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**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Public Protection
<b>DATE</b>	5 October 2022
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Mental Health & Wellbeing Support
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	POL/22/221
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Chief Inspector Robert Sturton, North East Division, Police Scotland
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	5.7

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide information to the Committee on mental health and wellbeing support for staff serving in North East Division.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

**3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 It is widely recognised that working in the Police service can have a significant impact on physical and mental health and as such the wellbeing of Police Officers, Police Staff, Special Constables and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers is paramount.
- 3.2 Police Scotland have a national Health and Wellbeing Team who are responsible for delivering health and wellbeing initiatives through the provision of the Trauma Risk Management Model (TRiM), the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Occupational Health Services and the 'Your Wellbeing Matters' programme.
- 3.3 If an Officer or member of Staff is identified to have been exposed to or suffered a traumatic incident and as a result, their mental health has been affected, there is an established and recognised process which their First Line Manager would implement in offering appropriate support. The following support services are offered and available to all Officers and Staff.

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### **Trauma Risk Management Model (TRiM)**

- 3.4 Post traumatic support for all Officers and Staff is paramount to prevent long term ill health.
- 3.5 TRiM is the model used to provide support for all Officers and Staff who are directly involved in or exposed to potentially traumatic incidents. It is a voluntary and confidential process and can be referred by line management or self-referred.
- 3.6 A TRiM intervention can include a one to one or group risk assessment where an assessor will work with the individual or group to identify what best support that can be provided. An assessment is usually carried out between 4-14 days after the incident with follow up assessment after 28 days.

### **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

- 3.7 The EAP provides Officers, Staff and household family members (over the age of 16) with access to a confidential support service. They can provide practical information and advice on a variety of issues. Counselling support is available to aid with anxiety, stress, trauma or bereavement related issues.
- 3.8 There is also specific Line Manager support which includes guidance on approaching difficult conversations and recognising the signs of psychological ill-health.

### **Occupational Health Services (Optima Health)**

- 3.9 Occupational Health helps identify how a person's health could impact upon their work or vice versa. The service helps to minimise health risks associated with work and provides expert advice and guidance on fitness for role and how and when a return to work can be facilitated, especially having been absent from work through psychological ill-health. They can also provide access to physiotherapy.

### **Police Treatment Centre (PTC)**

- 3.10 North East Division Staff have access to a PTC based in Auchterarder. It provides treatment and support, including intensive, police-specific, physiotherapy and rehabilitation, for injured and ill Police Officers, Police Staff and Special Constables. This includes psychological ill health.
- 3.11 The psychological wellbeing programme is a two week structured programme designed specifically for serving Officers with mild to moderate anxiety and depression and stress related issues.

### **Police Care UK**

- 3.12 Police Care UK is a charity for serving and retired Police Officers and Staff and their families. They are independent from any police service and provide practical, emotional and financial support.

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- 3.13 Police Care UK provide confidential counselling support including guided self-help, talking therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR). CBT and EMDR in particular have been shown to work for a variety of mental health problems including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- 3.14 Police Care UK and the Police Treatment Centre are currently working in partnership to create a centre of excellence to better care for those who suffer psychological harm because of their policing role. The centre of excellence will focus its efforts on building resilience to better support Officers, providing better and quicker access to treatment including PTSD.

### **Your Wellbeing Matters**

- 3.15 The Police Scotland Your Wellbeing Matters Programme has four strands; Psychological Wellbeing, Physical Wellbeing, Financial Wellbeing and Social Wellbeing. Each strand has their own set of support services available to achieve the key objectives;
- To embed a culture where the management and promotion of health and wellbeing are integrated into all aspects of the organisation.
  - To create a safe, positive and healthy working environment for all Officers and Staff.
  - To equip managers with effective, informative and practical policies, procedures and guidance to support Officer and Staff wellbeing.
- 3.16 Police Scotland also have a cadre of Wellbeing Champions. They are role models who support and underpin the delivery of the wellbeing initiative and are a point of contact for Officers and Staff providing them with guidance and advice on wellbeing issues and concerns, signposting them to the most appropriate service available.
- 3.17 North East Division currently have 16 Wellbeing Champions who range in rank, gender and skill set providing transparent and confidential support.
- 3.18 Champions take part in quarterly Wellbeing meetings, chaired by the Chief Superintendent.

### **North East Division Local Support and Initiatives**

- 3.19 In addition to the national support services available, North East Division have implemented a number of preventative and proactive initiatives to promote and support our staff in relation to all wellbeing matters.
- 3.20 In October 2020, recognising the importance of delivering on the objectives of the Wellbeing agenda, a North East Division Wellbeing Coordinator was appointed.
- 3.21 An associated Wellbeing Steering Group was established incorporating a broad cross section of Staff and Officers from various disciplines with command oversight.

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3.22 The Steering Group recognised and discussed wellbeing issues affecting our people. They also reviewed local and national initiatives and assessed their effectiveness; identifying areas for improvement and promoting 'Your Local Wellbeing Matters' across the Division.

### Objectives

Through consultation 4 key objectives were devised to ensure that North East Division would;

- *Listen to our People;*
- *Recognise the ever changing and increasing pressures people face in all aspects of life;*
- *Respond to people's needs; and*
- *Improve how we interact with, support and encourage our people at all times.*

### Priorities

To facilitate these objectives, the following interconnected priorities were devised;

- *Awareness Raising and Communications*
- *Breaking the Stigma*
- *Training and*
- *Initiatives and Continuous Improvement*

3.23 Since the implementation of the stipulated structure there have been significant strides made within the Division to address the key priorities. An associated action plan highlights achievements, progress and future ambitions.

