

**Joint Adults Wellbeing and Health;  
Children and Young Peoples' and  
Environment and Sustainable  
Communities Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee**



**6 February 2020**

**Oral Healthy Strategy Update**

**Ordinary Decision**

---

**Report of Gill O'Neill, Deputy Director of Public Health, County Durham**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide members of the Adults Wellbeing and Health; Children and Young Peoples' and Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees with assurance of the legal due process being followed to consider whether Durham County Council should vary the existing community water fluoridation scheme.

**Executive Summary**

- 2 At its meeting on 4 July 2019, the Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered an update report on the progress being made with the County Durham Oral Health Strategy as well as activity undertaken to tackle oral health inequalities across County Durham. During consideration of the report, it was agreed that Overview and Scrutiny participate in discussing future proposals in respect of Oral Health for County Durham.
- 3 A further update report in respect of the Oral Health Strategy Update report was presented to and endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 16 October 2019 and is attached to this report. (Appendix 2)

- 4 The Joint Committee will consider presentations from a variety of speakers to discuss:
- The County Durham oral health strategy and progress against objectives to date;
  - The current oral health inequalities in County Durham;
  - The due process being followed as set out in legislation;
  - The evidence associated with community water fluoridation;
  - The current work of dentists in County Durham;
  - Next steps.

### **Recommendation**

- 5 The Adults Wellbeing and Health; Children and Young Peoples' and Environment and Sustainable Communities Joint OSC is recommended to Consider and comment on the information presented; the due process being adhered to and next steps.

### **Background papers**

- Oral Health Strategy Cabinet Report – Cabinet (October 2019)
- Public Health England: Improving oral health: a community water fluoridation toolkit for local authorities  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774128/Fluoridation\\_Toolkit\\_-\\_Publications\\_gateway\\_version\\_20160304.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774128/Fluoridation_Toolkit_-_Publications_gateway_version_20160304.pdf)
- Public Health England: Water Fluoridation Health monitoring report for England 2018  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692754/Water\\_Fluoridation\\_Health\\_monitoring\\_report\\_for\\_England\\_2018\\_final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692754/Water_Fluoridation_Health_monitoring_report_for_England_2018_final.pdf)
- Public Health England: Water Fluoridation Health monitoring report for England 2018. Executive summary  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692756/EXECUTIVE\\_SUMMARY\\_Water\\_Fluoridation\\_Health\\_monitoring\\_report\\_for\\_England\\_2018\\_DR.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692756/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_Water_Fluoridation_Health_monitoring_report_for_England_2018_DR.pdf)

### **Author(s)**

Gill O'Neill, Deputy Director  
Public Health

Tel: 03000 267696

Chris Woodcock, Public Health  
Strategic Manager

Tel: 03000 267672

---

## **Appendix 1: Implications**

---

### **Legal Implications**

The process of making a fluoridation scheme is regulated by the Water Industry Act 1991 and the Water Fluoridation (Proposals and Consultation) (England) Regulations 2013. Durham County Council is the Proposer of the Scheme. Since water areas do not correlate to local government boundaries it requires a Joint Committee incorporating the councils affected by proposals which impact outside County Durham. A 67% majority based on population size is required to implement any proposal which is not unanimously supported by the constituent councils. Once the Joint Committee has been formed it takes over conduct of the proposal and makes the necessary decisions.

### **Finance**

Oral health tooth brushing scheme expansion would require additional costs within baseline budget which public health are considering.

The denture labelling equipment is £70.00 per care home.

The technical appraisal for the potential expansion of the community water fluoridation scheme has been estimated at to be ~£4,125 million capital (responsibility of SOSHSC) and ~50p to 65p per head of population for the revenue costs.

Should the option to progress be agreed to next stages there may be costs for the public consultation which are yet to be determined.

### **Consultation**

A full and comprehensive consultation would be undertaken with affected Local Authorities and all affected residents. An independent communications consultant has been commissioned to develop the public consultation with all affected and impacted Local Authority areas and residents. Should cabinet approve the recommendations detailed plans will be drawn up to be ratified by the joint committee.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Public health aims to reduce inequalities and improve health outcomes by reviewing PH outcomes data and developing relevant policies, strategies and intentions as appropriate. A specific equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of consultation process. All known affected groups with protected characteristics will be considered.

## **Climate Change**

Not Applicable.

## **Human Rights**

Fluoridation is the adjustment of the level of fluoride to secure improvements in oral health. In over 70 years of schemes operating across the world. There has been no successful human rights challenge to this public health measure in the UK, EU or USA.

## **Crime and Disorder**

Not Applicable.

## **Staffing**

The Durham County Council Public Health team coordinate and lead the oral health strategy and action plan working closely with multi-disciplinary partners.

## **Accommodation**

Not Applicable.

## **Risk**

The oral health strategy is reviewed against milestones to ensure actions are on target. If the actions within the plan are not progressed the risks to population health are that the gap in inequalities will not be reduced and residents will continue to have preventable dental treatment and tooth extractions which impacts on all aspects of life.

## **Procurement**

Independent communications and consultation consultancy will be procured to strategically coordinate and implement the 12 week public consultation should the work progress to this stage.