

Agenda Item	7a
Report No	HC/22/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: The Highland Council

Date: 27 June 2019

Report Title: Promoting Wellbeing:
Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

Report By: Acting Head of Policy

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council is committed to promoting good mental health and wellbeing. This is articulated in the Council's Programme, the Council's Corporate Plan, the Council's Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy and through the partnership Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, which aim that people in Highland will benefit from good mental health and wellbeing.
- 1.2 This report introduces the Council's Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. The Plan has been developed over the last year to capture and monitor a range of activity undertaken across the Council, for staff, members and communities. It also includes activities undertaken in partnership with Community Planning Partners. The Plan reflects actions which emerged from the series of seminars held on mental health and wellbeing for Members last year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - Consider and agree the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
 - Note that ongoing monitoring of the plan will be through the Council's Poverty and Inequality Working Group and appropriate strategic committee, as identified through the Governance Review.

3. Background and Development of the Plan

3.1 The Council is committed to promoting good mental health and wellbeing. This is articulated in the Council's Programme, which includes a commitment to improve mental health crisis response and suicide prevention, the Council's Corporate Plan, the Council's Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy and through the partnership Highland Outcome Improvement Plan (HOIP), which aim that people in Highland will benefit from good mental health and wellbeing.

3.2 As part of this commitment, during 2018 – 2019, a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan for the Highland Council has been developed. This is a 'live' plan where progress is recorded along with capturing new activity. The Plan brings together work across the Council with a specific focus on mental health and wellbeing associated with the Council's role as an employer; the Council's role with its communities; supporting young people; raising awareness with Members; and activities with partners and the wider community.

4. The Action Plan

4.1 The Plan covers the core themes of:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Suicide prevention and awareness
- Bereavement
- Partnership and external activities

The Plan also captures where the actions are promoting good mental health and wellbeing, focusing on suicide awareness, crisis intervention, suicide intervention or postintervention activity.

4.2 The following provides a summary of the key areas of the plan:

4.2.1 *Mental Health and Wellbeing*

The first section of the plan focuses on actions and activity to raise awareness of mental health issues and promote wellbeing. Internally, there remains a focus on promoting and supporting the development of staff mental health representatives whose role it is to promote mental health in the workplace and be a first point of contact for staff with mental health difficulties. Further staff focused actions include the refresh of the employee health and wellbeing strategy, the development of an employee assistance programme and a new approach to resilience and staff engagement, further details of which are outlined below.

In addition to a focus on supporting staff, the Council also has a key role in raising awareness of mental health with the public and promoting good mental health and wellbeing. A number of the actions consider this promotion role and the development

of key information for the public. Mirroring the mental health representative approach, a further action focuses on training senior pupils in schools to provide peer support.

4.2.2 ***Suicide Prevention and Awareness***

As detailed elsewhere on this agenda, developing interventions to address suicide prevention is considered a priority across Community Planning Partners (CPP). Internally, a number of actions underway to provide training and guidance for staff generally and for specific staff groups. Actions within the plan include developing guidance on suicide for professionals working with young people, further development of community-based support for communities experiencing loss through suicide, and the development and roll out of toolbox talks to staff groups. As work across the CPP develops, further actions for this area of the plan are anticipated.

4.2.3 ***Bereavement***

Bereavement is an area previously discussed at Council and highlighted as a key area of focus. The actions within the plan include developing guidance for managers to support staff experiencing bereavement in the workplace; training on bereavement and loss for staff, managers and members with a particular focus upon schools, and the development of materials to be used with pupils.

4.2.4 ***Partnership and external activities***

This section of the plan attempts to capture the range of activities being taken forward in partnership across all strands of the plan. This includes work to be developed through the Choose Life group to address suicide prevention and awareness and the CPP HOIP Delivery Group for Mental Health and Wellbeing. It also covers the partnership training approaches for staff and community groups.

5. **Progress 2018 -2019**

5.1 Notable progress during 2018 – 2019 has included:

5.2 ***Members:***

A series of four seminars took place in 2018 on Mental Health and Wellbeing for elected Members to improve understanding of:

- local challenges in acute mental health services
- lived experience of mental health illness and use of services
- awareness of local community-based support,
- the Council's role as an employer, and support to children, families and schools.

