

<b>HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>16 JANUARY 2020</b>
<b>SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY 2019-2023</b>
<b>REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE</b>

**1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To receive information on the Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-23.

**2 Action required**

- 2.1 To consider the information provided and use it to inform questioning, and make recommendations, where appropriate.

**3 Background information**

- 3.1 Following recommendations from the Parliamentary Health Select Committee, the Health Scrutiny Committee decided to review the implementation of Nottingham Suicide Prevention Plan, including how partners are working together to ensure its effectiveness in reducing suicide by Nottingham City citizens at its meeting on 22 February 2018.
- 3.2 Members of the Suicide Prevention Steering Group, including, Jane Bethea (Consultant in Public Health), Nick Romilly (Insight Specialist, Public Health), Ian Ridley (the Samaritans), and Pamela Dowson (Nottinghamshire Police) and Adrienne Grove (Harmless) were in attendance to present the report and respond to the Committee's questions, and provided the following information:
- (a) suicide was a preventable death which nationally affected approximately 48,000 people per year, including friends and family of the person who committed suicide and those who may have witnessed or responded to the suicide;
  - (b) the highest risk group of the population was males aged between 35 and 69 years old;
  - (c) the number of suicides in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire per year was low at between 23-25 per year, which was in line with the national trend, but still considered too many;
  - (d) the Local Suicide Strategy was in line with the National Suicide Strategy but an understanding of local patterns of suicide was needed to enable an effective preventative response. The Public Health Team worked closely with the Coroner and did in-depth analysis to consider which therapies work and if they were available to those in need;
  - (e) regional data was gathered to try and identify clusters and patterns of suicide. It was recognised that people affected by suicide were themselves at risk of suicide;
  - (f) 'Harmless' was a user led organisation working with those affected by self-harm (a potential indicator for suicide) and their families, and

runs the suicide prevention programme 'The Tomorrow Project'. Harmless also worked with other partner organisations including the Samaritans and the Police;

- (g) how the media reported suicide was very important. A good relationship with local and national media had been established and suicides were often more sensitively reported as 'incidents';
- (h) the funding period for suicide prevention training of frontline staff, provided by Harmless, had come to an end;
- (i) with financial restrictions, there was concern as to the level of future funding available to support suicide prevention in Nottingham City and the escalation of risks which could occur if future adequate funding was not available;
- (j) the Samaritans offered non-judgemental support on the telephone and welcomed anyone to talk to them. In addition to the telephone service, the Samaritans were also recruiting and training prison listeners amongst inmates to provide peer support;
- (k) HealthWatch welcomed the suicide prevention and suicide bereavement support available, but highlighted that the current system did not cater for citizens with chaotic lifestyles and often operated with waiting lists for intervention services, which needed to be addressed.

3.3 The Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-2023 is an update of the Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention Framework for Action 2015-2018 and the Nottingham City Suicide Prevention Strategy 2015-2018. It was developed in partnership by the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group, which includes members from the following organisations:

- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- British Transport Police
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group
- Newark and Sherwood Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS England
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- University of Nottingham
- Nottingham Trent University
- Harmless (a user led organisation that provides a range of services about self-harm and suicide prevention).

3.4 A public consultation on the draft strategy was held between 10 July and 7 August 2019, following which a refined draft was produced that takes into account feedback received as part of the consultation. The Nottingham City Health and Wellbeing Board endorsed the strategy at its meeting on 25 September 2019.

- 3.5 Colleagues from the Council and partner organisations will be in attendance at the meeting to present information and answer questions from the Committee.

**4 List of attached information**

- 4.1 Suicide Prevention Strategy report from Public Health, and the Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-23.

**5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information**

- 5.1 None.

**6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

- 6.1 Health Scrutiny Committee report and minutes dates 22 February 2018, and the Suicide Prevention Strategy 2019-23.

**7 Wards affected**

- 7.1 All.

**8 Contact information**

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