

CABINET MEETING – 8 DECEMBER 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health

Author(s):

Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval to the Council becoming a signatory to the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.

Description of Decision:

- a. to agree to the Council becoming a signatory to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.
- b. to delegate authority to the Executive Director Health, Housing & Communities in consultation with the Healthy City Portfolio Holder to:
 - (i) complete the submission of the application to OHID; and
 - (ii) produce the associated action plan setting out how the Council will address the topic of preventative mental health over the next 12 months.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

- Being a Concordat signatory and committing to a plan to address the prevention and promotion of better mental health is a cost-effective, evidence-based approach to reducing health inequalities and preventing future harm.
- Signing up to the Prevention Concordat is an opportunity to join a community of practice working towards creating resilient communities and building the case for a shift to support prevention activity.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Do not sign up to the Prevention Concordat. SCC could not sign up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, however signing up to the Concordat was an expectation after receiving the Better Mental Health Grant. Furthermore, being certified as a signatory of the Concordat allows SCC greater opportunities to showcase its work around improving mental health and reaffirms its commitment to collaborative working.

Impacts analysed;

Equality **Privacy** **Sustainability** **Crime and Disorder**

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? **Yes**

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? **Yes**

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? **Yes**

SUNDERLAND'S APPLICATION FOR THE PREVENTION CONCORDAT FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

Report of The Executive Director of Health Housing and Communities

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report seeks the support of Cabinet for the Council becoming a signatory to the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health¹.
- 1.2 The report also seeks commitment from Cabinet to support the submission of the application to OHID and the development of the action plan.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

- 2.1 Cabinet to agree to the Council becoming a signatory to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health and to commit to support the action plan as part of the application.
- 2.2 This will demonstrate the Council's continued support of its employees' Mental Health, as well as working with local partners in supporting the Mental Health and wellbeing of its residents.
- 2.3 This will also ensure that the action plan is fully developed and taken forward as an integral part of the Commitment, reporting progress into the Living Well Delivery Board.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health is an agreement to provide cross-sector action to deliver a tangible increase in the adoption of public mental health approaches.
- 3.2 To be recognised as a Prevention Concordat signatory, the Council must agree to the consensus statement at Appendix 1 to this report, and produce an action plan of how it is addressing the topic of preventative mental health over the next 12 months.
- 3.3 Signing up to the Concordat is an expectation of the Better Mental Health Fund, which the Council received in 2020 to address the mental health issues exacerbated by the pandemic. The funding also aimed to reduce mental health inequalities by targeting at risk and vulnerable groups².
- 3.4 The impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the social and economic consequences of the pandemic have meant that tackling mental health at a population level has never been more important. COVID-19 was recognised as a public health emergency. There is increasing evidence to show that one of the impacts of

¹ [Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevention-concordat-for-better-mental-health)

² [Evaluation of OHID's Better Mental Health Fund | Centre for Mental Health](#)

responding to Covid-19 has been an impact on mental health at a population level and existing mental health inequalities have been exacerbated.

