

Committee: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 24th November 2015

Wards: All

Subject: The Time for Prevention is Now - Merton Annual Public Health Report 2015

Lead officer: Dr Kay Eilbert, Director of Public Health

Lead member: Councillor Caroline Cooper Marbiah

Contact officer: Kay Eilbert

Recommendations:

- A To note Merton's Annual Public Health Report – The Time for Prevention is Now.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents The Time for Prevention is Now - Merton's second Annual Public Health Report.

2. DETAILS

2.1 The second Annual Public Health Report for Merton makes the case for prevention and celebrates the work of Public Health and its partners since the transition of Public Health from the NHS to local government to address health inequalities and embed prevention.

2.2 Beginning in 2013 with a Merton Partnership conference focussing on health inequalities, participants used evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to agree that a major challenge lay ahead in reducing unfair health inequalities in Merton.

2.3 Two key objectives for the Public Health team developed: prevention and health inequalities. Public Health developed strong relationships with Council colleagues, Merton CCG, the voluntary sector and local organisations across the borough to make progress.

The first evidence of this productive partnership approach was the Health and Wellbeing Strategy **Merton the Place for a Good Life** with a strong focus on reducing health inequalities and delivering prevention.

2.4 The annual public health report sets out the strong social and economic case for prevention and explains how the five themes of the Merton Health

and Wellbeing Strategy are helping to deliver this setting out examples of work in place and underway.

- 2.5 A slide set highlighting some of the key issues is attached in Appendix 1 of this report and the full Annual Public Health Report will be circulated at the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 Much has been achieved but many challenges remain. More progress could be made to convince local decision makers about the importance of the public health approach and of working across a system to embed prevention and to reduce health inequalities. Using policy levers within the council for better health requires more will rather than financial resources, offering significant opportunities to create more fair and healthy communities in times of financial constraints.
- 3.2 Seizing this as an opportunity for focusing resources on keeping people healthier longer will also require an understanding that wellbeing is created through a combination of healthy people and economic prosperity, clearly priorities for all partners. Economic growth will only be sustainable where it sits alongside health and wellbeing to include more fair opportunities for all and where our high streets and town centres make the healthy option the easy one for individuals to take responsibility for their lifestyle choices.

We can use this as a catalyst for increased prevention. We will need the will to make difficult choices that reflect our values and priorities. We can grasp this opportunity to focus on keeping our residents healthy and reduce the significant health inequalities in Merton.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

None for the purpose of this report.

5. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

Not for the purpose of this report.

6. TIMETABLE

Not for the purpose of this report.

7. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

Not for the purpose of this report

8. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Not for the purpose of this report.

9. **HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
The work of Public Health is focused on addressing inequalities of health.
10. **CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
Not for the purpose of this report.
11. **RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
Not for the purpose of this report. .
12. **APPENDICES – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report**
Appendix I Merton Annual Public Health Report 2015 slides
13. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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