

Committee(s): Health & Wellbeing Board	Dated: 07 Feb 2025
Subject: Annual Director of Public Health Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Dr Sandra Husbands <i>Director of Public Health</i>	For Information
Report author: Sarah Lawson <i>Public Health Registrar, DCCS</i>	

Summary

The Director of Public Health (DPH) annual report (appendix 1) is presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board before publication in early 2025. The DPH has a statutory responsibility to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population.

The theme for the 2024/5 report is the role of social capital in improving health and wellbeing. The three recommendations of the report concern:

- designing and evaluating our approach to building social capital with the community
- considering the role of physical spaces in building social capital
- working in partnership and building on existing networks and assets.

The theme of the 2025/6 report will be healthy weight.

Recommendation(s)

The Board is asked to:

1. note the summary of progress on implementing the previous DPH report *Sexually Healthy*
2. consider how the recommendations made in the *Social Capital* report can be implemented across the partnership
3. note the theme for the 2025/6 report will be on healthy weight
4. suggest any stakeholders that should be involved in the 2025/6 report on healthy weight.

Main Report

1. Background

- 1.1. The Director of Public Health (DPH) has a statutory responsibility to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population. This is an independent report, with the DPH responsible for its content and structure. It is an opportunity to draw attention to an aspect of the local population's health and to consider areas where further action might be recommended.
- 1.2. The [2023/4 report](#) *Sexually Healthy* considered sexual and reproductive health (SRH) with a particular focus on young people under 30 and on testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). An overview of progress since this report is included in appendix 2. This progress includes the development of the 2024-29 City and Hackney SRH strategy and a range of actions targeted at young people. For example: work through Young Hackney to improve access to SRH services, "let's talk about..." workshops to provide SRH guidance to people working with young people and creative communications including the development of a new sculpture to promote and celebrate sexual wellbeing.
- 1.3. This year's report focuses on the role of social capital in improving health and wellbeing. The report was developed in consultation with stakeholders across the City of London and Hackney, and informed by a review of local provision and published research. The full cross-sector advisory group is included in appendix 3.
- 1.4. Social capital refers to the people we connect with, how we connect with people including behaviours and norms, and how these networks allow us to access and share resources. The DPH report brings together:
 - Evidence on social capital and the opportunities and risks it presents for health.

- Data relevant to social capital in City and Hackney. This includes national indexes, locally collected data and local case studies to understand the current context.
- A literature review of published reports on “what works” to build social capital and promote health.

2. Current Position

- 2.1. The report highlights the strong basis to build upon in City and Hackney. For example, the high levels of formal volunteering in the City of London.
- 2.2. The central thread of the report is how the public health team, wider council along with our partners across the community and statutory sector can build on this further through working together.

3. Recommendations:

1. **Design and evaluate our approach with the community:** we need to increase our understanding of the parts of social capital that matter to residents, where there might be risks, and where action is needed. The report recommends developing neighbourhood-level community-led needs assessments. This approach would draw on existing work to build social capital in City and Hackney and involve processes that aim to strengthen relationships, e.g. participatory arts. This community-led approach should also be brought through to evaluation.
2. **Consider places as well as people.** Physical spaces play an important role in supporting connections and relationship building and the community-led needs assessment should include a focus on how the spaces in City and Hackney can support and enhance social capital. For example, access to open spaces in and around the City of London.
3. **Work in partnership.** All partners, including public health, need to work with networks and assets that already exist. There is a role to build capacity in existing networks through: disseminating training on areas such as grant bid writing; working in partnership to identify funding opportunities; and helping businesses make investment decisions that enhance social capital.

4. Theme for the 2025/6 report

- 4.1. Healthy weight continues to be of high relevance and importance nationally and locally. The national obesity strategy was published in 2020, although there have been delays and challenges in implementation, and weight-loss medical treatments have been high on the political and media agenda. In City and Hackney, 1 in 5 reception

children are above a healthy weight, rising to 2 in 5 by the end of primary school¹.

- 4.2. Healthy weight is a key driver of good health and reduces the risk of a number of physical and mental health conditions including type 2 diabetes and depression. Body weight is influenced by a range of factors at the individual, environmental and societal level. This includes the significant influence of the wider environments in which we live, including access to healthy and affordable food and physical spaces that encourage people to be active.
- 4.3. Action on healthy weight therefore demands a whole systems approach that addresses this wide range of influences. The next DPH report will be used as a vehicle to highlight positive work underway on healthy weight in City and Hackney and to advocate for an approach that addresses individual, environmental and societal influences.
- 4.4. A healthy weight needs assessment for City and Hackney will be published shortly, which highlights both the scale of the issue locally and recommendations for action.
- 4.5. The DPH report will build on the recommendations in this report, including those under the “working together” priority of the Healthier City and Hackney Framework: we will support the development of a societal movement for healthy weight in City and Hackney. To do this, we will build on the strengths and resources in our local communities and existing partnerships.

5. Corporate & Strategic Implications

- 5.1. This project aligns with the improving health and wellbeing priority of the corporate plan. Specifically it contributes to the social connection element of the health and wellbeing strategy.

