

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

**19 October 2021**

**Walsall Multi-Agency Mental Wellbeing Strategy – update on development**

**1. Purpose**

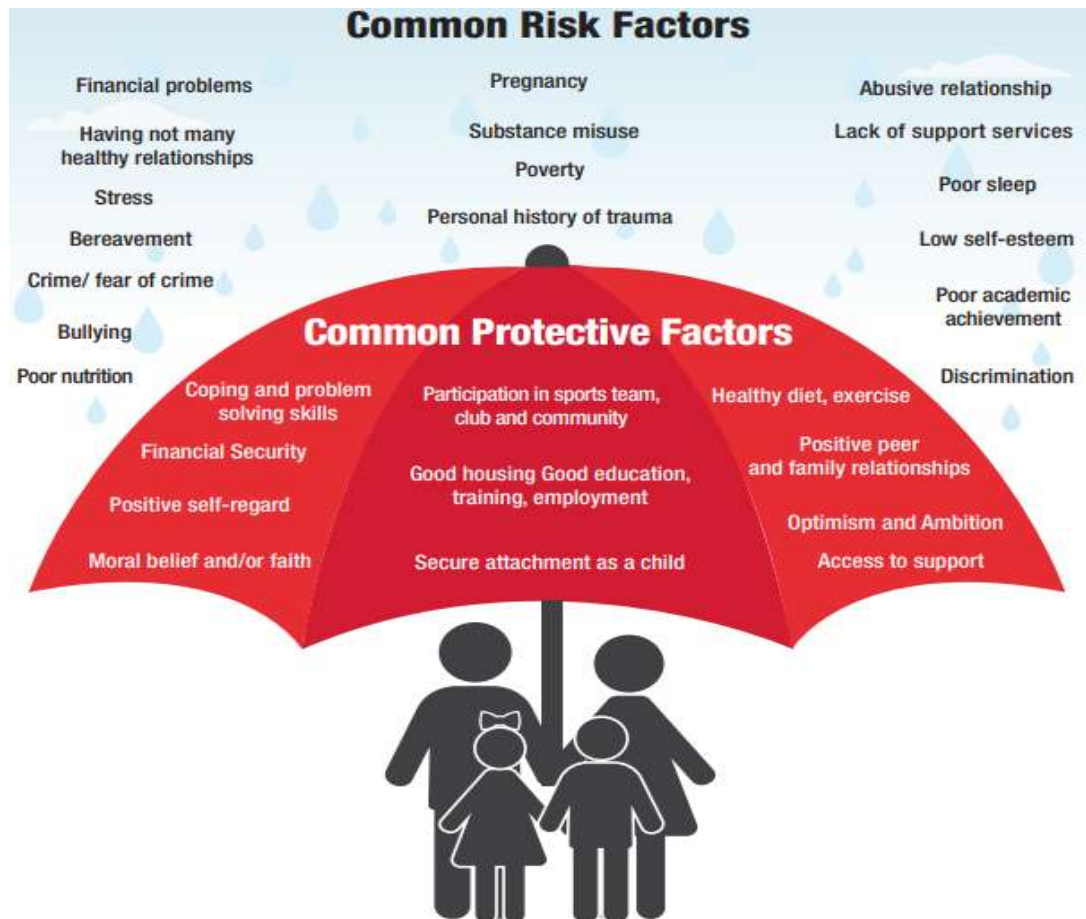
- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update of the progress of the Walsall Multiagency Mental Wellbeing Strategy.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the progress of the Walsall Multi-Agency Mental Wellbeing Strategy.
- 2.2 That the Health and Wellbeing support the approach to the development and completion of the Walsall Multi-Agency Mental Wellbeing Strategy.

**3. Report detail**

- 3.1 Promoting and supporting Walsall’s mental wellbeing has come up as a key issue for the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) in the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and as a key theme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 During the Covid-19 pandemic response, a mental wellbeing cell was set up to identify and coordinate action to support the mental wellbeing needs identified. This cell has developed since then and is developing a mental wellbeing strategy for the borough.
- 3.3 There are a range of risk and protective factors for mental wellbeing. These are as follows:



3.4 The emerging strategy is set out in three parts:

- What mental wellbeing is, the Walsall ambition and values for mental wellbeing, the priorities and the strategic approach, the interaction with other policy and strategies and how the mental wellbeing strategy has been developed
- Summary of key data that has identified assets and needs of Walsall residents and what residents and partners say they would like Walsall to be
- Walsall's current position, challenges, recommendations and how we will make it happen through leadership, partnership working and resources.

3.5 The strategy takes a dual approach to reach and engage Walsall residents. It takes the following universal and a targeted approach to improve population mental wellbeing:

- A *universal approach* to promote good mental health and emotional resilience and prevent mental ill health for all age groups and populations
- A *proportionately targeted approach* to reduce mental wellbeing and health inequalities to consider the clear mental health inequalities, both in terms of who experiences the greatest risk of poor mental health and in terms of unequal access to treatment.

3.6 The strategy takes a 10-year approach to address some of the social and economic challenges. These are as follows:

- 1-2 years: Addressing Immediate Wellbeing Challenges Including the Covid Impact on Mental Wellbeing
- 3- 5 Years: Equilibrium and Beyond
- 6-10 Years: Aiming Higher for Walsall Residents

3.7 The strategy proposes the following definition of mental wellbeing;

Health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO). Mental wellbeing is defined as the positive end of the spectrum and describes both feeling good and functioning well. There can be no health without mental health. Mental Wellbeing is the bedrock from which other things flow.

