

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 17th November 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Mental Health Street Triage Teams

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a briefing to the Board on Cheshire Constabulary's approach to addressing mental health issues and policing and to identify the best mechanisms to enhance existing partnership approaches to maximise early help and prevention to reduce the impact on emergency and crisis management services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) **The report be noted; and**
- 2) **The Board consider the information presented and raise any questions of interest or points of clarification following the presentation.**

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This paper is set in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Policing nationally is seeing rising calls for mental health support and tragic suicides during the Covid-19 lockdown. The type of presentations that are being encountered appear to have changed. Individuals are presenting in crisis who have never been known to mental health services before and the types of suicides, the demographics of those involved, appears to be changing, certainly over the last few months. The types of presentations are causing concern particularly now given the implementation of greater restrictions across the country. All of these are likely to impact on increasing calls for Cheshire Police to respond to those in crisis.

4.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 Volumes of matters dealt with linked to Mental Health

In 2018 the definition of a Police mental health related incident was defined as:

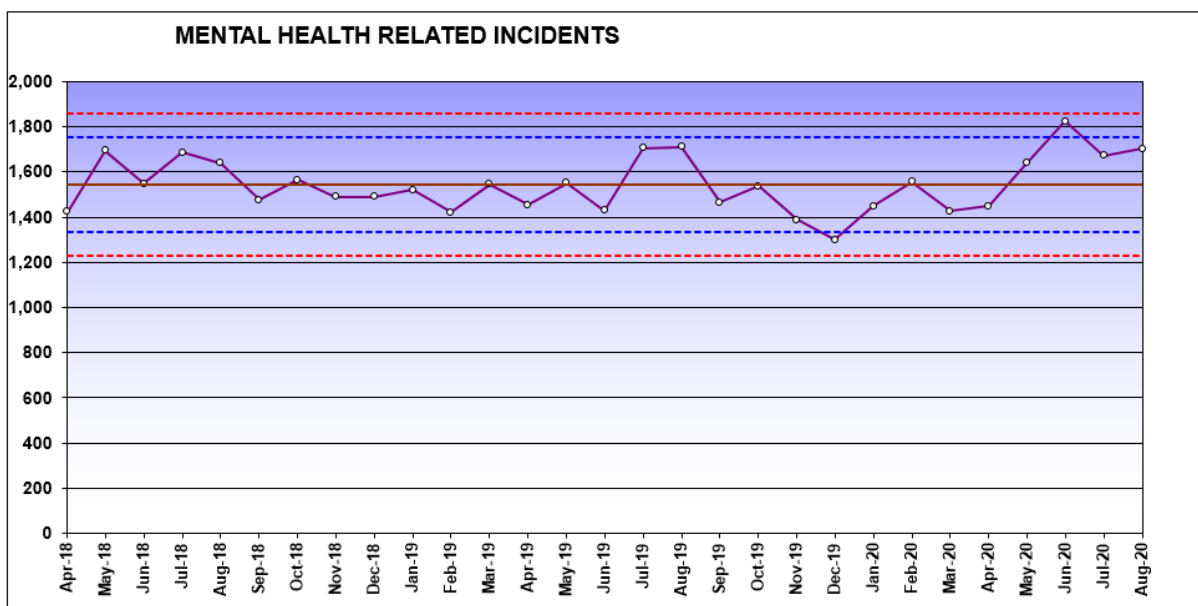
“Any police incident involving someone thought to have mental health problems where their vulnerability is at the centre of the incident or where the police have had to do something additionally or differently because of their condition.”

In 2018 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the ‘Picking Up the Pieces’ Report outlining recommendations for forces nationally specifically the following:

- Recommendation 1: The National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) lead and College of Policing should agree a new national definition of mental ill-health for all forces to adopt
- Recommendation 2: All forces should carry out a ‘snapshot’ exercise to assess their mental health-related demand By December 2019, forces should develop a better understanding of their mental health data, and the nature and scale of their demand.

The purpose of undertaking this work was to better understand demand data and to assist the Police as an organisation understand the strain on the service by assessing the combination of demand and workload.

What was established is that demand is on average 1543 incidents per month. That is 1543 incidents that the Police feel meet the National Police Chiefs Council definition of a mental health related incident. As to the impact of Covid-19 on mental health incidents reported to the police, it can be seen that there has been an increase from May onwards to an average of 1710 or 170 incidents extra a month. An increase of about 11% per month.



4.2 What does understanding this demand mean?

- It provides evidence of the scale of demand that the Police are dealing with and encourages them to engage in a dialogue with other services about their investment and how they may respond differently to explore earlier help and prevention.
- The back data review has reinforced that the level of mental health related demand is not purely a recent phenomenon linked to Covid-19. However there is a trend that causes concern. There is also evidence of increased mental health being a presenting factor at Cheshire and Warrington Local Authority Children and Adults front doors.
- The identification and quantification of incidents within that demand profile allows Cheshire Police to probe further into the data to give profiles around peak demand times, frequency of calls from particular sites, organisations and or people. This supports further problem solving.
- It allows Cheshire Police to understand and explore the appropriateness of its demand. For example in July 2020 Cheshire Police had 1673 incidents that met the threshold of being mental health related. Out those incidents it did not attend 672 of them and the Police were not sighted on whether these incidents were supported appropriately through other services.
- Qualifies the impact on front line policing services and provides evidence to support investment in additional capacity specifically around mental health related business.
- Reinforces the need for investment around education and training.
- Reinforces the validity of existing partnership endeavours such as Street Triage. The evidenced performance of that resource in the management and support to crisis incidents becomes more relevant in times of increased demand. The Constabulary is currently in discussion with Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust in relation to the level of investment they will provide with regards to additional nurse practitioners so it can determine what further resources may be needed to work even more effectively with them to prevent and support those suffering from mental health crisis.
- It is acknowledged that police mental health related demand can be an indicator of missed opportunities in other services. This data could provide evidence of other services under strain during this unprecedented period.

