

REPORT OF THE CABINET

B. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH: LEICESTERSHIRE'S HEALTH – WHAT THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD'S DASHBOARD TELLS US

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Director of Public Health's Annual Report for 2023 "Leicestershire's Health - What the Health and Wellbeing Board's Dashboard Tells Us" which is appended to this paper.

Background

2. The Director of Public Health's Annual Report is a statutory independent report on the health of the population of Leicestershire. It aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Leicestershire by reporting publicly and independently on trends and gaps in the health and wellbeing of the population and by making recommendations for improvement to a wide range of bodies, such as the NHS organisations, district councils, and the community and voluntary sector.
3. One of the roles of the Director of Public Health is to be an independent advocate for the health of their population. The Annual Reports are the main way by which Directors of Public Health make their conclusions known to the public.
4. The Covid-19 pandemic interrupted production of the Annual Reports. The previous Director of Public Health Annual Report in 2019 gave an overview of the need to move to a whole system approach to physical activity. The 2023 Annual Report includes an update on progress against the recommendations previously agreed.

Summary of the Annual Report

5. This year's report presents data on the health of the population across Leicestershire. The data underpins the Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032 (approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in February 2022). A dashboard of over 100 indicators looks at each stage of what is known as the life course, from birth and the early years of life, through working age life to older age and, eventually, death. Performance is compared against the national average and against other comparable areas in the country.

6. Good health is dependent on a complex set of circumstances including 'lifestyle' behaviour, social and community networks, living and working conditions and broader socio-economic conditions with lifestyle behaviour and socio-economic factors being the primary drivers of 'good health'.
7. Overall, Leicestershire enjoys good health with over half of the indicators in the dashboard being above that of the national average performance and only around one indicator in eight being below the national average performance.
8. Comparing Leicestershire against 15 comparable authorities, there are 30 indicators where Leicestershire's performance is in the top three, and 14 where performance is in the bottom three.
9. Leicestershire's success in reducing smoking prevalence, lower levels of childhood obesity in year 6, increasing vaccination coverage in early years, addressing homelessness, and a number of indicators relating to child development are worthy of note. Life expectancy overall is better than average and there is good performance in tackling inequalities in life expectancy at birth. Indicators suggest that Leicestershire has comparatively good public mental health.

Recommendations in the Annual Report

10. Looking at the 'big' public health lifestyle behaviours where national and comparative performance leaves room for concern, the two issues the Department needs to give more focus to are:
 - i. Physical Activity, where both the percentage of physically active adults and the percentage of adults walking for travel need improvement and;
 - ii. Diet, where the percentage of adults aged 16 and over meeting the '5-a-day recommendations requires improvement.
11. There are wider determinants, such as air quality, that clearly influence our health. Locally the data shows air quality (measured by the level of particle pollution from fine particulates (PM2.5) and the 'winter mortality index' to be an area of relatively poorer performance.
12. Public health needs to play its role in supporting other agencies to improve performance in indicators that are primarily the responsibility of other organisations. The Department will work with partners to improve the uptake of vaccination, immunisation and screening – particularly the shingles and HPV vaccines.
13. Overall population health status may mask areas or sectors of the population that have poorer health status. A further report is needed to examine the detail of how health is experienced by different parts of the

population, for example having regard to the areas where they live and socioeconomic status.

Comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board

14. The Board considered the Annual Report at its meeting on 31 October 2023.
15. The Director of Public Health offered to present his Annual Report in detail to partner organisations. Members agreed that this would be useful for the Integrated Care Partnership and that his report should be considered by the Partnership alongside reports for Leicester and Rutland.
16. The Board noted the Annual Report and its recommendations setting out priorities for Public Health and agreed that the Board's own priorities for the medium term should be considered in light of the findings in the report.

Comments of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17. The Committee considered the Annual Report at its meeting on 1 November 2023.
18. The Committee raised concerns about the prevalence of vaping in Leicestershire particularly amongst children and suggested that it should be covered in the Annual Report. In response the Cabinet Lead Member for Health reassured members that she shared their concerns, was monitoring the issue, and said that work was being carried out to tackle the issue in conjunction with the Council's Trading Standards team.
19. The Committee welcomed the Annual Report and asked that its comments be relayed to the Cabinet.

Resource Implications

20. There are no resource implications arising directly from this report. The recommendations set out in the report will inform commissioning decisions relating to the priorities for the Council's Public Health services.

Equality Implications

21. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

22. There are human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Consideration by the Cabinet

23. The Cabinet at its meeting on 24 November 2023 considered the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, together with the comments made by the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet decision was as follows:

- a) That the recommendations contained within the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 be supported;
- b) That it be noted that the Annual Report will be submitted to the County Council on 6 December 2023.

(Motion to be moved: -

That the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2023 be noted with support.)

24 November 2023

**Mr N J Rushton CC
Leader of the Council**

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet – 24 November 2023 – Annual Report of the Director of Public Health: Leicestershire’s Health – What the Health and Wellbeing Board’s Dashboard Tells Us

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s179769/LCC%20Cabinet%20Paper%20DPH%20Annual%20Report%202023%20v2.pdf>

Appendix

Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2023.