

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

DIRECTOR: ABDUL RAZAQ

DATE: 6th October 2022

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board met on 6th September and received items relating to the Public Health Annual Report, Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Cost of Living Crisis and Lancashire and South Cumbria Health Equity Commission. Kevin Lavery, Chief Executive of the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) joined the meeting to discuss the progress and priorities of the ICB with members of the Board.

Public Health Annual Report

The Public Health Annual Report 2022 was published at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 6th September 2022. The theme of this year's report is 'Resilience and Growth - Emerging from COVID-19 as a thriving Blackburn with Darwen'.

The Director of Public Health annual report is a statutory requirement and also essential in setting out key health challenges in each area and detailing how each local authority and their partners are working to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in their communities. The report should be publicly accessible.

This year's report sets out a past, present and future health and wellbeing outlook, guiding the reader through the challenges of the last two years of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts, the current cost of living crisis situation and the ambitious plans for inclusive economic growth in the borough.

The report as well as being an independent assessment by the local Director of Public Health is also a historical document that, once read from the future, articulates the important issues of the day and provides recommendations on how these can be addressed for improved outcomes.

A copy of the report is available at the BeWell Blackburn with Darwen website – <https://bewellbwd.com/a-z-services/annual-reports/>

Blackburn with Darwen MOVE Festival

The re:refresh wellbeing teams within Neighbourhoods, Wellbeing and Prevention organised a large scale physical activity festival on 21st August 2022 at Witton Park. The emphasis was on showing how physical activity can create social connections as well as having a huge impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing. The fun, free celebration of physical activity was delivered through a collaboration of organisations and providers across Blackburn with Darwen and was a huge success. With over 20 diverse partner organisations alongside re:refresh team all coming together to highlight the great spaces and amazing work they are doing for our communities across the borough. It provided an opportunity for people to 'have a go', find out what's already on offer locally with an effort on providing something for everyone.

Over 1000 people attended the event with 200 families completing the dinosaur trail walk, 30 Health Checks completed, 500 contacts with Blackburn Youth Zone, 70 referrals to the More Positive Together employability coaching programme, over 500 people accessing local cycling project providers, 100's taking information on Parkrun and 100's of toothbrushes handed out to families – just to name a few. There was notable positive feedback on the inclusive Early Years sessions where re:refresh staff used Makaton signing and also sessions delivered by Dance Syndrome, an inclusive dance charity based in Lancashire with a special focus on including everyone, regardless of ability.

The Active BwD network, a broad range of providers and partners from across the borough, provides a platform for sharing resource and learning and will remain central to co-creating and delivering future events.

Community Safety

The Government published on 3 September 2022 their new 'Cross-Government Strategy to End Rough Sleeping' which recognises the vital role Local Government plays in delivering the services that both prevent individuals sleeping rough and support away from the streets those that do. BwD has applied for two funding streams to continue the outreach and support work in the borough under this strategy, we expect the outcome of imminently.

The multi partner "BrightSparx" campaign is underway as we look to mitigate the risk of Anti-Social Behaviour during Bonfire Night with our partners in the Police and Fire Service. Council wide departments are engaged in the planning, which includes prevention work with schools and young people as well as land owners and communities, with significant fire and police resources being allocated on the night itself. While the majority enjoy Bonfire Night in a safe and sensible way, a minority have put themselves and others at risk on previous occasions and will be the focus of enforcement activity before, during and after the 5th November.

Blackburn with Darwen are co-ordinating a Lancashire wide Conference on Changing Futures in September as we look to solidify the progress made in improving the lives of the most marginalised people. The programme is attracting national interest given the progress made to date, with delegates from all over the county in attendance at the conference alongside national guests. The conference is being filmed with a recording available for those that are unable to attend.

Covid Responsiveness

It has been positive to see the case rate declining in the borough over the summer period. That being said, we are still here and will be supporting our high risk settings and communities as we move into the winter period to ensure we can respond and support if we see a rise in case rates.

Over the summer the team have undertaken proactive work to encourage wider infection prevention control (IPC) measures as this will also help support the reduction in the spread of other infectious illness such as flu. There have been 24 workshops delivered in the community, in main to young people at the summer Holiday Activity and Food provisions on Hand Hygiene and general IPC awareness, which has received excellent feedback. These workshops will be extended to Adult Social Care and wider community partners throughout the autumn.

Our key focus through the autumn and winter is supporting our NHS colleagues with the roll out of the Autumn Booster campaign. We are keen to ensure that those who are eligible can get easy access to the vaccine. With this in mind we have worked collaboratively with the NHS to set up a pop-up vaccine clinic in the Bus Station which will open on Monday 12th September. This is alongside GP Surgeries and Pharmacies who will also be offering the vaccine. A full communications plan is being developed and rolled out so that our residents know where they can go to be vaccinated. In addition to this, the team are also working with the Health Inequalities Steering Group to ensure that we provide a targeted and hyper local offer to certain groups and localities, where uptake is lower. This programme will also commence from October onwards.

Following the Covid-19 response de-brief session with chief officers we have now received a draft report which is being reviewed so that the recommendations can be addressed. This exercise will enable the Council to be better prepared for future events of this kind. We have also held a further session with partners we worked closely with throughout our response, the report for this is due imminently. In addition, elected members have been contacted to provide their feedback, which will also form part of any future recommendations.

The Covid-19 Public Inquiry has now been formally established and will examine, consider and report on preparations and response to the pandemic. Many sectors including local government will be asked to contribute to the Inquiry and we look forward to supporting this important piece of work. The team will be attending an LGA workshop in the coming weeks to understand more around the requirements of local authorities so we can ensure we respond and support appropriately.