

WIRRAL COUNCIL

Cabinet
29 JUNE 2015

SUBJECT:	Wirral Public Health Annual Report 2014
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All Wards
REPORT OF:	Director of Public Health
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Public Health
KEY DECISION?	No

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Local government has long been involved in promoting health taking action to reduce harm from the things that create poor health. Wirral council, as the democratically accountable stewards of their population's wellbeing, understands the importance of 'place' in promoting wellbeing. The role of the Director of Public Health is to support the strategic thinking about how to drive reductions in health inequalities, both through the things that local authorities can directly influence, and through effective, local, partnership working.

1.2 One of the responsibilities of a Director of Public Health is to produce an annual report on the health of the local population, and the Council has a duty to publish that report. The intention of the report is that it is an important vehicle by which Directors of Public Health can identify key issues, flag up problems, report progress and, thereby, serve their local populations. It is also be a key resource to inform local inter-agency action and will contribute to improving the health and well-being of local populations and reducing health inequalities.

1.3 One of the important questions often asked is how we can maximise our efforts and impact on the health of people in Wirral. This year's Public Health Annual Report is based on a practical, evidence based report produced by the King's Fund in 2013 which sets out what can be done, how it affects health, and the associated business case for action. We review each of the nine priority areas to see what is being done locally, and to highlight ways in which we can strengthen our impact.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 Nine themes for action

There are nine themes identified for action in the report. These themes and the rationale provided by the King's Fund for each is outlined in the following sections of this report.

2.1.1 The best start in life

To get the best possible start in life, a baby's mother needs to be healthy before and during pregnancy and childbirth. There is compelling evidence that a child's experiences in the early years (0-4) have a major impact on their health and life chances, as children and adults.

2.1.2 Healthy schools and pupils

Evidence from many countries confirms that there is a strong correlation between educational attainment, life expectancy and self-reported health, within and across generations. School is also an important setting for forming or changing health behaviours. But interventions need to be well targeted, and achieving improvements in behaviour among more deprived pupils may be more difficult and more costly.

2.1.3 Helping people find good jobs and stay in work

Injuries and stress endured in the workplace can be bad for health, but being unemployed can lead to poor physical and mental health, across all age groups, with major impacts for the individual concerned, their spouse and family. Getting back into work improves people's health, as long as it is decent work.

2.1.4 Active and safe travel

Local authorities are responsible for drawing up and implementing local transport plans. Poor planning and regulation leads to preventable deaths and injuries (particularly among vulnerable groups); it also leads to air pollution, and social and economic isolation, and acts as a disincentive to people making healthier choices like cycling and walking.

2.1.5 Warmer and safer homes

Suitable accommodation that is safe and warm is one of the foundations of personal wellbeing, whether in childhood or old age. It enables people to access basic services, build good relationships with neighbours and others, and maintain their independence – all resulting in a better quality of life. We focus here on three areas that can have a significant impact on improving health: preventing accidents in the home, making homes warmer, and preventing falls among older people.

2.1.6 Access to green and open spaces and the role of leisure

Access to open spaces and leisure and recreational facilities has direct and indirect impacts on people's physical and mental health, but can also enable people to build social capital.

2.1.7 Strong communities, wellbeing and resilience

Local authorities have a role to play in helping individuals and communities to develop social capital (for example 'neighbourliness', social networks and civic participation). There is growing recognition that although disadvantaged social groups and communities have a range of complex and inter-related needs, they also

have assets at the social and community level that can help improve health, and strengthen resilience to health problems. Several local authorities are pioneering these community asset-based approaches to improving health and building resilience for wellbeing.

2.1.8 Public protection and regulatory services

Effective public protection services – covering council powers of inspection, regulation and licensing – are an important component in ensuring public health and safety. Local authorities can make a difference in many areas, for example the regulation of takeaways and fast foods (a sector that has grown considerably in the past 30 years); the improvement of air quality; and fire safety.

2.1.9 Health and spatial planning

Good spatial planning helps improve the 'liveability' of areas. The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework acknowledges the role of spatial planning in improving health, and requires local authorities to help develop the evidence base further. Spatial planning is not an intervention in itself, but an enabler. How places are planned affects, for good or ill, how the other areas discussed in this report impact on health.

2.2 The 2014 Public Health Annual report provides recommendations within each chapter for action. Many of these actions link closely with the aims of the existing Corporate plan to support vulnerable people, promote good health and a positive environment and encourage employment opportunities.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 n/a

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 n/a

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 n/a

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

6.1 n/a

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 n/a

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 n/a

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 n/a

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(c) No because of another reason which is that this report does not directly make any decisions impacting on our local community. It does raise issues which impact differentially on our communities.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 n/a

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 n/a

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 That Cabinet receives and notes and approves for publication, the content of the Public Health Annual Report for 2014

13.2 That the Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Report and reflect on how they can be incorporated into Council policy.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 Wirral Council has a statutory duty to publish a Public Health Annual Report. The report is intended to support the understanding and insight required to identify key issues, flag up problems, report progress and, thereby, serve our local populations. It is also a key resource to inform local inter-agency action.

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APPENDICES

Public Health Annual Report 2014: Improving the Public's Health in Wirral

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field_publication_file/improving-the-publics-health-kingsfund-dec13.pdf

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Policy & Performance Committee: presentation on the King's Fund report – improving the public's health	8 April 2014