

Report to: Overview Committee

Date of Meeting 21.03.24

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## Public Health Strategy 2024 - 2027

### Report summary:

East Devon is an outstanding place to live, but although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. While that is a national trend, there are health inequalities across our district which we should work to address. Much has happened since our previous public health strategy was published: the updated Public Health Strategy 2024 – 2027 will direct and support this work. While this is not a statutory duty, it reflects local choice and our commitment to do the right thing.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget                      Yes  No

Policy Framework      Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Overview Committee recommend to Council adoption of the Public Health Strategy 2023-2027.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the health and wellbeing of all our residents is considered when delivering Council Services.

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### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

### Equalities impact High Impact

This work, to reduce health inequalities, aims to support those most in need. See Appendix 4

**Climate change** Low Impact

No direct implication, but Public Health activities link closely to issues around climate change so there are opportunities for a One Council approach.

**Risk:** Low Risk; There are no specific risks to the Council through the adoption of this policy.

**Links to background information** Referenced in Public Health Strategy 2024-27.

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
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**Report in full**

**1. Introduction**

East Devon is an outstanding place, so it can be easy to feel complacent, but although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. While that is a national trend, there are health inequalities across our district which we should work to address.

After emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic and entering a cost of living crisis, we've seen that these inequalities have been exacerbated. Our current PH strategic plan 2019-23 has reached the end of its useful life and the time is right for us to review and update our Public Health Strategy going forward.

We believe we have an overarching responsibility to consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life, focusing on where there is greatest need.

**2. The Strategy 2024-2027**

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society. We use the term 'public health' to cover the physical, mental and social wellbeing of everyone in our district.

Most people want to be in better health. Although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. We believe we should consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life, focusing on where there is greatest need.

The completed Strategy consists of three documents:

- quick-read
- full strategy
- underlying evidence-base for those who wish to examine our priorities in more detail.

**3. Strategic Aims**

We respect equality and diversity and would like everyone in East Devon to have an equal chance to lead a long, happy and healthy life. We aim to support:

- Healthy People - focusing on health outcomes.
- Healthy Lives - focusing on health-related behaviours and personal circumstances.
- Healthy Places - focusing on wider determinants of health, environmental factors.

### **Our priority activities:**

We will focus on local activities which we are most able to support or influence. Our priorities are:

- Cost of living crisis.
- Mental health.
- Unpaid carers.
- Loneliness and social isolation.
- Dementia.
- Homelessness, housing and indoor environment factors.
- Smoking.
- Alcohol and other drug use.
- Diet and nutrition.
- Physical activity.
- Pandemic preparedness.
- Health effects of climate and adverse weather events.

We will work across the East Devon district, with particular focus on areas in most need, including deprived and isolated rural communities.

### **To achieve our aims, we will:**

- As a major employer we will take seriously our responsibilities towards our staff and our opportunities to lead by example.
- Identify health and wellbeing priorities in each annual service plan.
- Seek and respond to new opportunities, continuing to build strong community partnerships and maximising partnership-working.
- Align our activities to support those of One Devon Integrated Care System and with Devon County Council as they deliver their statutory duties.
- Support East Devon's communities and residents in making it a healthier place.
- Plan for healthy communities in all developments.
- Aim to adopt a health-in-all-policies approach e.g. via health impact assessment.
- Ensure that our outstanding environment contributes to health and wellbeing.
- Ensure there are enough resources to improve health and wellbeing across the district.
- Embrace technologies such as web and social media to share health messages.
- Continue to monitor evidence to inform and update priorities.
- Monitor how we are doing, then report and publish progress annually.

## Conclusion

We are lucky that our district has such special green spaces and beautiful coastlines, and we will play to these strengths. We also recognise that we cannot achieve everything alone. Our work requires close partnerships so we will continue to strengthen our partnership working. The new Strategy will support the Council in achieving this.

Appendix 1: East Devon District Council's Public Health Strategy 2024 – 2027

Appendix 2: East Devon District Council's Public Health Strategy 2024 – 2027 (quick read)

Appendix 3: Public Health Strategy 2024-27 Evidence Base

Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment.

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## Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## Legal implications:

The council needs to bear in mind its public sector equality duties along with all equalities duties in any decisions and actions that it takes.