

EXECUTIVE MEMBER UPDATE TO COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Jan Ryles - Executive Member for Public Health

DATE OF MEETING: 15 October 2025

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members on areas of activity within my portfolio including performance against strategic priorities.

COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES

A healthy place:

- *Improve life chances of our residents by responding to health inequalities*
- *Promote inclusivity for all*
- *Reduce poverty*

1. HIGHLIGHTS

1.1 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Suicide Prevention

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day 2025, Public Health and key members of the Tees Suicide Prevention Taskforce produced a short video showcasing the organisations actively working to prevent suicide across Teesside. The central message is clear: suicide prevention is a shared responsibility. It requires collaboration between organisations, communities, and individuals, all united in the goal of reducing suicide deaths in our area. The video also encourages organisations to reflect on how they can contribute to suicide prevention efforts and help shift the narrative around suicide: <https://youtu.be/WNj4X5laakY>

The Suicide Postvention Service, 'If U Care Share', has received NHS funding to provide immediate, practical support to families following a suspected suicide. Public Health has supported the launch of this new service by raising awareness locally and working with Cleveland Police to develop referral pathways for those affected.

1.2 Mental Health Training Hub

The commissioned provider of the Mental Health Training Hub hosted their annual event in Middlesbrough in September for our local workforce to further develop their knowledge and skills based on the Mental Health Awareness Month theme of 'Community and its impact on Wellbeing'.

Ageing Well Updates

1.3 Dementia Friendly Care Home Guide has been introduced across Middlesbrough care homes and includes a self-assessment tool to enhance dementia support through improvements in the physical environment, staff training, leadership, and activities. It's

now part of the care home service specification and was highlighted in the LA CQC inspection report as best practice.

- 11 care homes have expressed interest
- 4 are actively using the tool
- 4 have been accredited by Dementia Action Teesside for their commitment to dementia-friendly communities

1.4 Dementia Friendly Transport

Public Health are working with colleagues at Stockton Borough Council to co-designing an e-learning package for Stagecoach and Arriva Bus Drivers on Dementia Friendly Transport to help make transport more accessible. This should increase independence, confidence in using public transport and travelling alone and improving access to health services and social activities.

1.5 Increasing Dementia Diagnosis in South Asian Communities

This is a collaborative project between Public Health, TEWVT, HDRC, Teesside University and BME Network to increase diagnosis, explore the way in which modifiable risk factors can be reduced, and to ensure pathways to treatment and engagement approaches are culturally relevant and appropriate.

We have secured a joint bid via Tees Eske & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust from the research capability funding to facilitate a series of creative workshops with members of South Asian communities. Workshops will be co-created and facilitated by creative artists and a research assistant and structured around identifying the components of effective and cultural appropriate information, advice and support on dementia, dementia prevention, diagnosis and post diagnostic support.

1.6 Seniors Connected Project

We have secured an additional £23k Know Your Neighbourhood Fund Grant Extension for procuring alternative provision for longer-term continuation of Seniors Connected and age friendly activities, securing a project legacy and for supporting ongoing groups and community events.

1.7 Ageing Well Hub

Since opening the Hub in the Live Well Centre we have seen people utilising the space to access advice and information and support and signposting to alternative support services.

Weekly activities include Movie Club, Mindfulness, Digital walks, Carers group, Bereavement support, Chair Exercise, and coffee mornings. Liaising with providers to facilitate additional support groups for older people including Domestic abuse support, Ageing without children, Young Onset Dementia, Over 50s recovery group, over 50s LGBTQ+ group, Wellbeing Plus for people living with chronic pain and Long-Term Conditions.

Vulnerabilities

1.8 Changing Futures

The duty walk-in service remains busy in quarter 2 with 217 people accessing the service at Middlesbrough House. The top three presenting issues were housing support, financial support, including foodbank vouchers and general advice and guidance. Although there is

still a waiting list for Key Worker support, this has reduced from an average of 9 weeks to 4-5 weeks.

1.9 Recovery Solutions

Recovery Solutions has trained staff at the Longlands Club, making it the first pub in Middlesbrough to have all managers and staff naloxone trained to respond to overdoses. This has been very positively received locally, with several other pubs, services – and even a barbers – now approaching us for the same training.

