

# Birmingham City Council

## Health, Adult and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024.



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**Subject:** Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum, objectives and outcomes.

**Report of:** Cllr Rob Pocock, Interim Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

**Report author:** Jane Itangata, Service Lead Public Mental Health and Wellbeing.

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum and the plans for developing a 'Creating a Mentally Healthy City Strategy'.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Health, Adult and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of this update. The Committee is invited to provide oversight of the framework approach to the co-production of the Creating a Mentally Healthy City strategy.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Mental Health is 'a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. Creating a city that enables this is much broader than the provision of clinical mental health support and requires action across the life course.
- 3.2 Compared to England and the West Midlands region, Birmingham is disproportionately affected by poor mental wellbeing. Currently, there is a higher-than-average prevalence of depression and anxiety in adults. It also has a much greater proportion of people (10.4%) self-reporting a low life satisfaction score compared to England (6.1%) and the West Midlands (6.5%).
- 3.3 According to the Birmingham COVID-19 Impact Survey, by July 2020 more than half (53%) said their mental health had deteriorated since the pandemic started. The impacts on mental wellbeing included bereavement, loneliness, and common

mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression. Through non-recurrent additional funding the Council was able to mobilise 14 interventions specifically addressing these issues including: counselling support for women affected by domestic and/or sexual violence, specialist LGBT affirmative person-centred counselling, bereavement support targeted in the most deprived areas of the City and at identified Health Inclusion Groups.

- 3.4 There are further inequalities highlighted in the Health and Wellbeing (H&W) strategy, within the city with more deprived wards reporting lower resilience and poorer mental wellbeing, particularly in children. Equally, there are inequalities within certain communities, such as the LGBTQ+ community, who face an increased risk of suicide and self-harm.

## 4 The Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum

- 4.1 The 'Creating a Mentally Health City Forum' (CMHCF) is a sub-committee of the statutory Health and Wellbeing Board (see figure 1). It was formally established in 2019 just prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Forum has a focus on developing an evidence-based approach to prevention and the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing across the city, so every citizen can thrive and achieve their potential. It works in partnership with the NHS led clinical services partnership groups which focus on access to treatment and care for individuals with clinical mental health issues. The forums Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix 1.

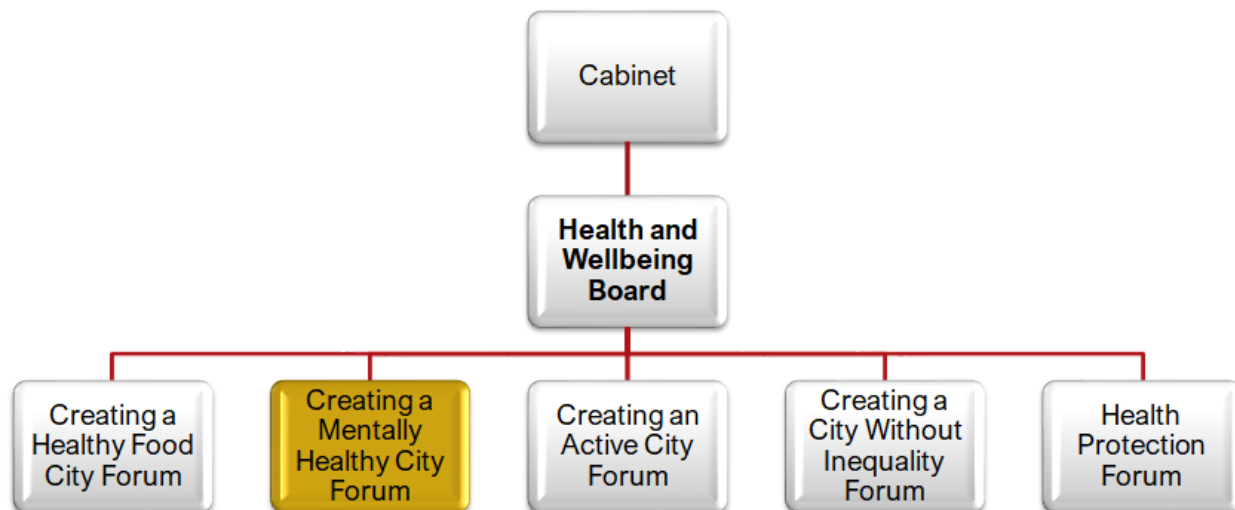


Figure 1: Health and Wellbeing Board Governance

- 4.2 The Council is committed through the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy to creating a mentally healthy city where every citizen is supported to achieve good mental wellness and balance to navigate life's challenges. The Health and Wellbeing Board through the strategy has set 9 ambitions to be achieved and has tasked the CMCF with overseeing the delivery of the ambitions of the Health and Wellbeing strategy. The ambitions of the H&W strategy that relate to mental wellbeing are, to work together to:

- Reduce the prevalence of depression and anxiety in adults from 21.1% to less than 12% by 2030.
- Reduce our suicide rate (persons) in the city to be in the lowest ten places in England by 2030 from 37<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 153 Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA).
- Reduce the emergency intentional self-harm admission rate to be within the lowest ten places in England by 2030 from 83<sup>rd</sup> lowest out of 153 Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA).
- Reduce the smoking prevalence in adults with a long-term mental health condition to at least the national average by 2027.
- Close the gap between people with long-term health conditions, explicitly including those with severe and enduring mental health issues, and both those in employment and those without.
- Achieve the ambitions of Triple Zero: i.e., to have zero deaths or overdoses linked to alcohol or drugs by 2030, and no-one living with substance addictions in the absence of support services.
- Work with the voluntary sector and faith leaders to embed early intervention, brief advice, and signposting in all services.
- Take proactive steps to close the inequalities in employment and education for people with long term conditions, including those with severe and enduring mental health issues.
- Deliver the targets set out in the Triple Zero Strategy to tackle harm from drugs and alcohol in our city.

