



Purpose: For Decision

# Cabinet report

Date **10 MARCH 2022**

Title **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
COVID-19: ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES IN MENTAL HEALTH  
AND WELLBEING ACROSS THE ISLE OF WIGHT**

Report of **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This year's report is focussed on COVID-19: addressing inequalities in mental health and wellbeing across the Isle of Wight.
2. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on the mental health and wellbeing of specific groups of the population. It has also uncovered inequalities in mental health and wellbeing that already existed and that will worsen unless we work as a system to improve them. Some communities and people with specific characteristics are at far greater risk of worsening mental health and wellbeing. These are the same groups that are often vulnerable in other ways such as people on low incomes and those from ethnic minorities. COVID-19 has therefore put a spotlight on existing inequalities – and is a necessary trigger for action to protect people who may already be vulnerable across communities on the Island.
3. This report will showcase the impact of COVID-19 on specific groups within the population, highlighting the inequalities in mental health and wellbeing and the actions needed to address them. It will be vital to work across the whole system to improve mental health, wellbeing and reduce inequalities.

## RECOMMENDATION

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. To note the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2021.</li><li>5. To approve the report recommendations made by the Director of Public Health as set out in the report.</li></ol> |
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## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

6. The 2012 Health and Care Act places a statutory duty on upper tier Local Authorities to improve and protect the health of their residents.
7. The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to produce an annual report about the health of the local population. The content and structure of the report is decided each year by the Director of Public Health, based on key issue of health and wellbeing that would benefit from a focused review. The requirement placed on Isle of Wight Council as the relevant local authority is to publish the report.

### Report Recommendations

- a) Work with partners across the Isle of Wight to promote a prevention-focused approach towards improving the public's mental health and wellbeing through adopting the Mental Health Prevention Concordat framework across the Island.
- b) Work alongside community, voluntary sector, Community Councils and Town and Parish Councils to identify how we can better support mental health and wellbeing for people on low incomes and other populations who may be vulnerable to poor health outcomes. This will include work with the wider Isle of Wight Council and Healthwatch to listen to communities about their experience of mental and emotional wellbeing to shape plans for improving mental health and wellbeing across the Island.
- c) Mobilise community assets to promote mental and physical health and wellbeing and strengthen resilience via the implementation of Community Mental Health Champions and Lions Collaborative Barber Shops programmes. This work will be supported by access to training and targeted communications across communities, to promote available resources, support people's mental health and wellbeing, prevent suicide and tackle stigma towards those with mental ill health.
- d) Strengthen the pathways for people with co-occurring mental health and substance misuse, working with the NHS Transforming Mental Health services programme.
- e) Work with the Isle of Wight Trust, the Integrated Care System (ICS) to ensure mental health services are equally accessible for everyone through the 'No Wrong Door' programme.
- f) Focus on the wider social and economic factors to address inequalities and mental health. For example, through understanding the impact of COVID-19 on people's personal finances and mental health and seeking to address these through targeted resources for residents and bespoke training programmes on debt and anxiety to support front-line staff.
- g) Work across the system to build capacity and capability across workforces to prevent mental health problems and promote good mental health within their everyday practice using the Public Mental Health Leadership and Workforce Development Framework Call to Action.

h) Continuing to promote public facing culturally competent mental health and wellbeing resources and targeted communications campaigns, with specific focus on people experiencing inequalities.

#### CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & UNESCO BIOSPHERE IMPACT

8. No implications.

#### IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

9. Despite not being clinically vulnerable to COVID-19, children have been particularly affected by the period of national restrictions, school closures and limited access to outdoor space such as play parks.
10. Children and young people with good mental health and wellbeing develop more resilience, are more able to learn, having better outcomes and ability to deal with life's challenges.

#### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

11. The decision relates to a programme and is strategic/administrative in nature; therefore, there is no anticipated negative impact on equalities.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. No implications.

#### APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 – Director of Public Health Annual Report

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