

Report to: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of meeting: 30 September 2021

By: Director of Public Health

Title: Annual report of the Director of Public Health, 2020 – A year of COVID

Purpose: To introduce the Annual report of the Director of Public Health, 2020 – A year of COVID

RECOMMENDATION

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to endorse the Annual report of the Director of Public Health, 2020 – A year of COVID (Appendix 1).

1 Background

1.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Director of Public Health to publish an annual report.

1.2 The 2020/21 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health focuses on the first year of COVID - from the emergence of the pandemic up to the end of December 2020 when East Sussex experienced its highest peak of infection. The report is attached at **Appendix 1**.

1.3 The Report tells part of the story of COVID in East Sussex. It has been produced around the moving waves of infection and available Officer time during the peak period of response.

2 Supporting information

2.1 We talk about ‘the’ or ‘a’ pandemic as though it were a singular ongoing event or challenge. Experience has taught us that it covers a constant turnover of issues and that the combination of those issues presents a unique picture at any given point. One of the clearest stories about COVID-19 in East Sussex is that this was not defined by one pattern, one trend, or a simple narrative.

2.2 The report makes several recommendations which identifies areas for continued action with partners. The recommendations build on programmes already underway across our county as well as being specific to COVID-19.

The report covers:

- the global context of the pandemic providing a timeline and an overview of the virus and interventions deployed by government;
- an overview of the health and wellbeing of our local population, services, and workforce including those identified as clinically vulnerable;
- data and trends on confirmed cases including hospitalisation data and deaths;
- the impact of interventions (such as ‘lockdowns’) on our population including insight from partner surveys as well as qualitative data;
- the economic impact of the pandemic; and
- the way in which COVID-19 exacerbated existing inequalities.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 Many of the inequalities that COVID-19 exposed are known. These require a long-term solution focussed plan and action on reducing inequalities in health, which requires reducing inequalities in wealth, access to quality housing, education, and employment. This report makes several recommendations which identifies areas for continued action with partners. The

recommendations build on programmes already underway across our county as well as being specific to COVID-19.

3.2 The Board is recommended to endorse the Annual report of the Director of Public Health, 2020 – A year of COVID.

DARRELL GALE

Contact Officer: Rob Tolfree

Tel. No. 01273 336298

Email: rob.tolfree@eastsussex.gov.uk

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None