

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Joint Director of Public Health South Tees
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	30 April 2025
Title:	Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value
Key decision:	No
Why:	Report is for information only
Subject to call in?:	No
Why:	Report is for information only

Executive summary

The purpose of the Director of Public Health Annual Report is to set out how we work together collectively to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. It highlights the different experiences of health and illness across South Tees and the key challenges we face.

This year the Report uses the experience and learning from the You've Got This (YGT) programme - a Sport England funded Place Partnership that has challenged traditional ways of working over the last six years, taking a place-based systems approach driven by insight and learning, collaboration and distributed leadership, framed within the context of physical activity.

The Report has developed ten learning points to support understanding of how we can work more effectively together across agencies and communities to achieve the improvements in wellbeing articulated in the Mission-led Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Delivering Best Value strand of the Council Plan (2024-2027) includes a Transformation theme, that states: "Transformation is not only a response to challenges, but a proactive strategy to shape a future-ready organisation". The learning detailed in this

report is important to consider as a set of principles to inform the development of transformation programmes and shape the development of a future-ready organisation.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Director of Public Health Annual Report is to set out how we work together collectively to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. It highlights the different experiences of health and illness across South Tees and the key challenges we face.
- 1.2 This year the Report uses the experience and learning from the You've Got This (YGT) programme - a Sport England funded Place Partnership that has challenged traditional ways of working over the last six years, taking a place-based systems approach driven by insight and learning, collaboration and distributed leadership, framed within the context of physical activity.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To recommend that Executive consider the learning detailed in this Report as a set of principles to inform the development of transformation programmes and shape the development of a future-ready organisation.
- 2.2 To recommend that Executive consider the learning detailed in this Report to support understanding of how we can work more effectively together across agencies and communities to achieve the improvements in wellbeing articulated in the Mission-led Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

3. Learning Points

- 3.1 The learning points detailed below aim to extract the learning of value to a much broader context than the work to create and support "Active Lives as a Way of Life".
 - a. Leadership is often considered in a hierarchical sense, with the value and importance of leadership perceived to increase moving up the hierarchy. YGT has demonstrated that different types of leadership exist throughout organisations and in communities and influencing leadership much more broadly is necessary to achieve change within and across organisations.
 - b. Traditional partnership models of delivery that focus on compliance and accountability can often exclude creativity and discovery and building shared ownership. These models may drive a transactional approach and miss the opportunity to develop relationships within and between people in organisations that can also influence behaviours beyond the immediate work. This in turn can open new and different areas to progress the aspirations of the partnership. Engagement of the leadership of the "horizontal" is important.
 - c. To achieve system change we need to pay attention to organisational policies, processes and structures and how they promote or act against achieving desired

outcomes. For example, competitive procurement processes are often a barrier to collaboration, pitting potential partners against each other, rather than encouraging them to combine their strengths. Deeper consideration of these policies, processes and organisational structures and their impact on achieving system change is necessary to fully realise the benefits of partnership working.

- d. How organisations invest in programmes of work and where resources are deployed is important to the development of broader coalitions, insight and influence across partners to achieve the desired outcomes.
- e. VCS and other local organisations, trusted by their communities, hold expertise, insight and commitment for their communities, but their influence over policy development and decision making in Councils and the NHS is limited. This neglects an important and necessary contribution.
- f. A clear vision, or Mission, is important, but not sufficient on its own to drive collaboration across and within organisations. Development of Common Purpose requires the trust-building through collaborative working and collective leadership based on shared insight and understanding and alignment in organisational processes are critical success factors.
- g. The development of a learning approach should be based on a clear understanding of current ways of working that undervalue learning – with often a narrow focus on operational performance and thin single-agency metrics. A learning approach cannot flourish within a culture focussed on compliance, accountability and policing the boundaries between organisations. A learning approach should also facilitate test and learn on implementation, with findings informing changes and refinements to plans and performance management in response.
- h. South Tees is a Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), which provides a very strong position to build longer term learning and research into how we work, in particular to draw down research funding to help us to understand better knotty issues in our own context. The HDRC provides a platform for greater collaboration to build insight and understanding between Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland Councils, Teesside University (and other Universities), the NHS and other partners.
- i. Embedding practices into ways of working, such as reflective practice, is important to building learning as part of an on-going approach rather than a series of set-piece events.
- j. Systems change is complex, often with ever-changing interconnections between different people in different roles and places. Models (like the Common Purpose Model and the Theory of Change Model) can help to ensure action across a range of areas likely to achieve change and build understanding of how interventions and approaches are working (or not working).
- k. Insight and understanding of how issues manifest themselves in communities and the opportunities and barriers to progress is critical to success. This requires

investment, work and time to build trust in communities and with partner organisations.

4. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 4.1 The learning identified in the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025 will contribute to the development of transformation programmes and shape the development of a future-ready organisation.
- 4.2 Learning from the YGT programme that has been developing it's approach for over six years, challenging traditional ways of working, taking a place-based systems approach driven by insight and learning, collaboration and distributed leadership will support delivery of the Middlesbrough Council Plan 2024-2027.

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

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	<p>The Director of Public Health Annual Report describes ten learning points to support understanding of how we can work more effectively together across agencies and communities to achieve the improvements in wellbeing articulated in the Mission-led Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These learning points are also applicable to inform the development of transformation programmes and shape the development of a future-ready organisation.</p> <p>There are no specific financial consequences arising from this report.</p>
Legal	The Director of Public Health annual report is a professional requirement of the Director of Public Health and provides an objective impression of the health status of the population based on sound epidemiological principles and therefore does not require any legal considerations.
Risk	The risk of not considering the learning points fully to inform the development of transformation programmes and the Missions within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is that those programmes of work underachieve their ambitions.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no specific consequences arising from this Report.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no specific consequences arising from this Report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no specific consequences arising from this Report.
Data Protection	There are no specific consequences arising from this Report.

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

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Consider the learning detailed in this Report to support understanding of how we can work more effectively together across agencies and communities to achieve the improvements in wellbeing articulated in the Mission-led Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	Director of Public Health	August 2025
Consider the learning detailed in this Report as a set of principles to inform the development of transformation programmes and shape the development of a future-ready organisation.	Chief Executive	In line with timescales for the development of the transformation programmes

Appendices

1	Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
None		

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