3.24 This ensured a focus on 'what works' for our teams to ensure they feel valued. It also helps 'break the stigma' to develop a healthier and more positive working environment.

### **Our Priorities - Outcomes**

3.25 Since the implementation of this structure there have been positive inroads made within the Division in relation to each priority. Most notably;

#### **Awareness Raising and Communications**

3.26 A quarterly Health and Wellbeing magazine entitled 'Fit Like' has been created. The format of 'Fit Like' is purposely informal and personal (while in keeping with corporate standards and ethics) with contributors providing emotive first hand experiences which aim to break stigma and raise awareness.

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- 3.27 The utilisation and varied composition of the Steering Group aims to ensure the driving force for the wellbeing agenda is our people. Encouraging a 'bottom up' approach with command oversight and support.
- 3.28 Recognising that neighbouring Divisions are similarly invested in the wellbeing agenda, there is also a close working relationship between the Wellbeing Coordinators in both 'D' (Tayside) and 'N' (Highlands & Islands) Divisions exploring collaborative opportunities and sharing experiences and learning. There is a collective 'North hub' desire to integrate wellbeing roles and the potential for a North Area Coordinator is being explored.
- 3.29 A wellbeing section has been added to the North East Division intranet pages which highlights training and a range of wellbeing information. A link has also been added to local briefing pages, directing staff to this area of the site.
- 3.30 Wellbeing inputs are also being provided to all Probationers returning from Scottish Police College from their first stage training along with departmental inputs advising on the wellbeing assessments available to them. Focus has centred on departments who deal with traumatic episodes on a more regular basis.
- 3.31 In addition, all newly promoted Sergeants have been provided with a wellbeing guidance document, detailing Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) processes alongside a wide range of support mechanisms designed to provide assistance.
- 3.32 Contact has been made with all staff currently on long term absence, providing updated divisional information, information on local development opportunities and addressing any additional support needs.
- 3.33 Staff and supervisors requesting additional support have been signposted through the Wellbeing Coordinator. To date, 63 separate requests have been received and addressed since October 2020.

### **Breaking the Stigma**

- 3.34 There is a recognition that breaking stigma and having the courage to undertake difficult conversations is a challenging barrier to break. The training formats outlined hereunder are critically important in enhancing awareness and enabling the modification of opinions and views. The Mental Health Governance Group is also heavily engaged in work around breaking stigma and the work streams are closely linked.

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### **Training**

- 3.35 Working alongside the Scottish Women's Development Forum (SWDF) First Line Managers courses have developed a better understanding of the menopause with over 200 members of staff attending. Supported by a Sunday online 'Menopause Café' has enabled supportive conversations about the menopause in a relaxed environment.
- 3.36 Funding from Police Care realised £3000 to enable the North East and neighbouring Divisions to support 'Art of Resilience' Training. This has the potential to reach 2-3 thousand Officers.
- 3.37 This training is visually unique using cartoon illustrations to address common 'triggers' that cause pressure and emotional distress. It also focuses on the consequences of chronic burnout, anxiety and depression. Delivered through a one hour video the training is assessed as instantly relatable regardless of personal background.

### **Initiatives and Continuous Improvement**

- 3.38 In addition to the support for training Police Care have also provided £3,000 of funding to furnish three 'Wellbeing Rooms' within Aberdeen with a further two established in Aberdeenshire enabling a safe space for staff to decompress from challenging situations.
- 3.39 Employment Assistant Programme (EAP) wellbeing assessments are being advertised throughout the Division alongside Resilience Wellbeing Assessments which have been offered to departments who deal with traumatic events on a more regular basis.
- 3.40 Working with the People and Development business area joint 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) events have been introduced since December 2021. The most recent event was extremely successful with over 20 members of staff attending. These continue to run quarterly throughout 2022.
- 3.41 The charity 'Odd Balls' (awareness of testicular cancer) and Police Mutual are being supported in running quarterly Men's Health Events in the Division in 2022.
- 3.42 The Steering Group has also ensured close links with Your Safety Matters (YSM) coordination recognising the intrinsic association between the respective agendas. Through this link, staff have volunteered to provide lived experience of the violence and abuse that they have experienced in the course of their roles which will be captured and shared.
- 3.43 The 'Little Things' wellbeing initiative resulted in £5,800 being awarded in various guises to the North East. This ran until March 2022 with staff

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requesting 'desirable' items to assist in making small but important inroads to team wellbeing.

- 3.44 Working alongside Police Care and neighbouring Divisions, Injured Veteran Peer Support is being introduced. Essentially, through trained volunteers, this initiative is intended to provide emotional support for Officers either in the process of / who have completed ill health retirement due to injury on duty.

### **Future Considerations**

- 3.45 It is felt that the investment in wellbeing coordination has been well received by our people. As a Division we are starting to see the approach and structure pay dividends with the realisation of some tremendously positive outcomes.
- 3.46 Undoubtedly there is still much work to do to continue developing and improving our approach to staff wellbeing in the short, medium and longer term.
- 3.47 Moving forward the Division will seek to harmonise the wellbeing and safety coordination portfolios to an all-encompassing 'You Matter' role. The new incumbent in post has been identified and will begin in earnest in mid-September.
- 3.48 The remit of the position will focus on continued consultation with our people in various forums, listening to their concerns and responding to them on all matters related to their safety and wellbeing.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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**7. RISK**

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Operational</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Reputational</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks			

**8. OUTCOMES**

<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>			
Prosperous People Outcomes	Stretch		Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.
Prosperous Place Outcomes	Stretch		Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to

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	support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.
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**9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 Not applicable

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Not applicable

**12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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