- 3.5 Mental health and substance misuse problems are responsible for 21.3% of the burden of disease in England. It's likely that this figure is an underestimate. This burden is expected to increase due to the impact of COVID-19. Promotion of better mental health and prevention measures should therefore be included in emergency planning, restoration, and recovery.
- 3.6 Recent research conducted by Swansea University has found that the cost-of-living crisis is having significant impacts on people's mental health and emotional wellbeing and that the crisis was leading to heightened anxiety and stress, with many, particularly those on low incomes, worried about the uncertainty of the future³.
- 3.7 The Concordat focuses on prevention and the wider determinants of mental health, to impact positively on the NHS and social care system by enabling early help through using upstream interventions. It supports joint cross-sectoral action to deliver an increased focus on the prevention of mental health problems and the promotion of good mental health at the local level, drawing on the expertise of people with lived experience of mental health problems, and the wider community.
- 3.8 The Concordat promotes evidence-based planning and commissioning to increase the impact on reducing health inequalities.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health and the supporting action plan is based on [the five-domain framework for local action](#) and also accounts for the mental health impacts of COVID-19.
- 4.2 Key headlines from the drafted action plan include:
 - To better understand local need and assets, there is commitment to:
 - support the development of the Regional Real Time Suicide Dashboard to allow real time alerts for Sunderland.
 - Carry out the suicide audit
 - Consider appropriate interventions and approaches with key target populations that are in greatest need
 - Share and consider recommendations of the better mental health evaluation
 - Work together as a system to:
 - Collaborate with the ICB on the Mental Health Dashboard and use opportunities for joint commissioning
 - Develop our local approach to suicide 'near misses'
 - Take action on prevention/promotion of mental health by:
 - Implementing recommendations of the Better Mental Health Evaluation
 - Implementing Sunderland City Council Workplace Health Strategy
 - Monitoring the progress of public mental health through the health and wellbeing delivery boards
 - Take action to reduce mental health inequalities by:
 - Identifying future opportunities to reduce mental health inequalities with intelligence gleaned from the JSNAs and Better Mental Health Evaluation

³ [PsyArXiv Preprints | The 'Cost of Living Crisis' and its effects on health: A qualitative study from the UK](#)

- Define success and measure outcomes by:
 - Ensuring milestones are achieved and reported to senior leaders for accountability (Healthy City Plan).
 - Working closely with the ICB to develop and publish a dashboard which will show progress against key performance indicators aligned to commitments and measures within the mental health strategy.
 - Implementing the Council's Workplace Health Strategy to ensure business need, data and the voice of employees is taken into consideration.

4.3 In addition the evaluation of the Better Mental Health funded projects has recently concluded with recommendations considered as part of the Prevention Concordat application and action plan.

4.4 A summary of the findings from Sunderland's Better Mental Health fund evaluation showed:

- Together, the projects reached 5,907 residents or 2.1% of Sunderland's population.
- The projects reached a wide diversity of residents and were successful in engaging marginalised and at-risk groups such as those from socioeconomically deprived backgrounds, and BAME groups.
- Additionality, by addressing previously unmet needs in the community:
 - Parent and carer support – practical support around financial resilience
 - Bereavement support for residents not accessing or previously known to primary care
 - Assisting care workers to be able to deal with their experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Insights from participant case studies, linked to the cost-of-living crisis and subsequent support offered.

4.5 The projects have addressed needs outlined in the Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- Improving short term wellbeing of beneficiaries through offering personalised support.
- Improving social and economic skills of the population through targeted training and awareness raising campaigns.
- Tackling socio-economic and environmental determinants of mental health through offering practical support and signposting.
- Creating healthier communities, places and organisations by reducing the stigmatisation of mental health.
- Improving access to services for vulnerable groups by providing previously unavailable forms of support.
- Increasing community resilience by increasing capacity in the mental health system and enhancing collaborative working.

4.6 The findings and recommendations of the better mental health evaluation will be shared through our local partnerships and health and wellbeing board delivery boards to ensure the findings and recommendations are considered.

5. Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 As a result of the pandemic there is more emphasis than ever on mental health provision, with prevention taking centre stage in many strategies. Signing the consensus statement and committing to a plan to address the prevention and promotion of better mental health is a cost-effective, evidence-based approach to reducing health inequalities and preventing future harm.
- 5.2 Additionally, signing up to the Concordat and action plan is an opportunity to join a community of practice working towards creating resilient communities and building the case for a shift to support prevention activity. Ultimately, through both local and national action, our aim is to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 Do not sign up to the Prevention Concordat. SCC could not sign up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, however signing up to the Concordat was an expectation after receiving the Better Mental Health Grant. Furthermore, being certified as a signatory of the Concordat allows SCC greater opportunities to showcase it's work around improving mental health and reaffirms its commitment to collaborative working.

7. Impact Analysis

A summary impact analysis for the proposed extensions is provided below.

