

Item No. 11.	Classification: Open	Date: 13 March 2018	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan, 2017-2022	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Richard Livingstone, Adult Care and Financial Inclusion	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Every suicide is a tragic event with devastating impacts on family, friends and communities. Sadly, many of us in Southwark will have been directly or indirectly impacted by suicide.

Like many parts of the country, our borough has seen an increasing trend in the number of suicides over the last decade. Whilst suicide rates in London tend to be lower than the national average, this is not the case in Southwark and it is clear that we need a new strategy to replace the one published back in 2005.

Our Suicide Prevention Strategy sets out how we will reduce suicide, attempted suicide and self harm, with the ambition that we have one of the lowest rates in London. Our medium term target on this journey is to reduce the number of suicides in the borough by at least 10% over the next five years.

The work in this strategy builds on the experiences in public health since that 2005 strategy was agreed, particularly the work of Public Health England and the Independent Mental Health Taskforce. It adopts as a framework the seven priority areas outlined in the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

The strategy also sets out how we will work with our partners to achieve this, in particular making use of the stakeholders that have come together to form Southwark's Suicide Prevention Steering Group.

Crucially, this strategy does not sit in isolation but is fully aligned with the Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy agreed by Cabinet, Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group and the Health and Wellbeing Board in January.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet are invited to approve the Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In January 2017 the then Secretary of State for Health Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP wrote to local authorities asking each local authority to develop a local suicide

prevention strategy by the end of 2017. This came on the back of an inquiry by the House of Commons' Health Select Committee into suicide prevention and new guidance issued by Public Health England.

3. Southwark last refreshed its suicide strategy in 2005 and since the new Southwark Public Health team was formed in June 2016, there was no existing forum for suicide prevention within the borough.
4. Southwark public health directorate has spent the last year bringing partners together around suicide prevention. A multi-stakeholder expert steering group has been established and one of the first activities of the group has been the co-production of a new suicide prevention strategy and action plan. The 2017-22 strategy and action plan was reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in November 2017 and was recommended for approval by Cabinet.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. Southwark's Suicide Prevention Steering Group met for the first time on 7 February 2017 and, in-line with national guidance, committed to developing a new strategy and action plan by year's end.
6. To inform the strategy Southwark's Public Health Team completed a health needs assessment on suicide and self-harm in Southwark as part of the 2016-17 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).
7. The new Southwark strategy identifies seven priority areas for action that have been built around the recommendations outlined in Public Health England's National Suicide Prevention Strategy and tailored to local needs:
 - Reduce the risk of suicide in high risk groups
 - Tailoring approaches to improve mental health across all communities
 - Prevention of suicide in high risk locations and reducing access to the means of suicide
 - Providing better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
 - Supporting the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
 - Reducing rates of self-harm as a key indicator of suicide risk
 - Supporting research, data collection, monitoring and information sharing.
8. The strategy vision draws on guidance published in the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health by the independent Mental Health Taskforce which sets a national ambition to reduce the suicide rate in England by 10 per cent by 2020-21. Southwark has therefore set an ambition to reduce the number of suicides across the borough by at least 10% over the five years of the strategy as well as reduce the incidence of self-harm and attempted suicide.
9. In order to realise the above vision, Southwark's Suicide Prevention Steering Group and partners have committed to implementing over 30 actions over the first two years of the strategy.
10. At the 18-month point of the strategy, the Steering Group will look to revise the action plan and again seek approval from the Health and Wellbeing Board.

11. In order to monitor progress against the actions that partners have committed to undertaking, a monitoring and evaluation framework has been proposed. The framework focuses on near-real time monitoring of suspected suicide, attempted suicide and self-harm as well as local published rates of suicide attempted suicide and self-harm. It is intended that reporting on the strategy would be undertaken alongside the updates from the Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy that passed Cabinet in January 2018.
12. Due to the registration delay in reporting suicides - the median registration delay for suicides in London in 2015 was 192 days - and the relatively low number of local cases annually, suicides are reported over a three-year period. Therefore, we recognise that we will not be able to measure the number of suicides in Southwark five years from now, in 2022, until 2025. Therefore, in order to determine success we will look to assess the trajectory in suicide rate at the end of the strategy period, using data for 2018-20.

Policy implications

13. Public Health England and the Independent Mental Health Taskforce have published guidance for local suicide planning and highlighted three main recommendations for local authorities:
 - Establish a multi-agency suicide prevention group involving all key statutory agencies and voluntary organisations
 - Explore opportunities to work with the local coroner court to complete a suicide audit
 - Develop a suicide prevention strategy and/or action plan that is based on the national strategy and local data.
14. With the new strategy and action plan Southwark will meet two of three above points.
15. We have committed to exploring opportunities to work with HM Coroner to carry out a suicide audit as part of the action plan and a draft information sharing protocol was shared with HM Coroner in summer 2017. The Director of Health and Wellbeing wrote to HM Senior Coroner for Inner South London on 12 February 2018 in an effort to accelerate collaboration.

Community impact statement

16. Southwark Public Health published a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on suicide and self harm in 2017 that identified groups (including those with protected characteristics) at greater risk on the basis of national data. The document is provided as a background document (page 5). The Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan sets out to reduce those inequalities. In-line with the council's Public Sector Equality Duty, the Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan will continue to undertake analysis as part of the planned suicide audit to better understand the differential impact of suicide and self harm on the many communities within Southwark and, in due course, bring forward recommendations to mitigate those risks.

Resource implications

17. The on-going coordination of Southwark's Suicide Prevention Steering Group, monitoring of progress against actions and delivery of actions will be absorbed into daily work activities.
18. No further resource is required.

Legal implications

19. Please see the comments of the Director of Law and Democracy below.

Financial implications

20. None.

Consultation

21. The Suicide Prevention Steering Group comprises Southwark Council, NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, London Ambulance Service, the rail industry, British Transport Police, the Metropolitan Police Service, the Samaritans and other voluntary sector organisations.
22. A public consultation event, led by Councillor Richard Livingstone and Dr Richard Pinder (Consultant in Public Health), was held on 1 November 2017. Key areas of feedback from the event have been incorporated into the strategy and action plan and we will continue to engage with partners over the lifetime of the action plan.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

23. The community impact statement notes that an equality analysis will be undertaken as part of the new Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan, and this will allow the council to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires it to have due regard to the needs of individuals and groups having a protected characteristic under the Act. There are no other specific legal implications arising from this report.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FC17/078)

24. This report is requesting cabinet to approve the suicide prevention strategy and action plan. Details are provided within the main body of the report.
25. The strategic director of finance and governance notes there are no financial implications arising from this report.
26. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

Other officers

27. None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
JSNA Suicide & Self Harm 2017	Southwark Public Health Directorate 1 st Floor 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2 QH	Richard Pinder 07825 693 831
Link (copy and paste into your browser): http://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/5714/JSNA%202017%20-%20Suicide%20%20Self%20Harm%2020171130.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan – circulated separately

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Richard Livingstone, Adult Care and Financial Inclusion	
Lead Officer	Professor Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing	
Report Author	Richard Pinder; Carolyn Sharpe, Public Health	
Version	Final	
Dated	1 March 2018	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		1 March 2018