6. Financial implications

- N/A

7. Resource implications

- N/A

8. Legal implications

- N/A

9. Risk implications

- N/A

¹ NHS England Digital. National Child Measurement Programme. Available from: <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/national-child-measurement-programme>

10. Equalities implications

- 10.1. Equalities implications will be considered in the development of a working group, analysis of the issues concerning healthy weight and in the recommendations of the report.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1. There are significant co-benefits that can be achieved through addressing healthy weight and taking action on climate and sustainability. For example, promoting active travel and supporting local food production can positively contribute to both health and climate outcomes.
- 11.2. A whole systems approach, where partners across different sectors are committed to act on healthy weight, is more likely to lead to sustainable change than short-term interventions that don't address the root causes of healthy weight.

12. Security implications

- N/A

13. Conclusion

- 13.1. A DPH report on the theme of social capital will be published in 2025 alongside work to build on the recommendations from this report. The 2025/6 report will focus on healthy weight and we welcome any suggestions of stakeholders to involve in the development of this report.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1: [Director of Public Health Report. Healthy Connections: the role of social capital in City & Hackney](#) (shared as PDF)

Appendix 2: Progress against the recommendations in the [2023/4 DPH report: Sexually Healthy](#).

15. Recommendations from the 2023/4 DPH report:

1. Work hand in hand with communities: health providers and commissioners should reconfirm, and put into action, their commitment to collaborate with young people in the co-production of services.
2. Services must be easily accessible to young people: refine existing SRH services and collaborate with young people to make accessing services as easy as possible.
3. Young people must be aware of when and how to access support.
4. Focus on enhancing collaboration and partnership working across SRH.
5. Continue to identify and address inequalities in SRH, including through ongoing research and audit with communities and committing to address identified inequalities.

16. Progress against these recommendations includes:

Since the publication of the last DPH report, a Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy has been developed for City and Hackney at both Health and Wellbeing Boards focusing on: healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships; good reproductive health; STI prevention and treatment; living well with HIV and work towards zero HIV infections; and inclusion communities and those with complex needs. There is also an action plan to monitor and demonstrate progress that will be updated annually.

Examples of progress for young people specifically include:

- The development of the “**Super Youth Hub**” project in response to the need for a more youth-centric approach to health and wellbeing services. Feedback from Children and Young People (CYP) highlighted the need for more aligned services. The Super Youth Hub caters for young people (aged 11-25) in City and Hackney and provides CYP with autonomous and independent access to a range of services including sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. It involves cross-sector working across public health, primary care, mental health, CVS and Young Hackney.
- “**Let’s talk about...**” **workshops** with people including those working in the community and voluntary sector and health champions. These workshops provide tailored conversations on SRH topics and include information and guidance, myth-busting facts and scenarios, as well as links to local services.
- **A central online resource** for SRH is in development, which will provide information, advice and signposting to all SRH services in City and Hackney with booking links where possible.
- **A sculpture by the artist STIK** to promote and celebrate sexual wellbeing and act as a lasting communication tool and local landmark has been created and is going to be located outside the main entrance at the Homerton Hospital.
- Ongoing work through **Young Hackney’s Health and Wellbeing Service** to improve access to SRH services including: health promotion and outreach, partnership working (e.g. with pharmacies), training (e.g. through school assemblies), condom distribution, and communications and promotion.
- Ongoing work to increase **access to condoms**. For example, since initiating the free condoms scheme for under 25s in 2022, managed by Young Hackney, new registrations have increased from 511 in 2022/23 to 1949 in 2023/24.

- Specific **young people's SRH in-reach and outreach** as part of the sexual health contract with the Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Appendix 3: cross-sector advisory group for 2024/5 DPH report

Alison Crawshaw, Outreach & Engagement Lead, LBH

Amy Wilkinson, Director of Partnerships, Impact and Delivery, North East London ICB

Caroline Westhart, Interim Area Regeneration Manager, LBH

Chris Lovitt, Deputy Director of Public Health, City & Hackney Public Health Team

Christopher Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture, LBH

Daniel Farag, Director of Innovation and Practice, Young Foundation

Diana Divajeva, Public Health Intelligence Lead, City & Hackney Public Health Team

Duleni Herath, Public Health Registrar, City & Hackney Public Health Team

Ellie Ward, Head of Strategy and Performance, City of London Corporation

Frankie Webster, Citizens UK

Helen Fentiman, Councillor, City of London Corporation

Jacqui Roberts Webster, Chief Executive of Shoreditch Trust

James Baggaley, Head of Comms & Engagement UCL Policy Lab

Jane Taylor, Volunteer Centre Hackney

Jenny Zienau, Strategic Lead, LBH

Joia De Sa, Consultant in Public Health, City & Hackney Public Health Team

Laura Austin Croft, Director of Population Health, East London NHS Foundation Trust

Lauren Tobias, CEO, Hackney Volunteer Centre

Lynn Strother, Trustee, City of London Healthwatch

Nicola Joyce, ESAL employment pathways Programme Manager, LBH

Richard Allen, Supported Internship Manager, Employment and Skills, LBH

Rhiannon Barker, Assistant Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Sadie King, Neighbourhoods Programme Lead, Homerton University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Samira Ben Omar, Independent Consultant

Sally Beaven, Hackney Healthwatch

Sarah Weiss, Interlink Orthodox Jewish Voluntary Action

Stephanie Coughlin, Clinical Director, NHS North East London, City & Hackney, ICP lead

Tony Blissett, Public Health Registrar, City & Hackney Public Health Team

Tony McKenzie, Co-Production Consultant

Tony Wong, Former CEO, Hackney CVS

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