

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda  
Item No.

Report of Director of Public Health  
to  
Cabinet  
on  
17<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Report prepared by: Andrea Atherton  
Director of Public Health

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**The 2014 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health**  
**People Scrutiny Committee - Executive Councillor: Councillor Ian Gilbert**  
***A Part 1 Public Agenda Item***

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**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To note the 2014 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.

**2. Recommendation:**

**2.1 To note the content and recommendations of the 2014 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.**

**3. Background**

3.1 Annual reports have played an important part in public health practice ever since the early days of Medical Officers of Health. They remain an important vehicle for informing local people about the health of their community as well as providing the necessary information for decision makers in local authorities and local health services on key priorities that need to be addressed to improve the health and well-being of the population.

3.2 The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health is intended to be an independent assessment of the health of the community based on sound epidemiological evidence and interpreted objectively. With the transfer of public health into local authorities, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 has maintained the tradition for the Director of Public Health to prepare an Annual Report and has placed a duty on the local authority to publish it.

**4.0 The 2014 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health**

4.1 This year's report focuses on the key health issues at either end of the age spectrum - the very start of life and older people.

4.2 It is well recognised that the foundations of good health, well-being and life chances are laid at the very start of life – in pregnancy and early childhood (0-4 years). The first section of the report looks at the importance of promoting the health of women preconception, and during pregnancy. This includes encouraging women to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle behaviours and

engage with antenatal services as early on in the pregnancy as possible. It is important for women to access the antenatal screening programmes at the correct time during pregnancy and to receive high quality antenatal education.

- 4.3 Infancy and childhood is a key period during which a complex interplay of a child's genetics with their family and community experiences and environmental factors can support or harm their development. Spending on the early years of life should be seen as an investment and will yield returns in the future.
- 4.4 Health visitors play a key role in preventative health care in 0-5s. The responsibility for the commissioning of the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme transfers from NHS England Essex Area Team to Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's Public Health Department from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. This creates an opportunity for more integrated working between maternity, health visiting, school nursing, mental health services and Early Years staff to ensure that we offer a comprehensive package of support to young children and families.
- 4.5 The second section of the report looks at the health of older people. Southend has a greater proportion of people aged 65 years and over compared to the England average. The number of older people is expected to grow sharply in the coming years.
- 4.6 As with the early years of life, the health and well-being of older people is also influenced by an interplay of the determinants of health, such as poverty and housing, genetic factors and lifestyle behaviours. This makes it vitally important for agencies to work together to ensure that older people have active, independent and fulfilling lives for as long as possible.
- 4.7 To ensure the health and wellbeing of the growing numbers of older people there needs to be greater focus on health promotion and disease prevention in old age. The evidence suggests that making healthy lifestyle choices particularly at the age of 40-60 years can have a marked impact on health in later years, including a reduction in the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, cancer, other long term conditions and dementia.
- 4.8 Estimates suggest that in 2012/13 there were 2622 people with dementia in Southend. However, only 1,139 were formally diagnosed with dementia on GP registers. Further work is required to reduce this 'dementia gap' to ensure that people with dementia and their family and carers have early access to services and support.
- 4.8. The final section on older people looks at the prevention and management of long term conditions, the important role of carers, and the management and prevention of falls, which pose a threat to the wellbeing and independence of older people.
- 4.9 The chapter on health protection highlights the need for more work to ensure that people in the at risk groups receive an annual flu vaccination.

4.10 The 2013 Annual Public Health Report looked at lifestyle behaviours. This report includes an update on progress against the recommendations made in that report.

## **5.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

5.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires Directors of Public Health to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population.

## **6.0 Corporate Implications**

6.1 **Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities**  
The report highlights the key actions at the very start of life and in later life that will improve the health and wellbeing of the 0-4 and over 65 age groups in the local population.

6.2 **Financial Implications**  
Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from the contents of this report, the Annual Public Health Report should influence future prioritisation and allocation of resources.

6.3 **Legal Implications**  
There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6.4 **People Implications**  
None

6.5 **Property Implications**  
None

6.6 **Consultation**  
The Annual Public Health Report has been considered at the People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Further information on carers and on mental health will be included in the Southend Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the mental health needs assessment respectively.

6.7 **Equalities and Diversity Implications**  
The Annual Public Health Report provides evidence that population health needs are assessed and considered.

6.8 **Risk Assessment**  
A risk assessment will be undertaken of individual initiatives introduced to tackle the key issues highlighted in the report.

6.9 **Value for Money**  
No implications

6.10 **Environmental Impact**  
No implications.

## **7.0 Appendices**

7.1 The 2014 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for Southend