3.8 The mental wellbeing of the population is affected by social network, income, unemployment and inadequate quality of work<sup>i</sup>, the quality of natural and built environment, such as air quality, the quality of green spaces, and housing<sup>ii</sup>.

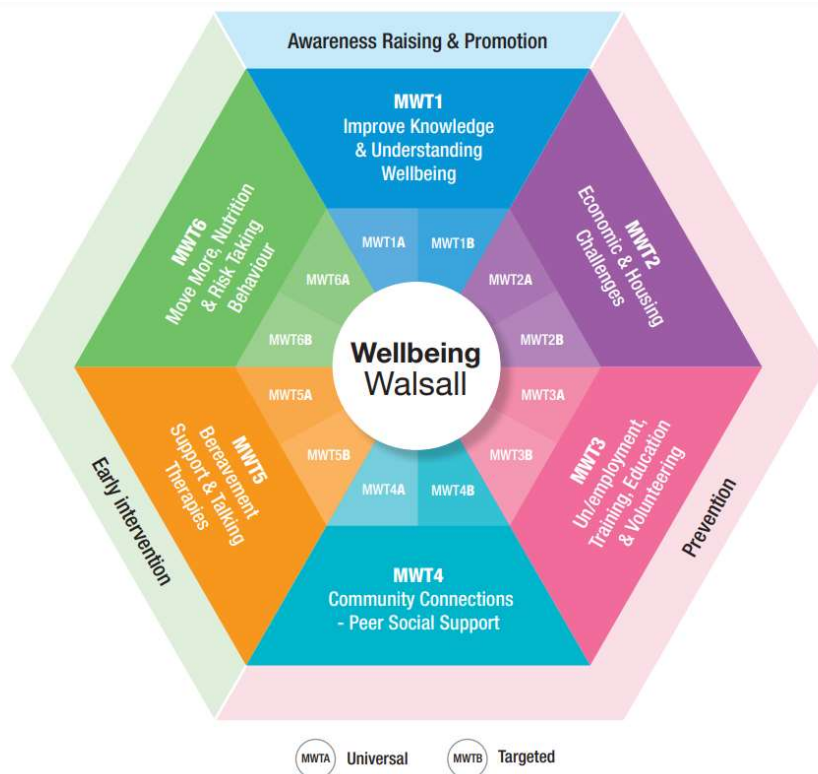
3.9 The proposed Walsall ambition and values is to achieve optimal mental wellbeing for all Walsall residents and reduce mental health and wellbeing inequality.

3.10 To achieve the ambition, we will need to work together to increase opportunities for better mental wellbeing. This will include; self-care and directing focus towards tackling common causes of poor mental wellbeing in Walsall.

3.11 The strategy priorities include:

- Improving the populations understanding of mental wellbeing and knowledge of how to access support and tackling mental health stigma
- Working together to improve some of the economic and housing challenges impact on the populations mental wellbeing
- Working in partnership with employers to support their employees
- Enhancing community connections, peer support and networks
- Making bereavement and counselling support more accessible by locating delivery within local communities and making them more culturally appropriate
- Utilising prevention and early intervention provision such as physical activity and nutrition

3.12 The Mental Wellbeing Strategy is set out in 3 Levels; Mental Wellbeing Promotion, Mental Illness Prevention and Early Intervention. These are laid out in 6 themes and are presented in the colours of the thematic wheel:



3.13 The thematic approach is as follows:

Theme 1.	Improve Knowledge & Understanding Wellbeing	Current position	Local challenge	Where we want to be
Theme 2.	Economic & Housing Challenges			
Theme 3.	Thrive Intervention Unemployment & Employment			
Theme 4.	Community Connections - Peer Social Support			
Theme 5.	Bereavement Support & Talking Therapies			
Theme 6.	Health Behaviour & Wellbeing			

3.14 The Draft Mental Wellbeing Strategy recognises other relevant local and national strategies and policies, which impact population mental wellbeing.

3.15 The strategy will be continued to be developed by exploring local needs and issues from the viewpoint of Walsall partners and residents. A qualitative study is currently underway which will glean views from local residents, drawing on existing literature of what works to improve mental wellbeing and by consulting partners through the;

- Health and Wellbeing Board Deep Dive
- Community mental wellbeing partnership
- Suicide Prevention Partnership
- One to one partnership engagement
- Mental Well-being SubCell

- Population Consultation.

#### **4 Implications for Joint Working arrangements:**

##### **4.1 Making it Happen, Leadership, Partnership & Resources**

To improve mental wellbeing across Walsall, it is vital to work as part of wider strategic system, which takes into account the social and other determinants of mental wellbeing. It is envisaged that with the further development of mental wellbeing SubCell will provide strategic leadership and will become accountable to the health and wellbeing board in delivery of the strategy.

#### **5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:**

5.1 Mental wellbeing is emerging as a key priority for the HWBB in the development of the JSNA and Health and Wellbeing strategy. The development of this strategy will be a key component of the delivery of that priority.

5.2 The proposal has been tested against the Marmot principles to reduce mental health inequalities. It contributes to the following objectives:

- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

#### **Author**

Angela Aitken

Senior Programme Development and Commissioning Manager

☎ 01922 6523719

✉ [angela.aitken@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:angela.aitken@walsall.gov.uk)

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<sup>i</sup> Compton, M.T. and Shim, R.S., 2015. The social determinants of mental health. *Focus*, 13(4), pp.419-425.

<sup>ii</sup> Evans, G.W., 2003. The built environment and mental health. *Journal of urban health*, 80(4), pp.536-555.