4.2 The Forum meets on a bi-monthly basis and is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care. It has one formal sub-group currently, the Suicide Prevention Advisory Group (SPAG), which leads on the implementation of the Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

4.3 The CMHCF works with partners and organisations including the NHS, academics, voluntary sector, faith groups, and most importantly local communities. This enables coordination and co-production of place-based, upstream approaches to positive mental health and wellbeing, that reduce the need for clinical interventions. The Forum membership and Terms of Reference are being reviewed in Spring 2024 as part of a general review of Health and Wellbeing Board sub-group structures.

4.4 To focus the efforts of the forum, members will collaborate to produce The Creating a Mentally Healthy City strategy with a view to launch in Spring 2025.

## **5 Co-producing the Birmingham Mentally Healthy City strategy**

5.1 According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), a Healthy city is one that continually creates and improves its physical and social environments and

expands the community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential.

- 5.2 The purpose of the strategy will be to lay out the strategic approach required to build a mentally healthy city where people are empowered and enabled to remain well. It will be a document that will be aligned with Health and Wellbeing Board's Priorities and guide the development of a Creating a Mentally Healthy City Strategic Action Plan (The Framework for Action) which will be a living document.
- 5.3 The Strategy will connect with the NHS led strategy for clinical treatment and care for people living with mental health issues. The Mental Health Provider Collaborative (MHPC) are in the process of undertaking a Mental Health Needs Assessment and Experience of Care exercise to inform their strategy focused on meeting the needs of those with mental ill health and their plans for the delivery of treatment and care. As active members of the Forum, the Collaborative will ensure these two strategic approaches seamlessly align to complement each other.
- 5.4 The strategy will be co-produced and led by members of CMHCF jointly with city-wide partners and citizens to ensure voices from a variety of backgrounds across the City influence its development and delivery. The co-production approach will draw on the methodology and learning from the recent Food and Physical Activity strategies as well as the national and international evidence of what works to improve mental wellbeing.
- 5.5 Co-production is focused on a relationship in which professionals and citizens share the power to plan and deliver improved outcomes. It is about seeing people as assets with skills and knowledge that they can bring to the table, no longer being a passive recipient of services. This will ensure that professionals, service users and citizens are equal partners in decision making, designing and delivering of the strategy. There will be extensive engagement through Community Engagement Workshops and Stakeholder Workshops to ensure the voice of Citizens informs the type of a Mentally Healthy City people would like to see.
- 5.6 The strategy will be informed by a literature review which will assess the positive and negative impact cities have on mental health and wellbeing and explores the building blocks required to create a mentally healthy city at individual, community and place levels.
- 5.7 The presentation in Appendix 2 describes the framework approach for developing the strategy.
- 5.8 Proposed timeline for developing the strategy:



Figure 2: Strategy Timeline

## 6 Suicide Prevention

- 6.1 In 2012, Preventing suicide in England: a cross government outcomes strategy to save lives, was published by the Department of Health. Reports produced by the Department Health & Social Care in 2014 & the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Suicide and Self-harm Prevention in 2015, recommended that all local authorities in England develop local Suicide Prevention Strategies and Action Plans, with oversight from Multi-agency Suicide Prevention Groups.
- 6.2 In response, the Birmingham Suicide Prevention strategy with an embedded Action Plan was published in 2019 and runs to 2024. The Suicide Prevention Advisory Group (SPAG) which reports to the Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum (and Health and Wellbeing Board), was set up for governance.
- 6.3 The government later launched a refreshed national 5-year suicide prevention strategy in September 2023 and has asked that all relevant employers, local government, NHS and VCFSE organisations to “review their plans and approaches to ensure alignment with this new strategy”.
- 6.4 With Birmingham’s current Suicide Prevention strategy ending, and the new research and priorities laid out in the government strategy, there is opportunity to develop a new strategy which is both aligned to national priorities, and which takes our unique population into account. The proposed objective is to have a co-produced suicide prevention strategy and action plan as a clearly defined sub-strategy to the Creating a Mentally Healthy City Strategy. This will build on lived experience, promote partnerships across the city and explore a new way of understanding suicide prevention across the continuum to best meet the needs of our citizens. The strategy will be refreshed as part of the work underway to develop a Mentally Healthy City strategy.
- 6.5 A BSol 5-year Coronial Audit has been undertaken and is awaiting validation from the Coroner. The validation has been delayed due to competing priorities in the Coroner’s office. The audit combined with local intelligence gathered in collaboration with partners during the coproduction of the strategy, will provide a

sound basis and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing suicide trends.

