

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

**6 March 2017**

### **West Midlands Fire Service Overview of Prevention Activities in Walsall**

#### **1. Purpose**

This report gives an overview of how the Prevention agenda within West Midlands Fire Service's Strategic Plan, is ensuring that Health and Wellbeing is at the forefront of its vision of making 'West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier' including being recognised as Marmot champions within the Walsall area.

#### **2. Recommendations**

That the Health & Wellbeing Board note the activity that West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) is actively engaging in, to support the Board's priorities around Health.

#### **3. Report detail**

- In the Walsall conurbation and surrounding areas, West Midland Fire crews are actively involved in Mental Health work as Dementia champions trained by pathways. Through engagement with Dementia cafes they are providing support and completing essential Safe and well referrals. Champions are clearly identified wearing the Champion Insignia on their lapels.
- Fire crews are also working with a number of alcohol and drug rehabilitation groups such as the Beacon centre. This work is relevant when teams discuss the issues around what and when individuals involved in drugs/ legal highs and alcohol impacts on others. Referenced as a trusted public service who attend to deal with the aftermath with a different perspective to our partners, WMFS work closely to ensure support for these proactive centres from a public service point of view and educate the outcomes of what officers see. Our teams have completed Drug and legal high awareness training.

- Through the safe and well visits WMFS has created an approach to Healthy lifestyles and Healthy eating as well as ensuring those identified are living safely and independently. Our safety service incorporates all lifestyle choices and offers support, referrals to partners such as the Falls response service and sensory teams as well as signposting to other services both Public and Volunteers. During the visit WMFS also monitor carbon monoxide levels to ensure that those most at risk are not being exposed to dangerous products from faulty gas or solid fuel heaters, cooker or boilers.
- Our Vulnerable Persons Officers (VPO's) will engage with those identified at greater risk and work tirelessly to achieve the greatest protection and service for those most at risk. Their specialist training ensures that they are fully aware of Mental Health Challenges, Safeguarding and hoarding procedures working closely with our relevant partners to intervene and secure the best outcome. WMFS understands the importance of creating a safer environment to support independent living allowing our conurbations to remain in their homes and VPO's are at the forefront of this service.
- Through the Black Country North Hub WMFS ensures that the referrals made go to the appropriate delivery teams within our partners. As the gate keeper for this service this is the ideal platform for ensuring health and well- being information is shared to our relevant partners.
- Through education WMFS encourages our youngest ambassadors within our communities the importance to understand healthy lifestyles, healthy eating and being active as well as safety in the home. We capture this early in our sparks 2 education package delivered in schools across the Walsall area. Through this engagement WMFS then invite schools to participate in the Schools education quiz. Throughout the preparation sessions and on line support, schools are educated and mentored in the principles of health/wellbeing and safety in and out of the home. The quiz is recognised as best practice and children, parents and schools are at the forefront of competing against other schools to become the WMFS champions.

- **Multi activity sports club (MASC) and Princes trust**

MASC started out as concept to support further physical movement or activity by team games and individual sessions to promote healthy lifestyles, this was done by sessions arranged to increase heart rate moderately in a sport activity for about an hour session once a week. This included children and young people being encouraged to increase this to up to five times a week and record an activity log. This subsequently had been factored into the Princes Trust project run at Walsall fire station with their three monthly cohorts and NEETS (not in, education, employment or training) members proactively engaged.

- **WMFS Cadets**

A number of the Walsall Fire stations have WMFS cadets running 18 week programs for children ages between 12 -16, they engage in Fire Service activity as well as Health and well- being modules for the period of time, through Mentoring and Coaching they receive recognised qualification and can stay on to become Cadet instructors.

- **WMFS Specific Needs Cadets**

This Cadet Service is for children and young people with challenging illnesses or mental health diagnosis, the cadet project builds independence, confidence and skills for further development as well as support and long lasting friendships, promoting health and well-being.

### **Future projects.**

- WMFS are in early development discussions with NHS and Diabetes UK to pilot incorporating diabetes risk assessments into our Safe and Well visits. During these visits, alongside fire safety, topics of health and wellbeing are discussed. This provides an opportunity for diabetes prevention, promotion of testing in those at moderate/high risk of diabetes and discussion about the condition with people who have diabetes.

It is planned to pilot this project in Walsall and Wolverhampton and it has two strands. These are:

- Diabetes prevention and testing
- Health promotion amongst people with diabetes

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

The Health & Wellbeing Strategy is a partnership strategy and therefore West Midlands Fire Service will always seek to work collaboratively with partners to contribute to service delivery and improvement.

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

Following Assessment of need in Walsall through the current Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), the Economic Needs Assessment and the Strategic Assessment to inform the Community Safety Plan the two overarching priorities are:

- Improve healthy life expectancy
- Reduce Inequalities

## Background papers



Safety information  
booklet.pdf

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