

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**06 February 2017**

**Report of the Director of Public Health**

**SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**1. Purpose of the report:**

To provide the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities with an update on work to reduce the number of deaths from suicide in Derbyshire and to gain approval for Derbyshire County Council to become a member of the National Suicide Prevention Alliance.

**2. Information and analysis:**

In England, one person dies every two hours as a result of suicide, and the impact on family, friends and local communities can be devastating. The factors that cause an individual to contemplate suicide are complex, but suicides are not inevitable. No single organisation can address all the factors that may contribute towards a suicide, and for this reason, professionals, service-receivers, community groups, volunteers and individuals need to work together to reduce the risks of suicide.

Local authorities are responsible for the co-ordination of suicide prevention work at a local level, including development and implementation of local suicide prevention action plans.

**Deaths from suicide in Derbyshire**

In 2015, there were 83 deaths from suicides in Derbyshire. Historically, the rate of suicides has been significantly lower in Derbyshire than England. However, a large increase in the number of suicides between 2013 and 2014 (from 46 in 2013 to 86 in 2014) means that the Derbyshire rate is now similar to the national figure.

Suicides are more common in males, with 84% of the deaths from suicide in Derbyshire in 2015 amongst men. The highest rates are amongst those aged 20 to 49 years. Just over half of all deaths from suicide occur in the home, with other key locations being outdoors (in parks, woodlands, car parks and commercial buildings), and on roads, waterways and railways. Amongst men, the most common method of suicide is hanging, and amongst women the most common methods are overdose and hanging.

## **Derbyshire Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum**

The Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum (SPPF) oversees work to reduce the number of deaths from suicides in Derbyshire, and their impact on families, friends and communities. The SPPF has a broad membership which includes representatives from Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council, British Transport Police, Network Rail, the Samaritans, Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Derbyshire Police, Derbyshire CCGs, Derbyshire Mental Health Forum, North Derbyshire Voluntary Action, Relate and Rural Action Derbyshire.

The SPPF oversees implementation of the Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework, which outlines the priorities and key actions for reducing deaths from suicide in Derbyshire. Actions completed over the last 12 months have included:

- establishment of a data group to collate and review data from health, social care, police and Network Rail to enable a more timely response to concerns and risks within communities, including early identification of possible suicide clusters and high-risk locations.
- work with Network Rail, the Samaritans and community organisations to reduce the number of suicides on the railways through identification of high-frequency locations and implementation of actions to mitigate the risk, such as physical alterations to the rail and station environment, training railway staff and community volunteers to be able to identify an individual in emotional distress and respond appropriately, and distribution of information
- in the 12 months to September 2016, 284 individuals attended Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training. Feedback from attendees 6 months after the training indicates that the knowledge and skills learned are being practically implemented in their daily roles
- suicide prevention work has been incorporated within the work of the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership. This includes work to mitigate suicide risk at a small number of higher-frequency locations including staff training, distribution and display of resources and the planning approval for preventative measures
- in conjunction with Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board, SPPF members have supported development and implementation of self-harm practice guidelines for professionals to recognise and respond appropriately to young people who have, or are at risk of, self-harm
- an event was held at Derby County Football Club on World Suicide Prevention Day in September 2016. Members of the SPPF, mental health service-users and representatives from community and voluntary organisations provided information and support to fans before the match, and this was complemented by a video of Derby

County players talking about the importance of people being able to talk about their mental health

- Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust has trained over 700 staff in suicide prevention, and this will be expanded to other staff in 2017. A similar approach will also be extended to GP practice staff during 2017.

An annual Stakeholder Event is held to engage with a broader cohort of individuals and organisations that have an interest in the suicide prevention agenda. Approximately 80 individuals attended the Stakeholder Event at Little Eaton Community Centre in October 2016.

Following the Stakeholder Event and subsequent discussion at the SPPF, the following priorities have been identified for SPPF to implement in 2017:

- developing resources that provide information on higher risk groups and possible trigger signs to circulate to front-line staff, for example in job centres, welfare advice services, and housing support services
- develop a systematic approach to the use of suicide prevention safety plans based on an individual's needs
- map key contact points for those bereaved or affected by suicide and develop a consistent offer of support from these services
- develop the suicide prevention role of community-based staff

### **National Suicide Prevention Alliance**

The National Suicide Prevention Alliance (NSPA) is an alliance of public, private voluntary and community organisations in England who care about suicide prevention and have committed to taking action to reduce deaths from suicide and support those affected by suicide. Any organisation can become a member of the NSPA by:

- signing a declaration and membership agreement committing the organisation to work to reduce the number of deaths from suicides, support those affected by suicide, and meet the aims of the NSPA
- make available an organisational suicide prevention action plan
- nominate an individual to represent the organisation within the NSPA. [It is proposed that Iain Little, Consultant in Public Health at Derbyshire County Council and chair of Derbyshire SPPF is nominated on behalf of Derbyshire County Council.]

Members of NSPA have access to information, reports and good practice guidance to further develop their suicide prevention plans, and can collaborate and share information with other member organisations. Member organisations have their name displayed on the NSPA website and in their annual report to demonstrate the commitment to suicide

prevention. Within Derbyshire, Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is already an NSPA member.

**3. Financial considerations**

There are no costs associated with becoming a member of the National Suicide Prevention Alliance.

**4. Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

**5. Background papers:**

[Deaths from suicide and undetermined injury in Derby and Derbyshire – 2015 registered deaths](#)

[Derbyshire Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework 2015-17](#)

**6. Key Decision:**

No

**7. Call-in:**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No

**8. Officer's Recommendation:**

That the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities notes the work underway to reduce the number of, and impact from, deaths from suicide in Derbyshire, and approves Derbyshire County Council becoming a member of the National Suicide Prevention Alliance.

**Dean Wallace**  
**Director of Public Health**