- 6.6 This will better inform review and updating of plans to ensure resulting interventions are tailored to respond specifically and effectively to identified needs with clear lines of ownership for actions in the plans. However, if the coronial audit is further delayed the plan will be updated without this information, using the other data sets, and updated if needed when the audit data is available.
- 6.7 For Corporate oversight, Priority 6 of the Action Plan which focuses on Research, Data collection and Monitoring, is included in the quarterly Performance and Delivery Monitoring Report to Cabinet. The activity relates to updating the Suicide Prevention Action Plan by incorporating the BSol 5-year Coronial Audit.
- 6.8 Work is commencing soon with education partners to deliver a school's suicide postvention policy, which will give schools the resources they need to minimise risk to the school community should a pupil or staff member die by suicide. The policy will include support and guidance on how to coordinate a critical incident response, communications guidance, and a directory which agencies schools should communicate with to support their communities. Once the policy has been written, engagement activities will be delivered to ensure the policy is disseminated to schools and they have the training needed to implement it safely.

## **7 Other commissioned projects**

- 7.1 The Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum also has oversight of several other commissioned projects.
- 7.2 We commissioned Thinks Insight & Strategy to conduct a 3-month real-time listening exercise via video blogs and written blogs in Birmingham called 'The Price we Can't Pay'. The Price we Can't Pay aims to develop a better picture of the most poorly understood impacts of the Cost-of-living crisis: the impact on mental health. The final report will enable the Council to hear the real voices of a cross section of the population in Birmingham, with recommendations that will inform the developing Mentally Healthy City strategy. The report will be presented at the Creating a Mentally Health City Forum meeting on 18.04.2024.
- 7.3 We have commissioned Barnardo's to work in partnership with Our Place, Birmingham City University (BCU) and other Early Help providers on the development and delivery of a new Peer Mentoring Service with a focus on young people aged 16-25 years from LGBT+ communities, young people with disabilities and young people from Black, Asian and other minority and diverse ethnicities was put out to open tender and awarded to Barnardo's. The overall aim for the service is to encourage community wellbeing and cohesion through the creation of a self-sufficient network of support and signposting. Constructing a preventive community lead approach to tackling the challenges faced by specific and wider members of the community ensures they get the support needed on their specific personal journeys. This is a 3 year (to 2025-26) joint

funded project by Children and Young People Team and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team.

- 7.4 We have commissioned a data analyst for 1 year to understand the needs presenting and trends of usage of the Mind Mental Healthline to inform future prevention work and the development of the Creating a Mentally Healthy City strategy. The role will develop a system dashboard, maintained by Mind to support continued analysis post our funding.
- 7.5 We are in the process of completing the procurement of Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) training for barbers across the City. The aim is to train 100 barbers from a variety of communities, with a focus on deprived areas as well as identified Health Inclusion groups across Birmingham, to allow effective recognition, signposting and communication regarding mental health with their clients and community. Barbers are frontline workers who interact and communicate with people daily. Their shops are often seen as safe places with important social and cultural functions, acting as safe spaces for men. Relationships are built with regular conversations between barbers and clients. Providing mental health and wellbeing training to barbers enables them to recognise, ask, listen and help those in their chairs to reduce stigma, increase awareness and encourage help seeking behaviours. This project will contribute to priority 1.1 of the Birmingham Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan, a reduction in the risk of suicide in high-risk groups, in this instance men.

## **8 Any Finance Implications**

- 8.1 This report is for information only and there are no decisions requested within the report that are likely to have any direct financial implications on the Council.
- 8.2 All funding is met wholly through the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant.
- £75,000 has been approved to co-produce the Mentally Healthy strategy.
  - £28,500 was approved for the co-production of the Suicide Prevention strategy and Action Plan strand.
  - The Price we Can't Pay was commissioned at £53,000.
  - The Barbers project has an approved budget of £23,000.
  - The Mental Health and Wellbeing budget for the Children and Young People Peer Mentoring service is £55,000 per year.
  - £33,844 was set aside for the Mind analyst role.

## **9 Any Legal Implications**

- 9.1 Currently, there are no legal implications.

## **10 Any Equalities Implications**

- 10.1 The ambition of the Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum is “Creating a Mentally Healthy City where every citizen is supported to achieve good mental wellness and balance to navigate life’s challenges”.
- 10.2 The Birmingham Community Health Profiles explore evidence for specific communities within Birmingham. The profiles highlight the multi-layered barriers and inequalities faced by each community in relation to their everyday lives and highlight gaps in the existing evidence base and all include detail on Mental Wellness and Balance. The profiles highlight inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.
- 10.3 Coproducing the Mentally Healthy City strategy will provide opportunity to illuminate and understand the mental wellbeing inequalities faced by our citizens to enable better focused interventions.

## **11 Appendices**

- 11.1 Creating a Mentally Health Forum HASC presentation.
- 11.2 Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum Terms of Reference
- 11.3 Co-production of the Birmingham Mentally Healthy City Strategy