- (a) **Equalities** – Signing on to the Prevention Concordat will support the drive to reduce health inequalities by promoting cross-section collaboration to improvement mental health provision across the region. It is anticipated that the proposal will have a positive impact on people of all ages by taking a more collaborative approach to mental health.
- (b) **Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)** – Not relevant as there is no change to working practices or procedures. The Concordat simply promotes closer and more intentional cooperation in the field of mental health.
- (c) **Sustainability** – Closer and more intentional collaboration between organisations with an interest in Mental Health will support the prevention of duplicating working unnecessarily and make more efficient use of resources by.
- (d) **Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion / Social Inclusion** – Not relevant

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- (a) **Co-operative Values** – Signing up to the Concordat furthers the co-operative values of the Council by boosting collaboration and joined up working between local partners.

- (i) **Financial Implications** – There are no direct financial implications associated with signing up to the Concordat.
- (ii) **Legal Implications** – The Assistant Director of Law & Governance has been consulted on this matter, and her comments are incorporated into this report.
- (iii) **Children's Services** – The Action Plan highlights current plans of SCC. The Action Plan takes a full life course approach and so details pre-existing interventions which relate to children.

9. Glossary – Not relevant

10. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Concordat Consensus Statement

Appendix 2 – Sunderland's Concordat Application (Summary)

11. Background Papers – Not relevant

Appendix 1 – Concordat Consensus Statement in Full

The Prevention Concordat consensus statement was updated in 2021 following consultation with stakeholders. It describes the shared commitment of signatories to work together via the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health, through local and national action, to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health.

Prevention Concordat signatories agree the following:

“Strengthening protective factors and reducing risk factors sit at the heart of our commitment to promoting good mental health. COVID-19 has highlighted long-standing social and economic inequalities. There is evidence that protective and risk factors for mental health are unequally distributed across the country, in our communities and for those with existing mental health conditions.

“We are committed to reducing mental health inequalities by taking action to address the following factors:

- Protective factors – maternal and infant mental health, early years support, family and parenting support, connecting with others and forming good relationships, good education, stable, secure, good quality and affordable housing, good quality work, a healthy standard of living, accessible safe and green outdoor space, arts and cultural activities, community cohesion.
- Risk factors – poverty, socio-economic inequalities, child neglect and abuse, unemployment, poor quality work, debt, drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, loneliness, violence, discrimination.

“This is an opportunity to build back better to create a fairer society, working with our voluntary and community partners, the health and social care sector, emergency services, local and national stakeholders. Signing the Concordat means becoming part of a community of practice committed to taking evidence based preventive and promotional action to support the mental health of the whole population, those at greater risk of poor mental health, and those receiving treatment.

“Keeping people mentally well is as important as providing early help, and many interventions will also result in social and economic benefits, even in the short term.

“As signatories, we will work as a whole system and across organisational boundaries. We commit to supporting place-based population mental health through co-ordination of partnerships at ICS, local authority and neighbourhood levels. We will do this using needs assessment in partnership with local stakeholders, communities, people with lived experience and carers, all of whom know what matters most. As system leaders, we will also use employment and procurement levers to improve population mental health and wellbeing.

“We believe that the transformation of mental health services set out in the NHS Long Term Plan will be supported through strong prevention and early intervention, as we know that evidence-based prevention and promotion interventions reduce demand on the mental health system and support recovery. The inter-relationship between good mental and physical health should also inform the delivery of physical health improvement.

“We will encourage local and national stakeholders to invest in promoting mental wellbeing, preventing mental health conditions and preventing suicide. This will reduce demand for services and create savings not just for the NHS and social care, but also for employers, education providers, emergency services and justice systems.

“We will lead by example, taking action based on the best evidence. Where there is promising evidence, we are committed to building on this and to evaluating its efficacy. We will share our good practice and promote learning. We will regularly review and refresh our prevention approach and our action plan, giving an annual account of progress.”