

# REPORT TO THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

9<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## Director of Public Health Annual Report 2018

*Are you Contactless? Changing the way we connect in a digital world*

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**Date of Report:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019

### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide Health and Wellbeing Board members with information about the Director of Public Health 2018 annual report.

### 2. Delivering the Health & Wellbeing Strategy

2.1 The 2018 annual report aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Barnsley's residents and address the health inequalities associated with loneliness.

The report's recommendations will contribute to the following Health and Wellbeing strategy priorities:

- People live happy, healthier and longer lives
- People have improved mental health and wellbeing
- People live in strong and resilient families and communities

### 3. Recommendations

3.1 Health and Wellbeing Board members are asked to:-

- note the contents and recommendations of the annual report and support their implementation throughout 2019.

### 4. Introduction/ Background

4.1 The Director of Public Health (DPH) is as independent advocate for the health of the population and system leadership for its improvement and protection. The independence is expressed through the DPH Annual Report – an important vehicle for providing advice and recommendations on population

health to both professionals and public – providing added value over and above intelligence and information routinely available.

- 4.2 The annual report is the DPH's professional statement about the health of local communities, based on epidemiological evidence, and interpreted objectively. However it is not just the annual review of public health outcomes and activity. The annual report is an important vehicle by which the DPH can identify key issues, flag up problems, report progress and thereby serve their local populations.
- 4.3 It is a valuable process for internal reflection and team prioritisation as well as external engagement and awareness raising.
- 4.4 The 2017 Director of Public Health report in Barnsley, *A Day in the Life of* captured a snapshot in time to illustrate the health and wellbeing of Barnsley's residents. Through the completion of a diary, residents told us about their physical and mental health on 7 November 2017 and what might have made it better or worse.
- 4.5 More residents wrote about loneliness, social isolation and the importance of connections with others than any other subject. An eighty-four year old female resident wrote: "I'm going out today – looking forward to this, even if it is to a hospital appointment." This diary entry was a stark reminder of the importance of our connections with other people, no matter how brief they may be.
- 4.6 Loneliness is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time and so public health welcomes the Government strategy for tackling loneliness, '*A Connected Society*', which was published in October 2018. The strategy suggests how we must all lay the foundations for change which are described in the recommendations of '*Are You Contactless?*'
- 4.7 The report aims to be clear and relevant to a wide audience. It will take a Digital First approach and will be web based.

## **5. Conclusion/ Next Steps**

- 5.1 The report will be used to communicate the work of the public health team within BMBC to the public, BMBC staff and partners. The public health team will work with partners, both internal and external, to coordinate delivery of the recommendations throughout 2019 which will be reported in the next DPH annual report.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

## **8. Consultation with stakeholders**

8.1 *'Are you contactless?'* has been presented to BMBC SMT and supported at cabinet. As in previous years, the majority of content was provided by residents of Barnsley through their engagement in a variety of focus groups and forums to discuss social isolation and loneliness.

## **9. Appendices**

9.1 Appendix 1 – Are You Contactless?

**Officer: Diane Lee, Head of Public Health, BMBC Date: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019**