

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Director of Public Health
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Relevant Executive Member:	The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
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Submitted to:	Executive
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Date:	13 March 2024
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Title:	Final Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel - Dental Health and the Impact of Covid- 19 - Service Response
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Report for:	Decision
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Status:	Public
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Strategic priority:	COVID-19 recovery
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Key decision:	No
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Why:	Not applicable
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Subject to call in?:	Yes
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Why:	Non-urgent decision
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Proposed decision(s)	
The following decisions are asked of the Executive:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The content of the Health Scrutiny Panel’s Final Report on Dental Health and the Impact of Covid - 19 (Appendix 1), be noted. ii. The action plan (Appendix 2), developed in response to the Scrutiny Panel’s recommendations, be approved. 	

Executive summary	
This report provides the findings of a scrutiny review into the oral health of Middlesbrough’s population and the accessibility of NHS dentistry services locally, for both adults and children.	

Based on the evidence and conclusions of the review the Health Scrutiny Panel has put forward several recommendations:

- a) That a further census survey of 5-year-old children is undertaken to enable analysis of data at a ward-level to identify health inequalities and enable the delivery of more targeted support.
- b) That a locally tailored oral health strategy is developed, which is based on an oral health needs assessment.
- c) That the Local Authority works with the relevant local authorities in the North East, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), NHS partners and the relevant water companies to support and delegate responsibility to respond to the OHID national water fluoridation public consultation (due in early 2024) to the Director of Public Health.
- d) That the Health Scrutiny Panel receives regular updates on progress made with implementing a water fluoridation scheme for the region, including the outcome of the public consultation.
- e) That targeted work is undertaken to increase uptake of the supervised tooth brushing programme and ensure engagement of the early years settings and primary schools located in town's most deprived areas.
- f) That, for those families who choose not to engage with the health visiting service, free toothbrushes and toothpaste are sent via postal delivery to encourage parents to adopt good oral health practices.
- g) That a targeted community fluoride varnish programme is commissioned to reduce health inequalities across Middlesbrough's population.
- h) That, to influence the national reform of NHS dentistry, the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel writes to the Secretary of State and the NHS England regional team undertake work, to make access to NHS dental services equal and affordable for everyone in the region.
- i) That an update is submitted to the Health Scrutiny Panel in 6 months' time in respect of:
 - the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board's (ICB) recovery plan to improve access to NHS dental services; and
 - how feedback from the local population has been utilised to formulate solutions and determine future plans.
- j) That Teesside University, the Local Authority and the North East and North Cumbria ICB work collectively to overcome and address current referral restrictions associated with the Student Dental Facility, with an aim to improving accessibility for those experiencing problems with accessing NHS dental care.

The Health Scrutiny Panel's recommendations have been reviewed and the appended Service Response and Action plan outlines how the Council will address them.

The impact of these recommendations is that there will be improved oral health outcomes via access to services and increasing awareness in the local population.

1. Purpose

For the Executive to note the final report of the Health Scrutiny Panel (Appendix 1) and to agree the Service Response and Action Plan (Appendix 2).

2. Recommendations

That the Executive

- Notes the content of the Health Scrutiny Panel's Final Report on Dental Health and the Impact of Covid - 19 (Appendix 1).
- The action plan (Appendix 2), developed in response to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations, be approved.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

The Health Scrutiny Panel conducted a review of this topic which resulted in these recommendations being proposed. Officers of the Council and key partners (including the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS England) have reviewed these recommendations and set out how they can be achieved, considering the local authorities' responsibilities with oral health.

4. Background and relevant information

To inform its review of Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19, the Health Scrutiny Panel gathered evidence at its meetings held on 11 October 2022, 13 December 2022, 23 October 2023 and 20 November 2023.

The terms of reference, for the Scrutiny Panel's review, were as follows:

- A. To identify:
 - The responsibilities of the Local Authority in respect of oral health; and
 - The responsibilities of NHS England in respect of dentistry.
- B. To examine Middlesbrough's oral health outcomes and the work being undertaken to improve the oral health of the local population.
- C. To investigate the pressures and challenges faced by dental care services and the work being undertaken to improve access to dental care.
- D. To examine the local population's views and experiences of accessing and using NHS dental services.
- E. To identify potential solutions to improve the oral health of Middlesbrough's population and access to dental care.

The Scrutiny Panel undertook its investigation over a series of 4 meetings.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

The report is following on from the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel. These are the recommendations which have been considered in Appendix 2. If we decided not to follow

the recommendations we would not be delivering our Local Authority responsibility to promote good oral health.

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

The impact of these recommendations is that there will be improved oral health outcomes via access to services and increasing awareness in the local population.

6.1 Financial (including procurement and Social Value)

Financial implications to the delivery of the actions are included in Appendix 2, including the existing costs for the Toothbrushing programme and the new proposed costs for a fluoride varnish programme, if we were to proceed with this, following the feasibility study.

6.2 Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this decision.

6.3 Risk

The risk of not implementing these recommendations is that there will be a lack of awareness relating to what Middlesbrough Council is doing to address the oral health inequalities, along with seeing an increase in oral health inequalities in the local population.

6.4 Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion

It is not anticipated that this project will impact negatively on any members of the public.

6.5 Climate Change / Environmental

It is not anticipated that this project will impact negatively on climate change/environmental.

6.6 Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers

It is not anticipated that this project will impact negatively on children and young people cared for by the Authority and care leavers.

6.7 Data Protection / GDPR

Any actions that attract a data protection compliance response from Middlesbrough Council will be reviewed and advice sought from the Data Protection Officer.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Please see Appendix 2 (Service Response Action Plan)		

Appendices

1	Final Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel - Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19
2	Service Response - Action Plan

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date

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