The seminars provided a good opportunity for discussion and enquiry on mental health support, services and individual experience. A number of areas for further action have been identified and are captured within the Plan including:

- Reducing stigma surrounding mental health and increasing awareness

- Increasing understanding of ACEs and linkages with mental health and wellbeing
- Focus on local solutions and local services – understanding of what supports are out there e.g. peer support, community supports.
- Supports for staff and members and community in relation to suicide awareness

5.3 **Staff:**

There is ongoing development of a Mental Health and Wellbeing staff Toolkit which is continually updated and provides employees with advice about caring for their mental health and wellbeing, and management guidance/tools for supporting colleagues. There are now 56 mental health representatives across all services and parts of Highland. Work will continue to increase the number of MHRs including amongst members.

A new approach is being developed towards staff wellbeing for 2019/20. Engagement with staff through the budget engagement process highlighted the importance of supporting and promoting wellbeing across staff groups. The new approach includes the development of staff forums in each area across Highland to enable discussion on matters of key concern and focused on listening and involving staff in decision making. Alongside this will be a series of training sessions developed on resilience, particularly focused on Personal and Team Resilience supporting our employees to look after themselves to ensure a motivated and positive workforce. In addition, all staff with responsibility for others will be required to complete additional Organisational Resilience covering the importance of creating and maintaining a psychologically safe work environment. Included in this new approach to staff wellbeing is specific training on stress management which will be available to staff and members.

A further action to address staff stress and promote wellbeing is set out at item **X.X** on the Council's agenda, setting out a proposal to develop an Employee Assistance Programme for staff and Members during 2019/20. An EAP can assist organisations address issues by helping employees identify and resolve personal concerns that affect job performance. The EAP provides a mechanism for offering counselling and other forms of assistance, advice and information to employees on a systematic and uniform basis and to recognised standards.

5.4 **Young people and schools:**

Highland Council is currently working towards becoming an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Aware Council in recognition that adversity and trauma in childhood can have long lasting and extensive impacts on lifelong physical and mental health and wellbeing. One of the initiatives to support this work is the development of the My World of Wellbeing programme where teachers work with middle primary and older children to develop their understanding of what it means to be Safe, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included. This was a key area

highlighted by Members for development under the Member Seminar programme for 2018/19.

5.5 **Partners and Communities:**

Mental health and wellbeing is one of five priority themes for Community Planning Partners in the [Highland Outcome Improvement Plan](#). Under this theme, partners agreed that suicide prevention would be a breakthrough achievement during 2018-19, and committed partners to deliver Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme training to CPP staff, with a target of 500 staff receiving training over the year, and to develop a [suicide prevention App](#) which was launched in November 2018. At end April 2019, 206 staff across the partnership had been trained with a further 14 sessions scheduled between May and September, including one specifically for Highland Council elected members.

Innovative community activities are being undertaken in the Black Isle following a Community Conversation Café on mental health and wellbeing hosted by Fortrose Academy in summer 2018 arising from local concerns. Since then, work has included identifying specific resources from Education and Police services and meetings with representatives from all local Community Councils and Community Planning Partners. An action plan has been developed and a survey went out by Community Councils to map vulnerable groups in their own communities. Three key themes have emerged:

- Social isolation older generation
- Social isolation no transport
- Mental health

A “One Year On” event is to be held at Fortrose Academy in 13 June featuring workshops and an information market place and with a focus on:

- ‘It takes a village to raise a child’
- Get support for your community group
- Value our Senior Citizens

5.6 **Communication:** Awareness raising is a key strand of activity across all four themes in the plan. Increasingly, social media is used to promote messages for staff and the public, encouraging people to have conversations about Mental Health, for example, Time To Talk Day, World Mental Health Day and Suicide Prevention Day. Actions for moving forward focus on utilising different methods to promote key messages regarding awareness of mental health issues, suicide awareness and wellbeing.

6. **Key Action 2019/20**

6.1 Whilst some of the actions within this action plan involve the development of specific supports, guidance or training, much of this work is ongoing rather than time-bound activity. The focus on raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing, and of challenging the associated stigma and prejudice surrounding mental ill health will be

maintained. There is a commitment to provide all staff with appropriate resilience training and development.

