

Southend Health Protection Board

Terms of Reference

Background

Since 1st April 2013, the City Council, through the Director of Public Health (DPH), has statutory responsibilities to advise on and promote local health protection plans across agencies, which complements the statutory responsibilities of UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), NHS England/Improvement (NHSE&I) and the local NHS – (from the 1st July 2022 this will be the Mid and South Essex's Integrated Care Board – **MSE ICB**).

The services that fall within Health Protection include :-

- Communicable disease and environmental hazards
- Public health emergency planning
- Immunisation
- Screening
- Sexual health
- Health in the Justice System

The Health Protection Board (HPB) for Southend was established in March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. It was set up as a multi-agency Board to facilitate information sharing, planning and emergency response across the system. Whilst responding to the need to suppress increase infection rates from COVID-19, it also assumed responsibility to support the system in tackling significant pockets of COVID vaccine hesitancy and consider the risks associated with the reduced staff resources overall in the system, due to both excess demand on health and care services and staff illness, and therefore ensuring that maximum efficiency is achieved.

In March 2022, at the bequest of the DPH, the HPB and the Outbreak Management Oversight and Engagement Board (now renamed the Heath Protection Oversight and Engagement Board) unanimously approved that the two Boards will continue to operate as an established governance for all Health Protection matters in Southend.

The HPB will also have a direct link into the Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP) which is a forum across Essex chaired by one of the three DsPH across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. Member agencies share responsibility for oversight of health emergency planning in this forum. The Council's Public Health Consultant will liaise with the LHRP, TB Network and the NHS Immunisation and Screening team to update the HPB - whilst we await the finalisation of the local NHS restructure and the creation of the MSE ICB. The Environmental and Food Safety issues will be covered by the Director of Public Protection.

Purpose

The Board shall exist to:

1. Provide a strong leadership forum for information sharing and planning between public agencies that have responsibilities for health protection across Southend;
2. Review, engage and seek assurance that appropriate mechanisms are in place to protect public health and agree what collective support is required;
3. Lead on the development and implementation of the Local Outbreak Management Plan;
4. Actively partnering with UKHSA for local surveillance of all communicable and infectious diseases' outbreaks and provide robust mitigation against risks;
5. Identify public health action required and identify key supporting agencies to ensure action is taken and collective support is agreed;
6. Identify gaps and issues which need resolution by the one or more of the member agencies and procedures/processes which need to be developed or improved;
7. Provide a clear steer on key items for communication out to stakeholders including citizens and visitors to Southend and the engagement with media;
8. Responsible for scientific, ethical and technical oversight;
9. Co-ordinate contract tracing service responsibilities, linking into both the national and regional system architecture – as and when required;
10. Monitor and recalibrate local actions and responses;
11. Provide assurance and lead on the exit strategy for winding down the local response as necessary;
12. Agree on collective approach, where necessary, and deployment of resources to ensure the effective local service delivery and response

The Board will be one of two sub-groups under the Southend Health and Wellbeing Board. This Board will report into the second sub-group, the Outbreak Control Oversight and Engagement Board.

Chair

The Board shall be chaired by the Director of Public Health for Southend City Council and the Council's Chief Executive and local NHS Alliance Director shall be co-Vice Chair.

Representation

The Board shall comprise of:

- Krishna Ramkhalawon – Director of Public Health (Chair)
- Andrew Lewis – Chief Executive (Vice-chair)
- Ruth Hallett – NHS Alliance Director, NHS representative
- Michael Marks - Executive Director of Children and Public Health (DCS rep)
- Smita Kapadia - UKHAS Consultant in Communicable Disease Control
- Tandra Forster – Executive Director of Adults & Communities (DASS rep)
- Joanne Stowell – Public Protection Director
- Gary Cullen – Resilience & Emergency Planning Manager (Southend CC)
- Margaret Eni-Olotu – Public Health Consultant (LHRP rep)

- Adam Keating - Strategic Communications Manager (Southend CC)

The Vice-Chair will be a standing substitute for the Chair when unable to attend, but another nominated qualified senior Public Health professional must be in attendance.

In Attendance

It may be necessary from time to time to co-opt other members for specific areas of interest such as representatives of the Environment Agency.

The Public Health lead for the Pandemic Outbreak Management will be a co-opted member.

Secretariat

The Council will provide this support through the Graduate who supports the Chief Executive's Office.

Quorum

The Board shall be Quorate if any 4 persons are present including the Chair and Vice-Chair and a nominated senior Public Health professional, in the absence of the Director of Public Health and a representative from the NHS.

Meetings

Meetings may be held with such frequency as are required. This is likely to be monthly currently, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Date approved and for review: (*tba on the 27 May 2022*) - Review in 3 months

Last reviewed - 22 April 2022