

****RESPONSE TO NATIONAL CAMPAIGN BY THE SAMARITANS****

Dear Ollie

Thank you for your email to the Leader. As the Vice-Chair of the Suicide Prevention Stakeholder Forum, I would like to respond to the points you raised in your email.

We believe that every local authority should:

- Have a clear suicide prevention plan, supported by a suicide prevention group which includes representatives from all the relevant local organisations, including the voluntary sector

A suicide prevention strategy and action plan is in place and it is overseen by a suicide prevention stakeholder forum with wide, multi-agency representation from across the city. This is chaired by the local Samaritans. Representation includes: a wide range of voluntary sector organisations, Black country partnership mental health foundation trust, Wolverhampton university, Wolverhampton college, Papyrus, Wolverhampton clinical commissioning group, LGBT community, educational psychology, mental health social work, police, network rail, refugee and migrant centre, Head Start (mental health programme for 10-16 year olds), Wolverhampton homes, Recovery near you (substance misuse service) and mental health commissioners.

The strategy is available here <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/stress>

- Have cabinet level leadership to ensure suicide prevention is a top priority and that the plan leads to real action

Councillor Paul Sweet, cabinet member for Public health and well-being, is a key sponsor of this work, as is Councillor Roger Lawrence, the leader of the council, who chairs the Health and Well-Being Board. When the suicide prevention strategy and action plan was presented to the Health and Well-being board in April 2016, it was highly commended by the Board. Since then Councillor Sweet and the Mayor have championed the activities that were organised for Suicide Prevention Week in September 2016 (see attached briefing paper detailing the activities from that week).

- Identify the most at-risk groups and ensure that its approach is tailored towards them

At risk groups have been identified by the suicide prevention needs assessment that was undertaken in 2015.

Each plan must respond to local need, but all local authorities will need to:

- ensure that the help and support which is available in the local area is promoted effectively so that all who require it are aware of it and able to access it when in need. One good way to do this is through community programmes aimed at those least likely to seek help.

The action plan includes the systematic updating of organisations that can offer support on the 'Wolverhampton Information Network'
<http://win.wolverhampton.gov.uk/kb5/wolverhampton/directory/home.page>

Checks are made regularly that the information is up to date. This directory has been regularly disseminated across the network and has been distributed at suicide prevention training events that have been held in March and September 2016.

- work in partnership with hospital trusts in order to ensure that people who attend A&E and are at risk of suicide are always provided with follow-up support

This is an area that was identified at the last meeting as needing more attention and the action plan is in the process of being updated accordingly.

- ensure that services are available to support everyone bereaved by suicide – a particularly high risk group

This is part of the action plan.

You can read more about Samaritans' policy calls here:
www.samaritans.org/localaction

As a constituent and member of the local community, I hope that you will ensure that the local suicide prevention plan in our area addresses all of these points, and is championed at the highest level in the council, in order to reduce the number of people taking their own lives.

I trust that you can see that the Council takes the issue of suicide prevention very seriously. We are proud of the joint work we are doing with the Samaritans and other organisations.

Regards
Neeraj

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