

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY REVIEW – SCOPE

1. Topic

Child and adolescent mental health and the risk of self-harm.

2. Responsible Overview and Scrutiny Committee

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)

3. Purpose of the scrutiny review

To examine the provision in West Northamptonshire of services and support for children and young people who may be at risk of self-harm, which help people not to reach the point where they require specialist health services and which enable people to access those services when this is required. The NHS website defines self-harm as “when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body.”

Key lines of enquiry

- What lower-level services and support are available to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people experiencing problems that might otherwise escalate to the point where they could lead to self-harm? Are the services and support provided by different organisations linked together effectively?
- What specialist health services are available to support children and young people who have a higher level of need? What are the routes into these services? How accessible and how quick to respond are they in practice?
- What is the extent of self-harm by children and young people in West Northamptonshire, given previous data showing that the number of 15-19 year olds hospitalised for self-harm in Northamptonshire was above the national average? How does the latest position compare to that in similar authorities and what are the reasons for any differences?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen existing provision, if this is necessary, taking account of the current context in which service providers in West Northamptonshire are operating?

4. Outcomes

To make evidence-based recommendations to the West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet and/or other applicable decision-makers that are intended to contribute to the provision of effective services and support for mental health and wellbeing amongst children and young people in the area.

5. Approach

The scrutiny review will be carried out by a task and finish panel made up of the following councillors:

1. Councillor Rosie Herring
2. Councillor Wendy Randall
3. Councillor Sue Sharps
4. Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
5. Councillor Muna Cali
6. Councillor Rupert Frost
7. Councillor Zoe Smith
8. Councillor Danielle Stone

The task and finish panel will make use of the standard working methods applicable to scrutiny reviews, including evidence-gathering meetings (either in-person or virtual); desktop research; targeted evidence-gathering by individual members; and site visits, as appropriate.

6. Information required

Background data

- Scene-setting presentation – overview of current services and support in West Northamptonshire; numbers of young people accessing services compared to comparator authorities and the national average; successes and challenges
- Relevant local policies and strategies
- Relevant national and local research
- Examples of good practice from West Northamptonshire and other comparable areas
- Anonymised case studies of young people's experiences of getting access to services and support in West Northamptonshire

Views from internal expert advisors

- Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
- Director of Children's Services and/or specific service manager
- Director of Public Health and/or specific service manager

Views from external expert advisors

- Representative of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Chief Executive of the Northamptonshire Children's Trust and/or specific service manager
- Young people

- Parents / guardians
- Organisations providing services and support relating to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Teachers, school nurses or other relevant school staff members
- GPs
- Representative of Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust
- Representative of Northamptonshire Police

7. Resources and support

- Democratic Services officer support for evidence-gathering and for production of the scrutiny review report.

8. Timetable and key dates

Confirmation of overall scope by People OSC	16 th November 2021
Initial task and finish panel meeting	November 2021
Evidence-gathering (specific dates for meetings and other activity to be set by the task and finish panel)	December – March 2022
Approval of draft report by task and finish panel	April 2022
Agreement of final report by People OSC	May / June 2022
Presentation of final report to WNC Cabinet	June / July 2022

The scrutiny panel will report back to the People OSC should it identify any need to request a variation to this timetable or any other amendments to the agreed scope whilst the scrutiny review is in-progress.

9. Follow-up

The People OSC will review the impact of the scrutiny review 6 months after the presentation of the final report to decision-makers.