- 6.2 Council priorities also include commitments to support children and young people to be protected, healthy, safe and responsible by continuing the delivery of a whole system approach to integrated children's services. For 19/20 this will include a focus on those affected by adverse childhood experiences and, through our role as a Corporate Parent, young people who are, or have been in care.
- 6.3 Through the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan, we are committed to work with our partners to explore ways of improving mental health crisis response and suicide prevention, and to develop multiagency working to coordinate our response to mental health services. 2019/20 will see a specific focus on developing interventions to support suicide prevention.
- 6.4 Further partnership action for 19/20 will also include the continuation of suicide awareness and prevention training for staff and to extend the offer more widely to targeted community groups or contacts.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

- 7.1 The plan will continue to be progressed through an officer Mental Health and Wellbeing working group and partnership action through the HOIP Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Group. Ongoing monitoring will be through the Council's Poverty and Inequality Working Group however work is required through the governance review to determine which strategic committee this area of work reports to in the future.

8. Implications

- 8.1 Resources: the plan will be actioned and monitored through existing resources.
- 8.2 Legal: there are no legal implications as a result of the action plan.
- 8.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): The plan's aim is to positively impact upon addressing mental health and wellbeing across Highland both internally within the organisation and within communities.
- 8.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever: there are no Climate Change implications for the plan.
- 8.5 Risk: as detailed elsewhere on this agenda, suicide is a growing risk across Highland and the work identified within this action plan and the intention to further explore and develop future initiatives to address suicide prevention will help to mitigate this risk.
- 8.6 Gaelic: there are no Gaelic implications.

Designation: Acting Head of Policy

Date: 12-6-19

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Appendix 1: Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan June 2019

Progress Key

	complete		underway/ongoing		slipping		Start date tbc
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Appendix 1

Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention	
Mental Health									
Member Seminars on Mental Health 1) Understanding challenges to acute Mental Health services 2) Mental Health Officers and service user experience; 3) Community support; and 4) Preventative support	MHAWB working group	Complete		21 March 2018 4 July 2018 19 September 2018 6 November 2018	X	X	X	X	X
Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit Ongoing development of mental health and wellbeing toolkit and resources to support staff, including training online guidance, toolbox talks, and recruitment and training of mental health representatives	Health and Safety Manager	Ongoing		Online materials and training and information resources are updated on a continual basis. Recruitment and training of mental health reps is also ongoing. As of Dec. 2018 over 70 mental health reps are trained. Following restructure of services, the spread of MH reps will be reviewed across HC areas and services.	X	X	X	X	X
Employee Support System Investigate development of an employee support system to provide advice and counselling for staff and members.	Health and Safety Manager	TBC		Paper to Council on 27 June 2019 with a proposal to establish an employee assistance programme	X	X	X	X	X

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Awareness Raising – National Campaigns Raise awareness of Mental health issues to general public and to staff, eg - Mental Health awareness week (Mid May) Mental Health Awareness Day (10 October)	MHAWB working group	a) May annually b) 10 Oct annually	2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health awareness week May 2018 Press release and staff information World Mental Health Day Oct 2018 Press Release 	X	X			
			2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Feb 2019 Time to Talk Day May 2019 Mental Health Awareness Week Press Release ; Facebook; Twitter 25 April 2019 Walk a Mile 10 June Ask, Tell (intranet); Facebook; Twitter 					
Awareness Raising – Local Information Develop appropriate web-based information to raise awareness. To include a directory of mental health resources with a focus on local services to provide information for staff and the wider public on available support, eg community and peer support.	MHAWB working group / Corporate Comms / Digital Services	March 2020	Work has already been undertaken to collate information sources and key support organisations. Further development is needed to create a directory.	X				

Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan June 2019

Progress Key

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Refreshed Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2021	Health and Safety Manager	Spring 2019	Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-21					
Mental Health Reps in Schools Training pupils as mental health reps peer support	Primary Mental Health Worker – C&L	ongoing	Ongoing as part of work at Fortrose Academy and Tain Academy	X	X		X	
Awareness of Adverse Childhood Experience Raise awareness of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Council's journey to becoming ACEs Aware within education, with other staff and with members.	Principal Educational Psychologist	2019 TBC	<p>Twelve workshops about ACEs were held for Council staff throughout June 2018. A presentation on ACES was given to elected members on 13 December 2019</p> <p>Recommendations for further work to become an ACEs aware Council include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness across staff, services, families and the community • Ensure services work together • Develop approaches to raising attainment that also foster resilience and wellbeing • A holistic approach to support emotional and mental health in schools and ELC settings • Implement national initiatives to develop positive relationships in families 	X				

