



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

6 October 2021

Report Title:	St Helens Public Health Annual Report 2020/21: Perspectives of the Covid-19 Pandemic
Cabinet Portfolio	Wellbeing, Culture and Heritage
Cabinet Member	Councillor Anthony Burns
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
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Borough priorities	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	
	Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities	X
	Create safe, strong communities and neighbourhoods for all	X
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy	
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture	
	Be a responsible Council	

1. Summary

- 1.1 This Public Health Annual Report (PHAR) for 2020/2021 focuses on the global COVID-19 pandemic and the impact this has had on the lives of people in St Helens. The structure and content of the Report was co-designed by Sue Forster and Ruth du Plessis. The chapters were written by key people involved in each of the different aspects.

The Report starts with some background information including a timeline, some key statistics, then reflecting on how this pandemic and the lessons learnt reflect the influenza pandemic of 1918 and the impact on inequalities.

The next section of the Report details the response to the pandemic including the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), testing, contact tracing, St Helens Together and vaccination. Then the Report moves to some specific examples of work with the homeless, sexual health, drugs and alcohol, keeping active and mental health. This is followed by sharing about some of the work with two of the key settings during the pandemic – schools and care homes. Interwoven in the Report are some real-life examples of people’s experiences and reflections.

Finally, the Report concludes by reflecting on how we came together, and people went over and above to manage the pandemic and its impacts. The conclusions drawn is that we need to have the same resolve and determination as we re-build society and in particular, to make sure we do our utmost to protect those amongst us who are poor and vulnerable.

Thank you to all who contributed to the Report.

2. Recommendations for Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

i) Note the contents of the Public Health Annual Report

3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 Each year, one of the roles of the Director of Public Health is to write an Annual Report. The focus of this year’s Report is the Covid-19 pandemic. The purpose of the 2020/21 Report is to capture the key events of the pandemic and make recommendations for the future.

4. Background /Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 At the end of each of the chapters there are recommendations, some of which are for us in St Helens, such as to focus on how to reduce inequalities and to build on the St Helens Together legacy. Other recommendations are for the national system; such as for Public Health to be a key part of the emergency response going forward and the potential for more of the health protection to be delivered at the local level.

5. Community Impact Assessment

- 5.1 The Report includes a discussion about the impact on inequalities and some of the most vulnerable as well as how the Community came together to support each other.

6. Consideration of Alternatives

- 6.1 No alternatives proposed.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 There are still some unknowns of this virus and perhaps more twists and turns to come. The success of the vaccination programme means that many of us are getting back to 'normal life'. However, there are some things that have changed for the long-term. For example, some services will maintain an online and telephone function as this means we can access services from our living room without having to travel. We have learnt that washing our hands and social distancing (and mask wearing) can work to prevent spread of several viruses, not just COVID-19. Most importantly, we have learnt that when we come together, we can overcome adversity and we must use this learning to build St Helens back better and fairer.

8. Implications

8.1 Legal Implications

N/A

8.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications

N/A

8.2.1 Social Value

N/A

8.2.2 Sustainability and Environment

N/A

8.2.3 Health and Wellbeing

This Report details the pandemic response and some of the impacts on health and wellbeing.

8.2.4 Equality and Human Rights

None

8.2.5 Customers and Resident

None

8.2.6 Asset and Property

N/A

8.2.7 Staffing and Human Resource

None

8.3 Risks

None

8.4 Finance

None

8.5 Policy Framework Implications

The recommendations within this Report are in line with existing Council policies.

9. **Background papers**

None

10. **Appendices**

Public Health Annual Report