

Public Health Annual Report 2018-19

Report of the Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to receive the annual report of the Director of Public Health 2018-19 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 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 the twelfth in a series of annual reports on the health of the population of Devon which began in 2007-08.
- 2.2. Each report covers the general health of the population of Devon; increasingly the detail about health and wellbeing can be found in the annual Joint Strategic Needs assessment which is available at: [www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/jsna](http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/jsna)
- 2.3. This year's public health annual report takes as its theme the mental health and wellbeing of the population. One in four adults and one in ten children experience mental health problems to some degree in any year, and mental ill-health is a major cost to society, particularly the criminal justice system, and health and care services.
- 2.4. Without mental health there is no health, and it is increasingly recognised that we should be giving the same priority to mental health as physical health in terms of prevention, early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation.
- 2.5. Health inequality persists and is a challenge – for example, Ilfracombe still has the shortest life expectancy in Devon. Inequality also exists between physical; and mental health: while indicators of physical health tend to be good overall, with only a few exceptions, the population of Devon does not compare as favourably on indicators of mental health. In fact, in the Devon Health and Wellbeing Board's outcomes set, progress made over the last six years on physical health indicators in both absolute improvement and relative ranking compared with local authority comparator groups is the opposite when it comes to the mental health indicators chosen by the Board.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 The ten recommendations set out in the report are:

1. Communities in Devon to adopt a positive approach to mental health, recognising how common mental health issues are among the population.
2. Promotion of mental health and wellbeing in schools and educational settings.
3. Wider recognition of, and action to address, the inequality that exists for people with serious mental health issues in terms of physical health, employment and housing.
4. Recognition of, and action to address the mental ill-health risks associated with poverty, poor housing and lack of decent employment.
5. Ensuring that a ‘Health in all policies’ approach embraces mental health as well as physical health.
6. Action to prevent, recognise and treat the symptoms of trauma (including as a result of adverse childhood experiences) to prevent inappropriate and/or ineffective use of resources, whether they be health, social care or criminal justice.
7. Sufficient expert support available within community settings to complement national and local developments in home-based and community-based care.
8. Recognition of the importance of formal and informal caring responsibilities at all ages and information and practical support for carers, particularly in the light of the potential impact of caring on carers’ own mental health and wellbeing.
9. Implementation of the recommendations of the fifth annual MBRRACE-UK (‘Mothers and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries’) report, particularly those concerning maternal mental health and women from vulnerable groups.
10. The Devon Health and Wellbeing Board continues to have mental health as one of its top priorities and to work, as a partnership, to achieve both measurable improvements in outcomes and also improvement in local authority comparator group rankings over the next five years.

### **4. Financial considerations**

- 4.1 Contained within the report, particularly pertaining to the benefits of prevention and early intervention.

### **5. Legal considerations**

- 5.1 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.

### **6. Environmental impact considerations**

- 6.1 Contained within the report.

### **7. Equality considerations**

7.1 Contained within the report.

**8. Risk assessment considerations**

8.1 Contained within the report.

**9. Recommendation**

9.1 Cabinet is asked to receive the annual report of the Director of Public Health and to note its recommendations.

**Dr Virginia Pearson  
CHIEF OFFICER FOR COMMUNITIES, PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND  
PROSPERITY  
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Electoral Divisions:** All

Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health and Transportation and Environmental Services: Councillor Roger Croad

Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment, and Prosperity: Dr Virginia Pearson

**Background publications**

Previous annual reports and this 2018-19 annual report of the Director of Public Health can be found at:

[www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/aphr](http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/aphr)