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Progress Key

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Monitoring Update of Training The uptake of Highland Council staff trained in a) Mentally Healthy Workplace b) Scottish Mental Health First Aid b) Mental health reps c) Tool box talks (mental health, eg stress, bereavement, suicide awareness)	Health and Safety Manager	Annually from April 2019		Annual figures to be reported to the MHAWB working group.	X			
	MHAWB Working group			2019-20				
					2020-21			
Resilience training Agreed for all staff and will be tailored to needs of specific staff groups – as per workforce plan.	Health and Safety Manager	16 May 2019		Resilience training launched in May 2019	X			
		TBA		Toolbox talks to include a resilience element for appropriate staff groups.	X			
		21 June 2019		MH reps to pilot resilience training on 21 June 2019 and details of further training to follow.	X			
Supporting Care Experienced Young People Mental health and wellbeing support specifically for care-experienced young people to be considered.	Working group (sub-group of the Corporate Parent steering group)	TBC		Mental health has recently been identified as a priority issue by care-experienced young people and will be discussed by the Corporate Parenting Board in 2019 for further consideration.	X			

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Suicide prevention/awareness								
Guidance on Suicide Prevention/Awareness Draft guidance on suicide prevention/awareness under development. Aimed at professionals supporting young people.	Primary Mental Health Worker – C&L	TBC		Working with Fortrose to develop a Mental Health Protocol and to include as part of this. Further discussions with NHS following Public Health report.	X	X	X	X
Suicide Awareness Training Monitor the uptake of staff trained in: a) ASIST, b) SIPP c) Safe Talk d) Tool box talks (suicide awareness)	Primary Mental Health Worker – C&L / Health and Safety Manager / MHAWB Working group	Annually from April 2019		Annual figures to be reported to the MHAWB working group. Baseline 2017-19 a) ASIST – 49 attendees b) SIPP –38 attendees (from Nov 18) c) Safe Talk – 18 attendees d) SMHFA – 4 attendees	X	X	X	X
				2019-20				
				2020-21				
Community Resources Develop resources to support communities - Conversation Cafes template - Mental Health Resource Directory	Primary Mental Health Worker – C&L	2018-19		Template for running Conversation cafes developed Resource list created for Conversation Café	X	X	X	

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
<p>Community Support Develop community-based support for communities experiencing loss through suicide.</p> <p>Identify other communities that would benefit from a community café approach for those experiencing loss through suicide.</p>	Primary Mental Health Worker – C&L	7 June 2018		Conversation café pilot carried out with partners at Fortrose Academy including evaluation	X	X		X
	CPP Partners	20 Nov 2018		Next steps meeting held on 20 Nov with Fortrose Academy and reps from all local community Councils and Community planning partnerships.				
	MHAWB working group	June 2019		Marketplace and workshops to feedback consultation from the community and next steps.				
		During 2019-20		Ongoing work with communities to raise awareness	X	X		X
<p>Suicide prevention training Training programme to be developed once NHS Scotland suicide prevention training agreed.</p>	Choose Life Working Group	TBC		Framework and guidance published by Health Scotland – awaiting further info re training packages and implementation	X	X	X	X
<p>Toolbox Talks Development and roll-out of Toolbox talks, including one on suicide prevention – suitable for depots, community groups.</p>	Health and Safety Manager	ongoing		Toolbox Talks are regularly delivered on a range of topics including Suicide awareness. Postvention sessions have also been carried out. Going forward, staff resilience will also be included as a topic.	X	X		X
<p>Water Safety Strategy Strategy to be developed and include suicide awareness.</p>	Health and Safety Manager	TBC		Strategy to be developed		X		X

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Bereavement								
Bereavement Policy and Guidance Develop bereavement policy and guidance for managers. Develop bereavement guidance for staff Develop bereavement training for staff	HR Manager	TBC	Draft Bereavement policy to Highland Council Staff Partnership Forum. Engagement with staff to inform guidance and training on bereavement for staff	X		X		X
Bereavement Tool Box Talk Talk to be: a) developed and b) delivered to groups of staff.	a) Health and Safety Manager	End 2018	Bereavement talk developed	X				
	b) Health and Safety Manager	From end 2018 and ongoing	Bereavement TBT delivered to Facilities Management staff (Dec 2018). Will be rolled out to other groups and attendance can be recorded	X				
Mental Health Representatives Extend Mental Health Reps Course to include suicide prevention, change and loss and ASIST.	Senior Learning and Development Adviser Primary Mental Health Worker	By end 2018	Suicide awareness/prevention covered in the MHR course	X	X		X	

