

Meeting:	Health and wellbeing board
Meeting date:	Monday 10 February 2020
Title of report:	Director of public health annual report
Report by:	Director of public health

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

The purpose of this report is to present 2019 Director of Public Health (DPH) annual report and to seek the support of the health and wellbeing board in implementing the recommendations.

Directors of Public Health have a statutory requirement to write an independent annual report on the health of their population. The Director of Public Health Annual Report is a vehicle for informing local people about the health of their community, as well as providing necessary information for decision makers in local health services and authorities on health gaps and priorities that need to be addressed. The report is informed by and sits alongside the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Understanding Herefordshire). The focus of the 2019 report is rural Herefordshire. This is because to date we have not clearly understood both the challenges and opportunities in rural communities. This understanding is vital to informing the implementation and County Plan, the NHS Long Term Plan, the Talk Community approach being developed in Herefordshire, as well the emerging priorities being identified by the health and wellbeing board.

Herefordshire is a beautiful county, with large areas of rich and varied countryside which are sparsely populated. Overall people in rural areas of Herefordshire have better health than those in the urban areas, and indeed have slightly higher life expectancy. However, this masks significant pockets of deprivation and poor health outcomes which rurality can exacerbate. The report looks at those factors which drive deprivation and impact on life in rural communities.

The recommendations set out in the report identify key areas for action to tackle some of the challenges associated with rural living, and reduce the impact of inequalities.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) The health and wellbeing board notes and considers the findings of the report, and supports the identified strategies and actions to address challenges of life in rural Herefordshire; and**
- (b) The health and wellbeing board provides leadership in addressing inequalities faced by rural communities through recognition of the challenges, communicating the key messages of the report to their constituent members and identifying further actions that can be taken by constituent organisations and across the system.**

Alternative options

1. The health and wellbeing board may receive the report but determine that they will put in place different arrangements to support the health and wellbeing of people living in rural communities but under the relevant legislation, there are no alternative options in terms as to whether or not the annual report is published.

Key considerations

2. Rural areas pose different types of challenges for the people who live there compared to urban areas. Nationally, more emphasis is often given to urban areas and urban poverty, not least as across England the majority of the population reside in urban areas, but also our common measure of deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation) is known to be skewed towards identifying deprivation in an urban context.
3. Rural deprivation looks very different to urban deprivation. In rural areas, the most common types of deprivation relate to housing and physical access to services. Deprivation is often a hidden feature of rural communities and within even the most affluent areas, there can be pockets of real hardship, ill health and inequality.
4. The 2019 DPH annual report outlines data on health and wellbeing of people living in rural communities and the challenges they face. It outlines the work we are undertaking to improve health and wellbeing in the rural setting and makes recommendations to improve the health and reduce inequalities in rural settings.
5. The report sets out the work we are doing to address the barriers and challenges associated with rural setting. This includes i) strategic level drivers through Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan and Children and Young People's Partnership Plan, ii) working in partnership across the system and maximising the impact of anchor organisations, and iii) specific programmes of work which will help tackle the drivers of deprivation and challenges associated with living in rural environments, including Talk Community programme; Keep Herefordshire Warm scheme; Fastershire Broadband and Fastershire digital inclusion activities.

Community impact

6. The Director of Public Health Annual Report recommendations are all designed to have a positive impact on the community by delivering more robust and effective approaches to improve health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities.
7. The recommendations specifically identify priority areas which can have a positive impact for those living in rural settings, particularly vulnerable groups.

Equality duty

8. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
9. This is a factual report that sets out the key areas for action to tackle some of the challenges associated with rural living, and reduce the impact of inequalities. Therefore we believe that this will not have a detrimental impact on anyone that shares a protected characteristic and as many of the recommendations are specifically targeted at vulnerable groups we believe this will support the council in fulfilling its equality duty in particular advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

Resource implications

10. There are no direct resource implications from the publication of the 2019 DPH annual report.
11. Not all of the activity outlined in the recommendations has been costed at this stage and where this is the case those projects will require further work across relevant organisations

Legal implications

12. Every Director of Public Health must produce an annual report. This is a statutory requirement and must be complied with.

Risk management

13. The risks and opportunities associated with the delivery of the recommendations of the Director of Public Health Annual Report are identified below:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The impact of rurality on health and wellbeing, and the causes of health, are not understood.	Data presented to describe the drivers of health and wellbeing and the unique challenges for people living in, and delivering services to, rural settings.
HWBB constituent members do not utilise the findings reported in the DPH report to inform their decisions and actions, including provision of services, in Herefordshire.	Report shared with HWBB. DPH working with partners in the development and delivery of various plans, for example Herefordshire Council delivery plan for the Corporate Plan, the local NHS Long Term Plan, development of local Primary Care Networks.

Consultees

14. None.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Director of Public Health 2019 Annual Report. Rural Herefordshire: What does it mean for health and wellbeing?

Background papers

None identified.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report

DPH: Director of Public Health

HWBB: Health and wellbeing board