

Appendix 2 – Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum Highlight Report

1. Context

- 1.1 The 'Creating a Mentally Health City Forum' (CMHC) is a sub-committee of the statutory Health and Wellbeing Board. The forum focusses on developing an evidence-based approach to prevention and promotion of mental health and wellbeing across the city, so every citizen can thrive and achieve their potential.
- 1.2 The CMHC Forum aims to work with partners and organisations including ICS, academics, voluntary sector, faith groups, and most importantly, local communities. The partnership work enables co-production and delivery of place-based approaches to positive mental health and wellbeing, working upstream to increase mental wellness and reduce the need for clinical interventions.

2. Current Situation

2.1 CMHC Forum Framework for Action

- 2.1.1 The April 2023 CMHC Forum took the form of a workshop to gain forum member's feedback into the priorities for the Framework for Action. The following areas were considered, Building our intelligence, Life course, Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality, Inclusion Health Groups and Understanding our Impact.
- 2.1.2 The April 2023 CMHC Forum incorporated feedback from the November 2022 workshop where topic areas for the Framework for Action were confirmed. Prior to the workshop, forum members were sent a pre-reading pack including a summary of the evidence and policy which should inform the shaping of the framework. The forum then focussed their discussion around the following questions:
- What added value can we bring by working together as the Creating a Mentally Healthy City Forum?
 - What is already working well that we can build on?
 - What don't we know and who else do we need to invite in?
 - What are the most important things to include in the Framework for Action?

Feedback from the event has been collated and circulated. In the next forum there will be updates on the work of the Suicide Prevention Advisory Group and Better Mental Health Fund (BMHF).

2.2 Commissioned projects

- 2.2.1 A project has been commissioned better understand the mental health impact of the Cost-of-Living (CoL) Crisis and will be led by Thinks Insight and Strategy - a research agency. The project will involve real-time research with participants across Birmingham to understand the impact of the CoL crisis. There will also be engagement with relevant organisations. This project will be paused until September 2023 to allow it to run into the winter when it is

anticipated that the impact of the CoL crisis is greatest.

- 2.2.2 Mind, a charity supporting mental wellbeing, has been funded through BCC to recruit an analyst to gather real time data on the mental health of Birmingham and Solihull populations using their helpline data which will be accessible in an anonymised dashboard. Interviews are taking place on 19th May and the analyst will be in post for six months. This role should allow BCC and Mind to share intelligence about mental health need across the city.
- 2.2.3 The Better Mental Health Fund (BMHF) programme is complete and six local projects have received additional public health funding to continue to address mental health inequalities in Birmingham. An independent evaluation of the Birmingham projects has been commissioned and the final report will be shared in June 2023.
- 2.2.4 BCC commissioned Polish Expat Association to support tackling mental health inequalities amongst local Polish and Eastern European groups and build stronger relationships with communities. This involves the recruitment of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Engagement Officer for the Central Eastern European community. We have co-created a culturally competent job advert/job description and job interviews were held on 17th May 2023.
- 2.2.5 We are working in partnership with Solihull to bring the national Orange Button Scheme to both local areas. This is a universal, community asset-based based scheme which encourages people locally to wearing an orange button that signifies that they have had quality-assured suicide prevention training. The orange button wearer can speak or hear about suicide without judgement (removing stigma), signpost to appropriate support and create a community of support. Work is ongoing to finalise local assets and training for a cohort to pilot the project launching on 10th September 2023 to commemorate World Suicide Prevention Day.

2.3 Suicide Prevention Action Group update

- 2.3.1 The Suicide Prevention Advisory Group (SPAG) met on the 25th of April 2023 and there was a useful discussion about an upcoming campaign called the Baton of Hope which will be held in Birmingham on the 3rd of July. This is an initiative across the UK to raise awareness about suicide by connecting with communities and professionals using conversations that enable prevention and signposting to appropriate support. Volunteers are sought to be baton bearers at the event and local organisations are encouraged to raise awareness focusing on target demographic groups.
- 2.3.2 The Suicide Prevention Action Plan has been updated and presented to the CMHC forum with feedback expected by 24th of May.

3. Next Steps and Delivery

- Finalise the CMHC forum framework for action
- finalise the Suicide Prevention Action Plan
- Progress the Orange Button Scheme