

**HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**11 NOVEMBER 2015**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH 2015:**  
**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND**  
**WELLBEING OF THE POPULATION**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the publication of the Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2015. The Annual Report is a statement on the health of the population of Leicestershire and is a key resource for shaping commissioning decisions to improve the health status of the population. A copy of the Annual Report is appended to this report.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. Last year's report focussed on the wider determinants of health and this report includes an update on progress against the recommendations made in that report.
3. This report will also be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 18 November, the Health and Wellbeing Board at its meeting on 19 November and to the County Council at its meeting on 2 December. The comments of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported to these meetings.

**Background**

4. The Director of Public Health's (DPH) Annual Report is a statutory independent report on the health of the population of Leicestershire.
5. This year's report focuses on the role of communities in improving the health and wellbeing of the population. It builds on last year's report, which set out the case for focusing on the social and economic factors which underpin health for everyone in Leicestershire. These include healthy housing, access to quality lifelong education, fair and secure employment and a supportive social circle.
6. This year the work has been further developed by looking at how public health and its partners across the health system can strengthen and enhance the impact that communities have on people's health and wellbeing.
7. The aim of this report is to raise awareness of the role that communities have in improving the health of the population, and the need for all partners concerned with

the health and wellbeing of the population to work together to support and develop this role in the future. The report also highlights the need for good local leadership of this agenda to ensure that there are significant overall benefits for our populations.

8. People in Leicestershire are living ever longer lives, meaning that there are increasing numbers of older people living with long-term conditions and disabilities. It is therefore essential that we redouble our focus on preventing ill health, so that people not only live longer lives but also remain healthier for longer. At the same time we have to recognise that more people will need support and help with their health and care needs.
9. The role that communities have in supporting health and wellbeing will become increasingly important over the next few years. All public services across Leicestershire will face a very difficult financial challenge. For example, Leicestershire County Council has to save at least a third of its budget over the next four years. Demand for services is growing, people are living longer and are working for a smaller proportion of their lives. This means that when they need services they need them for longer, However, this also means that there may be more people who can volunteer and support people in communities.
10. Communities have a valuable role to play in empowering people to help themselves and providing extra support where it is needed. Being a part of a strong and supportive community that works together on local issues can in itself provide an enormous boost to people's health and wellbeing. It is important that the County Council, district councils and local health organisations work together in a coordinated approach to build community capacity.
11. The report includes the 2015 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Executive Summary as a data appendix to raise awareness of this important strategic document and to set out the scale of the challenges facing the health and social care needs of the population in the future.

### **Consultation**

12. The report is the independent report of the Director of Public Health.

### **Resource Implications**

13. Full implementation of the recommendations of the report will need to be addressed through the commissioning cycle.

### **Conclusions**

14. Leicestershire County Council's recently approved Communities Strategy sets out a framework for developing community based approaches. The central philosophy of the Communities Strategy is prevention and this should be the driving force behind community led models.
15. This report sets out a framework for developing community based approaches that can improve the health and wellbeing of the population, and provides examples of some of the initiatives that are already happening across Leicestershire. The report

also identifies areas where the researchers found less evidence of local schemes. It is demonstrated that the framework is an effective approach for providing communities with opportunities to improve health and wellbeing. However, the very nature of community led approaches means that these are not being systematically applied across Leicestershire, and to be most effective each community will need to be able to develop the community interventions that are most suitable for their needs. Joined up working between the Public Health Department and the Policy and Communities Team within the Chief Executives Department will help to ensure an effective and co-ordinated approach to prevention. Community approaches will be central to this and to the delivery of the Communities Strategy.

### **Background Papers**

Director of Public Health Annual Reports from 2011 to 2014  
All accessible from <http://ow.ly/UbbmX>

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure.**

None.

### **Officer to Contact**

Mike Sandys  
Director of Public Health  
Email: [mike.sandys@leics.gov.uk](mailto:mike.sandys@leics.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 0116 3057913

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix: Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2015. Leicestershire: The role of communities in improving the health and wellbeing of the population.

### **Relevant Impact Assessments**

#### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

16. Implementation of the report's recommendations would have a positive impact on health inequalities.

#### **Partnership Working and associated issues**

17. The recommendations within this report focus on actions across local government that will improve the population's health. The recommendations focus not just on the actions that Public Health will need to take as a lead agency, but on the actions that they can support as a partner as well as the actions that they can influence as an advocate. The basis of the report is improving population health in partnership with other key agencies and increasing community capacity is only possible through partnership working.