

## **Public Health Annual Report 2015-16**

### **Report of the Director of Public Health**

**Recommendation:** The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee receives the Public Health Annual Report for 2015-16.

#### **1. Context**

1.1 Responsibility for Public Health moved to upper-tier and unitary local authorities from the NHS in April 2013. Public Health was last the responsibility of local authorities prior to the health reforms of 1974, at which time the County Medical Officer was responsible for producing an annual report on health in their community.

1.2 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, there is a statutory requirement for the Director of Public Health (in upper-tier and unitary local authorities) to write an annual report the health of the local population. It is the statutory duty of the local authority to publish it (section 73B(5) & (6) of the 2006 Act, inserted by section 31 of the 2012 Act). The annual report is based information identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the preparation of which is the statutory duty of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This paper introduces the Public Health Annual Report for 2015-16.

#### **2. The Public Health Annual Report 2015-16**

2.1 This year's report draws on the importance of the health of the public in our society and its links to fairness, equality and justice. The role of politics – local, national and international – in health is unequivocal. While the health of the public in Devon is generally very good, both in terms of national comparisons and with similar geographic areas, as indicated by the Devon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, there are areas of concern.

2.2 Priorities highlighted by the report are overweight and obesity in adults and children; unhealthy levels of alcohol consumption; poor mental health and social isolation; violence and abuse – all of these are affected by the society within which we live and none has a single remedy. Action is necessary at local, national and international levels to address these issues.

2.3 There needs to be an increasing emphasis on people taking greater responsibility for their own health, to prevent deterioration in health and decline in independence in the later years of life. We need to continue to reduce the health inequality gap by improving the health of the worst-off in Devon, and ensuring all children in Devon have the best possible start in life as an effective way of tackling health inequality in later life. A balance needs to be struck between early intervention for long-term conditions and not over-diagnosing or over-treating people's health conditions – which is why the regular surveillance of health outcomes and disease trends is so important.

2.4 The full document is published on line and can be found at:

<http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/aphr/2015-16/>

#### **3. Legal Considerations**

There are no specific legal considerations identified at this stage.

#### **4. Risk Management Considerations**

Not applicable.

#### **5. Options/Alternatives**

Not applicable.

#### **6. Public Health Impact**

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy is an important element of the work of the board, drawing together priorities from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This report and the related documents

have a strong emphasis on public health and other relevant health, social care and wellbeing outcomes. A number of the outcomes indicators are also drawn from the Public Health Outcomes Framework. The report also includes a specific focus on health inequalities.

**Dr Virginia Pearson**  
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**DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Electoral Divisions: All**

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Background Papers

Nil