

County Council

6 December 2023

**Director of Public Health Annual Report
2023**

Ordinary Decision



Report of Corporate Management Team

Jane Robinson, Corporate Director of Adult & Health Services

Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Adult & Health Services

Councillor Chris Hood, Portfolio holder for Adult & Health Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is for the Council to receive the 2023 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for County Durham (Appendix 2).

Executive summary

- 2 One of the statutory requirements of Directors of Public Health under the Health & Social Care Act 2012 is to produce an annual report about the health of the local population. In addition, the local authority has a duty to publish the report.
- 3 The government has not specified what the annual report should contain and has made it clear that this is a decision for individual Directors of Public Health to determine.
- 4 The County Durham Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 focuses on the following:
 - Foreword by the Director of Public Health.
 - Health of our people.
 - 10 years of public health in local authority.

- Collaboration, working together to improve lives.
- Conclusion.

Recommendation(s)

5 County Council is recommended to:

- (a) receive the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023.

Background

- 6 Section 73B(5) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the National Health Service Act 2006 to include the requirement that the Director of Public Health (DPH) for a local authority must prepare an annual report on the health of the people and that the local authority should publish the report.
- 7 The government has not specified what the annual report should contain and has made it clear that this is a decision for individual Directors of Public Health to determine.
- 8 The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 provides an overview of the health and wellbeing of County Durham's population.
- 9 This year's report '10 years in Local Authority – Looking back to plan ahead' includes an in-depth focus on 10 years of Public Health in the Local Authority. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 highlighted the importance of a population health approach to addressing health inequalities. It moved the public health function and services, including the Director of Public Health's statutory responsibilities, from the NHS to local councils in April 2013, giving them responsibility for implementing local strategies to improve the health of their populations.
- 10 In County Durham, close working relationships between NHS, Social Care, Primary Care, local Public Health, and Durham County Council were already well established.
- 11 The report highlights, and provides examples on the enhanced collaboration work, involving health, social care, council staff, wider partners and communities, the move into the local authority has established. It also recognises some of the challenges faced over the last 10 years, such as the response and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 12 The annual report provides an update on 10 years of the Health and Wellbeing Board linking to the social determinants of health (including economy) and the work undertaken against the four current key health priorities for County Durham:
 - Making smoking history;
 - Enabling healthy weight for all;
 - Improving mental health, resilience, and wellbeing; and
 - Reducing alcohol harms.

Main implications

Legal

- 13 It is a statutory responsibility for the Director of Public Health in a local authority area to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population.

Conclusion

- 14 The conclusion re-iterates the fact that no work to improve public health can be achieved without working with others, our partners and most importantly our local communities.
- 15 The report concludes that while progress has been made in relation to some health inequalities over the last 10 years a continuous concerted commitment by all to improve health and reduce health inequalities remains crucial.

Background papers

- Previous DPH annual reports

<https://www.durhaminsight.info/director-of-public-health-reports/>

Other useful documents

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Section 73B(5) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the National Health Service Act 2006 to include the requirement that the Director of Public Health for a local authority must prepare an annual report on the health of the people in the area of the local authority.

Finance

The publication of the report is funded by the ring-fenced public health grant.

Consultation and Engagement

This is the independent report of the Director of Public Health (DPH) and is not subject to formal consultation. However, Public Health do engage and consult with partners in the development of the DPH Annual Report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Actions from this report are targeted to reduce the health inequalities.

Climate Change

No impact.

Human Rights

No impact.

Crime and Disorder

No impact.

Staffing

Staff time to produce the 2023 annual report.

Accommodation

No impact.

Risk

No impact.

Procurement

No impact but should inform council commissioning plans in relation to services that impact on the health of the population.