

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

**23 July 2024**

**Health and Wellbeing Board  
Annual Report 2023/24**



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**Report of Jane Robinson, Corporate Director of Adult & Health Services**

**Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Durham County Council**

**Cllr Chris Hood, Portfolio Holder for Adult & Health Services**

**Electoral divisions affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) with the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2023/24 (Appendix 2) for agreement.

**Executive summary**

- 2 During 2023/24 the HWB has supported and led a range of excellent work which has impacted positively on the strategic priorities in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28 (JLHWS) (Appendix 3).
- 3 The priorities, based on evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs and Assets Assessment (JSNAA), inform partners planning, policy, and commissioning decisions, which enable us to continue to improve health and wellbeing services to all sections of the population countywide.
- 4 One year on from publishing our new JLHWS, the Annual Report looks at how we are progressing against the four focused priorities of:
  - (a) Making smoking history
  - (b) Enabling healthy weight for all
  - (c) Improving mental health, resilience, and wellbeing,

(d) Reducing alcohol harms

It identifies progress, challenges, and next steps to ensure we are delivering in these key areas.

- 5 The HWB work programme has been reviewed to ensure focused discussion and development time is given annually to each of the four priorities.
- 6 Sustainable health improvement takes time and as expected there are no significant changes in the trends at the one-year point. The report looks to illustrate actions and impacts in the intended direction of travel.
- 7 Over the coming year, the HWB will continue to monitor progress against the four priorities and prioritise resources to have the maximum impact. Amongst its statutory responsibilities the HWB will publish a new Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028 to support health needs across the county.
- 8 The HWB will continue to support legislative change which would contribute to our vision that *County Durham is a healthy place, where people live well for longer*. We will make it our business to ensure any opportunities generated by North East Devolution are used to maximise health outcomes.

## Recommendations

- 9 The HWB is recommended to:
  - (a) note and agree the contents of the HWB Annual Report 2023/24 and authorise publication;
  - (b) note the timeline and next steps outlined in the report;
  - (c) Share the HWB annual report within your organisations to showcase this good work and share learning with partners.

## Background

- 10 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 required all upper tier local authorities to establish Health and Wellbeing Boards. The County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board was formally established as a committee of Durham County Council in April 2013.
- 11 This is the ninth Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report, which looks at how we are progressing against the four key priorities identified in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28. No reports were produced for 2019/20 or 2020/21 due to pressures of the pandemic response. The HWB's vision is *County Durham is a healthy place, where people live well for longer.*

## Annual Report 2023/24

- 12 In May 2023, the HWB agreed its new Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028 (JLHWS). From the evidence base in the [Joint Strategic Needs and Assets Assessment \(JSNAA\)](#) we identified the four biggest contributors to people in County Durham dying young, living in poor health or with illness and agreed four key priority areas of focus to tackle these:
  - (a) Making smoking history
  - (b) Enabling healthy weight for all
  - (c) Improving mental health, resilience, and wellbeing
  - (d) Reducing alcohol harms
- 13 This first annual report, since the publication of the new JLHWS, looks at how we are progressing against these key priorities. The report includes examples of work the HWB has undertaken, or supported, during the past 12 months which have enabled **progress** towards the four key priorities; and includes case studies which show how the work of the HWB and its sub-groups has impacted on people's lives. It also identifies **challenges** which might impede our progress and outlines some of our **next steps**.
- 14 It is estimated that 'healthy behaviours' such as what we eat and drink, our use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, and whether we are physically active contribute 40% towards our health and wellbeing. 45% is determined by wider determinants such as how much money we have, our housing, the natural environment and our access to education and work. 15% is dependent on health and social care support and services.

The HWB works closely with partners on all these contributors or 'building blocks' of good health.

- 15 The HWB continues to oversee Health Protection arrangements, Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, and receive progress updates on Transforming Care, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Health and Social Care Integration, the Integrated Care System, and on joint health and social care planning and commissioning activity and performance through the Better Care Fund.

## **Data and evidence**

- 16 Infographics in the JLHWS illustrate Durham's position in terms of health outcomes within England and the North East, and compare figures across different areas of the County. Since the JLHWS 2023-2028 was published further population data (Census 2021) has been released which changes some of these figures. In respect of annual reporting, the new data does not show a significant change in the trends in any direction.
- 17 Sustainable change in health outcomes is known to take place over longer periods of time. In this annual report we are looking to evidence positive experiences of our services, intentional behaviour change and improvements to our systems which strengthen the building blocks of good health; all of which are the drivers of differences in health outcomes.

### *Priority 1: Making smoking history*

- 18 The Tobacco Control Alliance of partners lead on Making smoking history on behalf of the HWB. Its Strategic Plan has been refreshed and reviewed, including the addition of a vaping subgroup, better support to workplaces, and a renewed emphasis on engaging with social care and social housing.
- 19 A 2023 Health Equity Audit found positive results in that those from the most deprived areas of County Durham were accessing support through the Stop Smoking Service. This will bring us closer to addressing smoking related inequalities.
- 20 In March 2024 the [Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#) was published. The HWB formally registered its support and wrote to MPs to gather their support. Unfortunately, the Bill was not prioritised in the 'wash-up' period before the general election.

- 21 Smoking in pregnancy remains a pressing issue in County Durham and targeted interventions are required. We will work with partners to ensure collaborative action is taken.