5.0 The approaches taken by the Constabulary to address the issue of mental health when it presents itself in the community

5.1 Cheshire Constabulary acknowledges its important role in supporting the collective system response to addressing mental ill health in the community. It recognises and supports the ongoing work with partners e.g. The Health and Wellbeing Boards; Mental Health Partnership Boards; Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care partnership crisis care work streams; Cheshire and Wirral Partnership; The Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Public Service Transformation Cheshire and Warrington Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

However, Cheshire Constabulary has identified the impact that this business area has on operational Policing and as a result commits the following resources to maintain and improve the service it provides to the public:

- Strategic Mental Health Lead – Local Policing Superintendent
- Mental Health Sergeant/Coordinator – This full time position provides a consistent and professional approach to the overall approach of Cheshire Police to mental ill health in the community. Acting as an organisational tactical advisor on mental health the role coordinates partnership activity, training both general and specialist, policy & procedure generation, and manages the two street triage teams.
- 2 Street Triage Teams – a commitment of 6 Officers working alongside clinical colleagues from North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The teams support the police response to incidents involving mental ill health.

5.2 The partnership approaches in place – benefits and areas for development.

The current partnership approaches adopted in Cheshire are highlighted below:

Street Triage – Operation Emblem/Street Triage has been in place since 2013 and has developed and changed since its implementation. Cheshire Police work alongside clinical colleagues from North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust responding to police incidents. After a recent period of evaluation the current provision is under redevelopment with aspirations of expansion to meet current and future anticipated demands. The service provision is currently deemed to be limited by a lack of joint investment however commitment to this model of working is being developed by health partners with police eager to support.

Liaison & Diversion – mental health provision in custody building from the Bradley Report Recommendations in 2009. Cheshire has adopted a Liaison and Diversion service supported through NHS England roll out. The service is provided via Mitie, the current custody healthcare provider. Custody provides specific challenges in regard to the management of mental ill health. The main challenges are the relationship between the custody healthcare provider and how it works in partnership with existing NHS services. There are aspects of improvement required in this area with regards to the availability of beds for sectioned persons. Although there is a fairly good escalation process, there are still times when we need to move patients out of custody and there are no available beds.

Cheshire and Merseyside Prevention of Suicide (CHAMPS) – Public Health lead the partnership response to suicide prevention. CHAMPS are the pan Cheshire and Merseyside body where this activity is coordinated and commissioned. Cheshire Police are an active partner in this work. A recent achievement is significant funding now being invested into training for first responders. Cheshire Constabulary will benefit from this investment.

High Intensity Users (HIU) – A new pilot project working in partnership with Cheshire West Integrated Care Partnership will be looking to respond to and manage High Intensity Users. This work was reinvigorated recently due to a perceived trend over the Covid-19 pandemic where many previously identified High Intensity Users stopped presenting to statutory services. This work will include joint research and evidence based practice to better manage this complex cohort.

6.0 Training for Officers and Staff

Cheshire Constabulary is delivering training in line with the College of Policing (CoP) defined Mental Health and Learning Disabilities programme. The approach adopted by the service is delivering a tailored modular programme which meets the defined learning outcomes set by the College of Policing but also local training needs. This approach is allowing the organisation to meet operational requirements by adopting blended training methods and where possible including local partners and innovative approaches.

In 2019/20 a series of 1 day workshops were delivered across the organisation which included Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England's Mental Health Awareness and the College of Policing's Review of the Legislation module. This is now delivered to Student Officers as part of their initial training. The training delivery in 2019/20 captured response officers across the service as well as other business areas such as custody and the Force Control Centre.

Alongside the College of Policing learning programme Cheshire Police delivers Mental Health First Aid training to Officers and staff. The force can deliver a range of adult focused MHFA products depending on the needs of the departmental client.

The organisation has approximately 150 Mental Health First Aiders and over 600 officers and staff who have received MHFA awareness training. This year Mental Health Champion training has been delivered to the Wellbeing champions identified across the organisation.

This initial delivery appears to have had a direct impact on performance with an increase in positive feedback from frontline partners to the Police from within health and social care services.

Working from this solid base the plan for 2020 is to meet the College of Policing learning objectives outlined for suicide prevention and intervention. A proposal for training has had to be revisited due to the impact of Covid-19 however a new approach maintaining the appetite for a partnership delivery is proposed in the next couple of months.

Cheshire Police is keen to develop multi agency joint training opportunities around the response to mental ill health. A 999 joint mental health training day was delivered in October and following the success of that day further joint delivery days are planned.

A series of enhanced training deliveries which will include NHS and local authority partners are planned for 2021 to create a pool of uniform specialists who can provide tactical advice on crisis and mental health related incidents. This exciting piece of work is based on international best practice around the emergency response to mental illness and will further develop Cheshire Police's capability to respond.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The policy implications of the review relate primarily to the Safer Halton priority. However this is a cross cutting work area which has wider implications on other areas of council business.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

9.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the health, safety and well-being of young people.

9.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

9.3 A Healthy Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

9.4 A Safer Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

9.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

10.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

12..1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.