

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 14 March 2024
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO: Deputy Leader's
SUBJECT: Mental Health in Construction
WARD(S) Borough- Wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce a requirement in all future council construction procurement processes, that a statement around mental health forms are required and scored part of the tender process.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Executive Board agrees that all future construction tender processes undertaken by the council include a requirement for the main contractor to include a scored statement around mental health wellbeing amongst all staff and sub-contractors as part of the process.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 According to the Health and Safety Executive in 2022/23, 45 building workers died because of work-based accidents. A figure that is clearly too high and unsurprisingly drives all public sector procurement exercises to insist on work-based Health and Safety statements as part of the process. Every construction worker or visitor to a construction site in this country is required to wear PPE and undergo Health and Safety briefings. It forms an intrinsic part of the sectors thinking as we try to reduce the number of work based accident deaths to zero.

3.2 What goes largely unreported and sadly unnoticed, is that the number of work-based accidents is dwarfed each year by the number of construction workers who commit suicide an unacceptable 507 cases in 2022 which is almost 10 a week.

3.3 **The role of Local Government**

Local Government is in a unique position in that as a sector we commission over £18 billion of construction each and every year so can exercise some control over the sectors working practices. One way in which we could begin to address the high number of suicides in the construction industry given our high amount of spend would be to introduce a requirement that all future construction project tenders that all bids include a scored statement around mental health and how this will be dealt with amongst both directly employed staff and sub-contractors.

3.4 It is only when we begin to ask our contractors to consider the mental wellbeing of their staff and make this a prerequisite of being awarded contracts will we begin to make serious inroads into this challenge. Hopefully resulting in the similar reductions in the number of suicides in the same way that we have seen around accidents at work over the years.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 That the procurement process is amended to reflect to include a requirement about mental health around construction projects.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no key risks associated with the proposed action.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are none.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None within the meaning of the Act