest in serving on this Group. Councillor Kershaw reported that he would soon be in a position to report back to the Board with 3 to 4 recommendations from the Social, Emotional and Mental Health in Schools Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The items identified at the All Member Informal Scrutiny meeting on 18th June, 2018 be included on the Board’s work programme for the current year.**
- (2) Arrangements be put in place for a workshop and an additional meeting of the Board to be held in September to consider Adult Social Care.**
- (3) The work programme be approved.**

(4) A Task and Finish Group be established to look at aspects of mental health, still to be determined, comprising Councillor Gannon and Hetherton and several other Councillors.

5. Any other items of Public Business

There were no additional items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.10 pm)