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Change loss and bereavement training - Probationer Teachers Change, loss and bereavement training delivered to all probationer teachers	Primary Mental Health Worker (C & L Change, loss and bereavement working group)	2018-19	Session for 2018/19 delivered and well evaluated. Approximately 140 probationers attended training during August/September 2018.	X				X
		2019-20	To continue to offer this as standard to each cohort of probationers as a feature of annual probationer training.					
Change, Loss and Bereavement Training – C&L Staff Change, loss and bereavement training delivered to be offered across Care and Learning to all staff on CPD calendar	C & L Change, loss and bereavement working group	2018-19	Sessions delivered across Highland. 1 in Mid; 1 in South; 1 in North and 2 in West.	X				X
		2019-20	Further demand for more courses – to look at as part of training strategy.					
Bereavement Pack Creating a PSE pack for schools (linked to PSE review)	C & L Change, loss and bereavement working group	2019-20	Ongoing – sub-group reviewing other available packages to look at what could be used or adapted. To look at adapting and trialling in Fortrose Academy.	X				X
Tragic Events Guidance Review of tragic events guidance and palliative care policy	Educational Psychology Team	Early 2019	Work with Caledonian Forces Trust to add Forces information.	X	X	X		X

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Partnership activities and external								
CPP Partnership Activity Work with CPP partners to increase awareness of mental health and wellbeing and suicide prevention	a) Primary Mental Health Worker C&L b) MHAWB group members	Ongoing – regular meetings	Existing involvement with a) Choose Life group b) HOIP Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Group	X	X	X	X	X
	Acting Head of Policy	2019-20	Investigate opportunities for involvement with the local Green Health Partnership group	X				
CPP Breakthrough Achievement a) New CPP Breakthrough Achievement to focus on suicide awareness training across partners (SIPP) b) Identify potential trainers to be trained via mental health reps c) Promote training to staff d) Promote Highland Prevent Suicide App e) Arrange SIPP training for elected members	a) Acting Head of Policy	July 2018	Approach agreed by partners	X	X		X	
	b) Health and Safety Manager	Sept 2018	4 HC Trainers trained					
	c) Acting Head of Policy	May 2019	Email, Intranet notice and In Brief article					
	d) Acting Head of Policy	Nov 2018	Press release					
	e) Acting Head of Policy	During 2019	Date set to deliver member training on 26 September 2019					

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
Community Based Suicide Awareness Training CPP agreement (May 2019) to extend provision of SIPP training to targeted community groups / business (eg voluntary groups, taxi drivers, hairdressers). Consider opportunities to support community based groups around Safe Talk and MH First Aid	MHAWB working group CPP Mental Health and Wellbeing Group	TBC	SIPP group are investigating opportunities to reach targeted groups through Chambers of Commerce, FSB, etc	X	X		X	
	MHAWB working group	2019-20						
Suicide Prevention Day Through the Choose Life group develop an awareness raising approach to Suicide Prevention Day 10 Sept	Primary Mental Health Worker C&L MHAWG	10 Sept annually	Intranet message to staff and splash page. Links to Choose Life awareness raising materials.	X	X		X	
Impact of Poverty and Mental Health Improve understanding of the poverty/income maximisation aspects for individuals dealing with the stress arising from income shocks and low income.	Acting Head of Revenues and Business Support	October 2019	Partnership activity between NHSH primary care and the Council's Welfare Support services and partnering with GP services	X				

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Action	Who	Timescales	Progress	Promote good MH & WB	Suicide awareness	Crisis intervention	Suicide Prevention	Postvention
<p>Armed Forces Community Covenant The partnership of the Armed Forces Covenant supports the mental health and wellbeing of local Armed Forces Communities.</p>	Senior Ward Manager	Ongoing	The website of the Armed Forces Covenant supported by HC launched in Jan 2019 encourage support for the local service community in a local area and raise awareness of issues affecting service personnel provides information on health and wellbeing and emergency contacts in Get Help Now	X	X	X	X	
Raise awareness of the support available through the Armed Forces Covenant to HC staff, in particular to any ex-military /reserve, eg use of In Brief	Senior Ward Manager	2019-20		X	X	X	X	