



## READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	8 <sup>th</sup> October, 2021		
REPORT TITLE:	BERKSHIRE SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY 2021-26		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Karen Buckley	TEL:	
JOB TITLE:	Acting Consultant in Public Health	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:Karen.buckley@reading.gov.uk">Karen.buckley@reading.gov.uk</a>
ORGANISATION:	Reading Borough Council		

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-26 (annexed as Appendix A) for approval by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.2 Following publication of the Governments national suicide prevention strategy - Preventing Suicide in England, a cross governmental strategy to save lives (HM Government, 2012), councils were given the responsibility of developing local suicide strategies and action plans through their work with Health and Wellbeing Boards, Clinical Commissioning Groups and wider partners.
- 1.3 This strategy has been developed through the work of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Group, that has representation of partners across the system, and is founded upon local data, intelligence and knowledge.
- 1.4 Appendix A: Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-26  
Appendix B: Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-26: Equality Impact Assessment  
Appendix C: Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-26: Climate Assessment

### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board, having considered the Equality Impact Assessment (annexed as Appendix B) and the Climate Assessment (annexed as Appendix C) approves the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy (2021-26) as set out in Appendix A.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Following the publication of the Governments national strategy for England, Preventing Suicide in England, a cross governmental strategy to save lives (HM Government, 2012) all local authorities are responsible for developing suicide prevention plans through the work of their Health and Wellbeing Boards, Clinical Commissioning Groups and wider partners. It is also reinforced by the Mental Health Taskforce's report to NHS England, The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health (NHS England, 2016).

3.2 The national strategy stresses the importance of engaging with a wide network of stakeholders to develop and deliver these strategies and plans to reduce suicide. Locally, this takes the form of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Group.

#### 4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1.1 This strategy builds on the previous Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy (2017-2020) and serves as a refresh of that strategy, where we take forward the key underlying principles and identify new priorities.

4.2 The vision for this strategy is 'To reduce deaths by suicide in Berkshire across the life course and ensure better knowledge and action around self-harm'.

4.3 The strategy has been developed by the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Group, who have worked together to identify key priority areas, derived from local data, intelligence, trends and action. A small subgroup of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group was responsible for further defining the content for each of the priorities and providing regular updates to and receiving feedback, from the main steering group.

4.4 The priorities of the national suicide prevention strategy (2012), and subsequent progress reports are the guiding principles to how we work to prevent suicide across Berkshire.

The 7 principles for this strategy;

1. Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups
2. Tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
3. Reduce access to the means of suicide
4. Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
5. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
6. Support research, data collection and monitoring
7. Reduce rates of self-harm as a key indicator of suicide risk

4.4 The five core priority areas principally address the national priority to tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups, but the commitment remains to all of the national principles and reducing suicide rates across all population groups. Our local intelligence has demonstrated a need to focus on the following key areas;

1. Children and Young People
2. Self-harm
3. Females
4. Economic stresses
5. People bereaved by suicide

4.5 Whilst these are the agreed strategic priorities across Berkshire, there will remain a need to monitor trends and risk factors, particularly from the impacts of COVID-19 and to respond to latest changes.

#### 5. CONTRIBUTION TO READING'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The strategy directly contributes to current priority 4 - '*Reducing deaths by suicide*' of the Health and Wellbeing Boards strategic aims. The strategy will directly contribute to priority 4 and 5 in the new Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy;

Priority 4 - Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people

## Priority 5 - Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

- 5.2 The strategy directly meets this aim through the vision 'To reduce deaths by suicide in Berkshire across the life course and ensure better knowledge and action around self-harm'.

### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Berkshire Suicide Prevention Plan does not address climate impact directly or indirectly, as it is focussed upon reducing suicide and self-harm across the life course. It is not foreseen that the strategy will have an impact on carbon emissions or resilience to the effects of climate change. The climate assessment is as Climate Assessment Appendix C.

### 7. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 Whilst there has been no formal public consultation, as was done previously, this strategy has a local focus and contains the perspectives from professionals working in the statutory, private and third sector organisations. Colleagues who support people who have been directly affected by suicide have also been involved, who we have worked with sensitively to engage this group with this strategy. The strategy reflects the commitments of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy Group who worked together on identifying the key priorities, which have been derived from reviewing local data, intelligence, and information.

A small subgroup of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group was responsible for further defining the content for each of the priorities and providing regular updates to and receiving feedback, from the main steering group.

- 7.2 Not applicable

### 8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy focusses upon five priority areas that have been chosen due to local data, intelligence and evidence, but the commitment remains to reduce suicide for all residents across Berkshire. Whilst the strategy will have impact on population groups with protected characteristics that have been prioritised, there is no negative impact foreseen. Equality and diversity has been consistently considered throughout the development of this strategy. The Equality Impact Assessment is annexed as Appendix B.

### 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Not applicable

### 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health (NHS England, 2016).  
National strategy for England, Preventing Suicide in England, a cross governmental strategy to save lives (HM Government, 2012)