

Report to Cabinet

20 July 2022

Subject:	Sandwell Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care & Health Cllr Suzanne Hartwell
Director:	Director of Public Health Dr Lisa McNally
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Consultant in Public Health Dr Lina Martino lina_martino@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to publish and promote the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan, as set out in Appendix A and B, subject to any required revisions.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The draft Strategy and Action Plan have been through a statutory 60-day public consultation and have been revised to reflect feedback from Sandwell residents and partner/stakeholder organisations.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people This is an all age Strategy & Action Plan that includes actions specific to children and young people, aligning to the Black Country CYP SP subgroup. CYP were specifically targeted during the 60-day consultation via the SHAPE forum to ensure that their voices were heard.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well Suicide is the leading cause of death for men under 50, and even one death by suicide can have wide-reaching impacts across families and communities. Every suicide prevented can have a positive impact on many more people. The Strategy & Action Plan include a range of measures to prevent deaths by suicide, balancing universal action to improve wellbeing among our residents with more targeted action to ensure that they are supported in their communities to access the help they need.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities Strengthening community resilience through training, awareness raising and capacity building is a key element of the Strategy & Action Plan. The Strategy & Action Plan have been developed through the Sandwell SP Partnership, which includes representation from across services and sectors that contribute to improving population mental wellbeing and preventing suicide. The Strategy & Action Plan have a much wider focus than mental health services, recognising the complex relationship between the various factors associated with risk of suicide. A key focus is on improving partnership working and information sharing so that we can act early to prevent suicide, and residents are always able to access the help they need.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods N/A</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy Employment is one of the key factors associated with mental wellbeing. Involving employment services in suicide prevention activity (e.g. staff training) can help to promote a more inclusive economy that meets the needs of all our residents.</p>





A connected and accessible Sandwell
N/A

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Sandwell had a preliminary Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan which were drafted at the start of 2020. A local Suicide Prevention Needs Assessment was carried out to re-assess the local situation and current programmes of work in light of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings and recommendations were endorsed by Health & Wellbeing Board in September 2021.
- 4.2 The local Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan were updated through the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership, and links to the Black Country-wide Suicide Prevention Plan have been developed with the Black Country Suicide Prevention Group, which identifies common priority areas to be addressed through NHSE/I Suicide Prevention funding.
- 4.3 The principal priority is that by 2030, no-one will die of suicide in Sandwell. This ambition is also a key priority for the Sandwell Good Mental Health Strategy, reflecting the importance of good mental health in delivering an effective suicide prevention plan. These form part of a suite of interlinked strategies that also include Autism, Dementia and Child Mental Health.
- 4.4 The draft Strategy & Action Plan were released for public consultation on 20 December 2021 for the statutory 60-day period, supported by a communications plan to ensure maximum reach and representation across our diverse communities. We also worked with voluntary and community sector organisations to engage seldom heard residents and service users.
- 4.5 Feedback from the consultation suggested that the priority areas identified were generally the right ones, with individuals and organisations ranking them similarly in terms of relative importance. However, different groups placed greater emphasis on some of the areas (e.g. children & young people ranked priorities around information and intelligence more highly). The consultation also



highlighted gaps around domestic violence & abuse, and individuals in contact with the criminal justice system.

- 4.6 The draft was revised to address these gaps, as well as amending timelines where possible to reflect higher priority actions (taking into account that some of the actions are already ongoing/concurrent with one another, and differences between groups in perceived importance of priority areas).

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The alternative would be for the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership to continue our work without a supporting Strategy & Action Plan.

This would compromise the effectiveness and efficiency of our work by making it more difficult to: plan and monitor progress; ensure alignment with other relevant strategies, programmes and partnerships (e.g. Black Country Suicide Prevention Partnership, Sandwell Better Mental health Programme and Strategy Group); assess impact; and identify gaps in provision and support.



6 Implications

Resources:	This work is being led by Sandwell Public Health staff as part of the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership, with much of the focus on improving partnership working across the system. Although identifying possible funding sources for further work is included in the Action Plan, there are currently no budget or land/building implications associated with this proposal.
Legal and Governance:	Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions: None
Risk:	The main risk is disruption to the work programme that will compromise delivery of the Strategy & Action Plan. This is currently being mitigated by the current governance arrangements and dedicated resource to support delivery. There is also potential risk around information sharing where personal data are exchanged between partners – developing Information Sharing Agreements with support from the Information Management Team will mitigate this risk.
Equality:	A focus on protected and marginalised groups is a key part of the Action Plan, therefore it is anticipated that this work will have a positive impact on reducing inequalities.
Health and Wellbeing:	In addition to reducing inequalities in health, the Strategy & Action Plan are expected to contribute to the wider wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.
Social Value	Every death by suicide has wide-reaching social and economic impacts. Preventing suicide will therefore have a range of beneficial impacts on Sandwell’s residents and communities.

7. Appendices

- Appendix A: Sandwell Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Appendix B: Sandwell Suicide Prevention Action Plan
- Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment



8. Background Papers

None

