

Public Health Annual Report 2021-22

Report of the Director of Public Health

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to receive the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2021-22 which this year focuses on the impact to Devon residents of COVID-19 and the economic crisis and to note its recommendations.

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### **1. Background**

1.1. The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to write an annual report, and the local authority has a statutory duty to publish it (section 73B [5] & [6] of the 2006 NHS Act, inserted by section 31 of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act). This enables the Director of Public Health to make an independent judgement about the state of the health of the local population and ensures that the report will be published and in the public domain. The annual report by the Director of Public Health is therefore different from all other reports received from an officer in that it is not a Cabinet Member report.

### **2. Introduction**

2.1 This Annual Public Health Report for Devon County Council is my second report as Director of Public Health for Devon County Council. This is the first annual report which will be published in a digital format only in recognition of our commitment to the climate change emergency.

2.2 This year's annual report looks back over the past twelve months, describing how COVID-19 has continued to impact upon the lives of Devon residents and examines what living safely with covid will look like.

2.3 The report also examines the impact of the 'cost-of-living crisis', driven by rising energy, fuel and food prices and inflation, and how this, like the pandemic is impacting on the poorest households in Devon and increasing health inequalities.

2.4 The report highlights the need to ensure that as a local authority we are able to respond effectively to any additional pandemic waves as well as ensuring that the resources we have are targeted at the most vulnerable households to help reduce the combined impact of the pandemic and 'cost-of-living crisis'.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 The recommendations set out in the report are:

1. Public Health Devon continues to maintain a surveillance system to monitor local cases and outbreaks across settings to enable swift public health actions, working closely with our partners.
2. Public Health Devon continues to support NHS partners in the promotion and delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, with a particular focus on addressing inequalities in uptake.

3. Public Health Devon works with NHS partners to ensure the learning from the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme is embedded in the delivery of all routine vaccination programmes.
4. Further research should be commissioned to gain a greater understanding of food insecurity and fuel poverty in Devon, its impact and the arrangements to support people at greatest risk.
5. Increase in publicity to raise awareness and encourage eligible homeowners in Devon to access free energy efficiency improvements through Cosy Devon.
6. The Council continues to work with Government and local partners in the commissioning and delivery of schemes which mitigate some of the impacts of food and fuel insecurity, through funding within the Household Support Fund and Holiday Activities and Food programme.
7. Public Health Devon work collaboratively with colleagues from Education and children and young people service providers to explore the delivery of an enhanced health and wellbeing programme offer.
8. Local strategic partners should consider working together, with people with lived experience, to better understand the wider impacts of poverty and explore opportunities to help tackle and prevent poverty in Devon.

#### **4. Financial considerations**

- 4.1 Contained within the report.

#### **5. Sustainability considerations**

- 5.1 Contained within the report.

#### **6. Carbon impact considerations**

- 6.1 Contained within the report.

#### **7. Equality considerations**

- 7.1 Contained within the report.

#### **8. Legal considerations**

- 8.1 The publication of the annual report of the Director of Public Health by Devon County Council discharges a statutory responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

#### **9. Risk management considerations**

- 9.1 Contained within the report.

#### **10. Public Health Impact**

- 10.1 Contained within the report.

## **11. Recommendation**

11.1 Cabinet is asked to receive the 2021-22 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health and to note its recommendations.

**Steven Brown**  
**Director of Public Health, Communities & Prosperity**  
**Devon County Council**

**Electoral Divisions: All**

Cabinet Member for Public Health: Councillor Roger Croad

[Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers](#)

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**Background Paper    Date    File Reference**

Previous annual reports and this annual report of the Director of Public Health can be found at:

<https://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/aphr/2021-22>