



Committee report

POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Date	14 September 2020
Title	Public Health Update
Report of	Simon Bryant, Director of Public Health

SUMMARY

This report is an update on key Public Health issues.

BACKGROUND

The first part of this year has been dominated by COVID-19 with Public Health at the centre of the response. This report presents some key public developments and outlines the Health Protection Board.

Public Health Strategy

1. The Public Health strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2020. The strategy comes at a time of a Public Health emergency highlighting the need to focus on protecting and promoting the health of the population.
2. Our current health and care systems focus on treating illness rather than keeping people healthy. People have told us that being healthy, having a good quality of life along with being in control and making decisions about their own health is very important to them.
3. We know that the population is changing. Demand for services is rising and it is widely accepted that these services are not sustainable in their current form. We need to move to a 'wellness' model, with a shift to prevention and early intervention. This will change our reliance on services by supporting people to build resilience, to use their own strengths and assets and so reduce the need and demand for services.
4. The Public Health Strategy will span 2020-2025. It will set out proposals for how the Council can deliver its public health responsibilities and start to make the shift towards prevention. There are five priority areas within the strategy. These are:
 - (a) Good start in life
 - (b) Physical wellbeing
 - (c) Mental wellbeing
 - (d) Healthy places
 - (e) Protect from harm

The priority areas are all based on health needs and a drive to reduce inequalities.

5. The Public Health team is working with internal and external partners to develop action plans to support the delivery of the strategy.

SERVICE DELIVERY

6. The Public Health services of Sexual Health, Substance Misuse and 0-19 Healthy Child Programme continue to recover their delivery models with a focus on face-to-face support for vulnerable service users and opening of satellite clinics.
7. We are developing our models for Stop Smoking Services and Weight Management.

COVID-19

8. The Isle of Wight is in a good position with regard to COVID-19 and the number and rate of cases. The Public Health team continues to play the leadership role in response to the pandemic. As at 4 September 2020 there have been 433 cases on the Island with 2 in the last 7 days. The first peak was well managed through social distancing and effective planning. The modelling of the virus suggests further waves of disease may develop during the Autumn and Winter. We are working to manage further waves of disease.
9. The first phase was to CONTAIN the disease, tracking those who had the disease and contact tracing those they had been in close contact with. Working with Public Health England, the County Council's Public Health team supported this through connecting with and supported key settings affected. Following this phase and once the disease was understood to be spreading in the community, the country as a whole moved to the DELAY phase. This phase has increasingly involved measures to slow the spread through social distancing for the whole population and shielding for the most vulnerable. These measures have been largely successful, and we appear to have now seen a predicted peak much reduced and delayed, albeit with many people experiencing severe disease and significant numbers of COVID-19 related deaths.
10. As the pandemic has developed and the impact of the interventions is becoming better understood we will have seen an easing of some of the measures but importantly maintaining social distancing wherever possible. However, in the absence of an effective vaccine, as long as there are cases of infection in the community, the likelihood of a resurgence of spread remains. As restrictions eased, the spread of disease will need to be managed in a similar way to the current measures, with increased local leadership through the Outbreak Control Plan.
11. The programme of testing for COVID-19 is key for understanding the spread of disease and prevent further cases. The testing programme has been developed over the life of the epidemic. Testing programmes have developed through a variety of delivery models. Under the Director of Public Health these models

are being reviewed to ensure they meet local needs. The progress and coordination of testing, and a stronger local authority role in that coordination is key to the effective management of outbreak control plans. Whilst we have a strong leadership role locally many of the assets in regard to testing are nationally led and managed.

12. We have now moved to a phase, as the start of outbreak management, of testing and tracing community cases. This involves increased testing in the community, tracing those who have been in contact with a case and supporting people to self-isolate with symptoms and NHS care where needed. It is intended to be a more targeted and “surgical” approach to management of the spread of the disease which can apply controls which do not have such widespread and economically as well as socially disruptive effects.
13. The contact tracing is run by the NHS Test and Trace programme with Public Health England with input from local Directors of Public Health. We are developing our local programme to compliment the national Test and Trace service.
14. A vaccine is still being researched which would enable society to gain population immunity, preventing the spread of disease and protecting the vulnerable from illness. This is most likely to be available during 2021, if a vaccine can be developed.
15. The Health Protection Board chaired by the Director of Public Health with partners and specialists, meets weekly to oversee the actions required to manage the spread of infection. This includes:
 - reviewing data, outbreaks and situations
 - oversight of significant events
 - logging any care homes the Director of Public Health has closed to visitors.
16. The Board also agrees actions to mitigate any outbreaks including:
 - communications
 - review of powers needed
 - agreeing risks and mitigations.

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND

17. On 18 August 2020 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced the creation of the National Institute for Health Protection, a new organisation to address the next phase of the pandemic and a new chapter for the nation’s public health system.
18. Through the Association of Directors of Public Health we are ensuring the views of the Island and other Local authorities are considered in the development of the new arrangements.