

Report to: **East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board**

Date: **15 January 2015**

By: **Acting Director of Public Health**

Title of report: **Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2014-15: Growing Community Resilience in East Sussex**

Purpose of report: **To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board of the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2014-15**

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## ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

**The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to note the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2014-15.**

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### **1. Background**

1.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 stipulates that the Director of Public Health is required to produce, and the relevant Local Authority to publish, an annual public health report. Each year there is a different focus for the report.

1.2 The focus for the report this year is growing community resilience thus supporting the County Council's priority outcome of helping people help themselves, informing the community resilience cross-council facilitating programme and the East Sussex Better Together Programme. The report has been circulated to Board members and is available at the following website: <http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/publichealthreports>.

### **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 We need to concentrate our efforts as much on improving and sustaining good health and positive wellbeing as we do on identifying risk, preventing illness and reducing premature death.

2.2 If we want to reduce the burden of illness, disability, old age, loneliness and isolation, both personal and financial, we need to consider how we can build resilience by growing the assets of wellbeing across East Sussex. Assets are any factor (or resource), which enhances the ability of individuals, communities, and populations, to maintain and sustain health and wellbeing and to help to reduce health inequities. This includes the skills and capacities of the individuals, the formal and informal networks and associations, the institutions, the land and other physical assets within a community.

2.3 An asset based approach focuses on the resources, capacity and strengths of people and communities to maintain and improve health and wellbeing rather than solely focus on their needs, deficits and problems.

2.4 Taking an asset based approach involves building and mobilising the skills and knowledge of individuals and the connections and resources within communities and organisations. The approach aims to empower individuals and communities to take action. It fosters skills and capabilities that can improve health and wellbeing and support those in need of health and social care support. This could bring multiple long term benefits for individuals, families, communities, public services and society as a whole.

## ***Content of the Report***

2.5 This Annual Public Health Report looks at how we can identify, better understand and support development of existing and potential new community assets. It focuses on identifying the key features of asset based approaches and how we can make further progress in a sustainable manner. It initially focuses on describing what an asset based approach involves and how it is different from focusing on deficits in the current services and support people receive. It describes how individuals can play a significant role in increasing community resilience. The report describes how systematic processes can be used to support this work and monitor its impact particularly in developing sustainability.

2.6 There are already many good examples of this approach in East Sussex. Included within the report are some case studies of East Sussex projects and services which use an asset based approach or elements of an asset based approach. The case studies provide a further source of evidence, supplementing the academic research, and demonstrating what can be achieved.

2.7 Based on a review of the evidence, this report recommends further work to enhance community resilience which seeks positively to develop, harness and mobilise the assets, capacities and resources available to individuals and communities to enable them to gain more control over their lives and circumstances and to meet primary prevention, health, wellbeing and social care support needs.

2.8 The second part of this report sets out a relatively new way to measure the wellbeing and resilience of communities. It describes a tool – Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (WARM) – that has been designed to support local agencies and communities to better understand, plan and act. WARM provides a way of understanding and identifying an area's strengths, such as levels of social capital, confidence amongst residents, the quality of local services or proximity to employment; as well as vulnerabilities such as isolation, high crime, low savings and unemployment. The tool identifies these factors using routinely available information.

2.9 WARM has been calculated for East Sussex at ward and district and borough level and also modelled at clinical commissioning group and GP practice level. All the WARM maps at ward and GP practice level are available to download as separate documents, along with this report at [www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk).

2.10 The report concludes by summarising the approach outlined in the report and, drawing on the evidence and best practice, looks at the ways in which the skills, knowledge, connections and resource of individuals, communities and organisations might best be captured, harnessed and strengthened. The report makes ten recommendations for supporting community resilience in East Sussex.

## **3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

3.1 The focus for the report this year is growing community resilience thus supporting the County Council's priority outcome of helping people help themselves, informing the community resilience cross-council facilitating programme and the East Sussex Better Together Programme.

3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the 2014-15 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.

**CYNTHIA LYONS**  
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