*Priority 2: Enabling healthy weight for all*

- 22 The County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance is a well-supported subgroup of the HWB. A review of approaches to healthy weight in Durham was approved by the HWB in November 2023. The alliance has been working on these recommendations and will soon publish a five-year action plan.
- 23 A key action recommendation from the 'review of approaches to healthy weight in County Durham' is for Durham County Council to become a signatory to the Food Active Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight. This will enable DCC to be systems leaders on matters relating to healthy weight across the county and promote increased collaboration with key local stakeholders.
- 24 Public Health and local health care colleagues are working closely to coproduce resources that will help health care professionals to have supportive conversations with (and delivered brief interventions to) service users who live with overweight and obesity.
- 25 A pilot programme has been delivered to increase the availability of healthy food offers in hot food takeaways in County Durham. The findings from this are now being applied to promote wider availability of healthy food offers in a range of settings across the county.

*Priority 3: Improving mental health, resilience and wellbeing*

- 26 The Mental Health Strategic Partnership (MHSP) leads work across County Durham to improve mental health, resilience, and wellbeing. The MHSP has this year refreshed its action plan focusing on the key areas of the five workstreams: Children and Young People, Suicide Prevention, Urgent Care, Dementia, and Resilient Communities.
- 27 The reduction of mental health prevalence across the County is strongly linked to the wider social, environmental and community determinants of health. Each of the five workstreams have ensured their operational plans build on the assets linked to the various county wide strategies that consider risk and protective factors around mental health and wellbeing.
- 28 Within the mental health treatment system, we have developed mechanisms for hearing the voice of lived experience, including new paid posts within Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV). These roles have been crucial in helping us design and

implement new, integrated models of community-based treatment and support. We intend to find more opportunities to coproduce services, healthy behaviours, and wider determinants initiatives.

- 29 Family hubs are providing early help to children, young people, and families. They offer a range of activities, groups, and programmes to support emotional wellbeing including access to more specialist services where required. Engaging with children, young people, and their families from a range of communities, to ensure that the support we offer meets their needs, remains a challenge.
- 30 Urgent care response rates and capacity within crisis services have improved and we are implementing a new national telephony system to support people experiencing mental health crises.
- 31 Looking forward, we will work in partnership with organisations who were awarded funds from the national suicide prevention strategy and will deliver in County Durham.

#### *Priority 4: Reducing alcohol harms*

- 32 In response to government guidance, a new Combating Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (CDAP) working across County Durham and Darlington coordinates a system-wide response to implement the new strategy.
- 33 We continue to commission Balance, as our alcohol office, on behalf of seven Local Authority areas in the North East. Campaign materials from Balance have been cascaded to partners to amplify their impact at a local level. Influencing a change in the perception of the cultural norm of high levels of alcohol being acceptable within our communities remains a challenge.
- 34 14 posts have been incorporated within the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service (DARS): Harm Reduction Lead Practitioners, Criminal Justice Intervention Team workers, Harm Minimisation Police Liaison Workers, Integrated Offender Management (IOM)/Checkpoint Link Workers, Women's Recovery Workers, a Peer Led Communities Development Worker, and a Lived Experience Peer Apprentice.
- 35 We will review opportunities to recommend the implementation of Minimum Unit Pricing for alcohol, based on the positive outcomes in Scotland, to prevent the sale of cheap high strength drinks that lead to the greatest health harms and social costs.

## Looking Forward

- 36 The Health and Wellbeing Board will continue to monitor progress against the four priorities identified in the JLHWS, through the relevant lead groups and their strategic plans. The Board will dedicate specific agenda time for focused discussions on progress, challenges, and next steps to ensure we are moving in the right direction.
- 37 The Health and Wellbeing Board will continue to lead on Health Protection, oversee the Better Care Fund, consider developments in Transforming Care, and provide support to those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). In 2025 we will publish a new Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028, to ensure sufficient services are provided to support health needs across the county.
- 38 We will make it our business to ensure the opportunities of North East Devolution arrangements are used to maximise health outcomes through additional investment and improvements across culture, sport, environment, economy, housing, education, and skills.

## Next Steps

- 39 The HWB is asked to note the following key dates for the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2023/24:
- Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Adults and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive HWB Annual Report 2022/23 for information – **August 2024**
  - DCC Cabinet receives HWB Annual Report 2023/24 for endorsement – **18 September 2024**
  - Partner governance arrangements receive the HWB Annual Report 2023/24 for endorsement – **September – November 2024**

## Background papers

- **Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28 (Appendix 3)**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS) is a legal requirement for HWBs to produce under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, ensuring health and social care agencies work together to agree services and initiatives which should be prioritised.

### **Finance**

Ongoing pressure on the public services will challenge all agencies to consider how best to ensure effective services are delivered in the most efficient way.

The demographic profile of the County in terms of both an ageing and projected increase in population will present future budget pressures to the County Council and NHS partners for the commissioning of health and social care services.

The JLHWS is used to influence commissioning decisions across the system, supporting preventative work and maximising the County Durham pound.

### **Consultation**

Consultation took place on the development of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28, and work with our communities, using the County Durham Approach to Wellbeing, has continued through the formally established subgroups of the Health and Wellbeing Board in the development and delivery of plans and includes co-production and consideration of lived experience and the voice of the user.

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

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken alongside the JLHWS.

### **Human Rights**

No direct implications.

### **Crime and Disorder**

The JLHWS is aligned with and contributes to the current priorities within the Safe Durham Partnership Plan which focuses on crime and disorder.



**Staffing**

No direct implications.

**Accommodation**

No direct implications.

**Risk**

No direct implications.

**Procurement**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 outlines that commissioners should take regard of the JLHWS when exercising their functions in relation to the commissioning of health and social care services.