This demonstrates strong community demand for lifesaving skills and highlights the role of Recovery Solutions in building safer, more resilient neighbourhoods

The night clinic that was set up to support vulnerable women and those sex working has been successful in supporting people out of hours, to date it has achieved:

- 4 have gone to detox and rehabilitation with a further 3 on the pathway
- 2 no longer sex work as they no longer need to buy heroin due to being in treatment
- 8 have been supported into accommodation from being street homeless
- 20 are now in structured treatment
- Further 28 have been supported through the night clinic
- Recovery Solutions represent the women within the safeguarding arena including the High-Risk Adults Panel and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- We have administered naloxone 4 times in the night clinic. These women may have died if out on the streets without this connection and intervention
- One of our women recognised an overdose in someone else and ran to the clinic to get our help and naloxone and she stated that was from us talking to her every week about overdose and naloxone
- We have created safe space and a community in the night clinic where the women come together, eat together, chat and engage with whichever part of the clinic they need in that moment.

1.10 Continuity of Care

Continuity of care rates supporting people from Prison into support services have risen to 62% – the highest level in over a year. This is particularly encouraging given that other areas nationally are seeing a decline. The improvement reflects the introduction of new pathways, including Service presence at probation, pre-release visits, arranged prison pick-ups, and enhanced post-release support for a set period.

1.11 Successful Completions

Successful completions have increased across all groups (opiates, alcohol and non-opiates). Outcomes remain below national averages – particularly for opiates – but there has been clear progress, with alcohol and non-opiate completions now moving much closer to the national benchmark.

1.12 Numbers in Treatment

Alcohol and non-opiate treatment numbers have both risen, bringing us closer to our 2025/26 targets. If this upward trend continues, we are on track to achieve them. Opiate referrals have also started to increase, but volumes remain a significant challenge. Dedicated working groups are in place to strengthen pathways and improve referral numbers to help close the gap

III Health Prevention

1.13 Stop Smoking Service

Due to the improved referral pathways and access points this has also resulted in an increase in those accessing service following a referral. This again can be explained by the improved referral routes for both professionals and Self-referrals resulting in reduced inappropriate referrals being placed.

1.14 Social Prescribing

The Social Prescribing model is expanding into the Cardiology pathway to support patients more broadly in managing their condition and connecting to local support services. Q1 has involved co-development of Standard Operating Procedures, setting up systems, evaluation plans, community partnership development and service promotion.

Health Protection

1.15 Increasing uptake of Immunisations

Following the childhood immunisations behavioural insights trial in Middlesbrough, resources (red book stickers, leaflets, and posters) have been developed to increase uptake. Changes to the national schedule have been accounted for, so the 5-step resources are now 6-step resources. We are currently awaiting guidance on the introduction of the varicella vaccine (chicken pox) before finalising the materials. School admissions will continue to distribute the “it’s not too late” leaflet, designed to encourage parents to complete the set by catching up on any missed vaccines before their child starts reception.

Similarly, following the adolescent immunisation behavioural insights trials in Macmillan Academy, the Health Protection Team are working closely with NHS England and the School Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS) to roll out the resources (letters, e-mails, texts, and leaflets) to all secondary schools in Middlesbrough. The leaflets include QR codes to the relevant sections of the regional adolescent vaccine video commissioned by the North East Association of Directors of Public Health (NE ADPH) network. Teaching resources (presentations) to educate pupils about the importance of the adolescent vaccines are also being developed.

1.16 Communicable Disease

Funding has been provided to continue the JCUH opt out testing for hep C, HIV and Syphilis which has detected a higher rate than other pilot areas funded via the Government funding. This pilot is testing for syphilis and Hep C whereas the government funded ones just test for HIV. High numbers of Hep C have been detected.

A procedure is being adopted to deal with hospital discharges for TB patients that are homeless and vulnerable. This procedure will involve several agencies meeting to discuss each case in order that the patient has suitable accommodation, financial provisions and assistance to allow them to live within the community safely with appropriate support to allow them to continue with their treatment.

Healthy Environments

1.17 Run Middlesbrough

The council and its leisure partner, Everyone Active, have teamed up with Event of the North to deliver Run Middlesbrough’s programme of running events from 2026. Events of the North, operated by former 1500m world record holder and world champion, Steve

Cram, will deliver the Middlesbrough 10k and Ali Brownlee 5K on Sunday 30 August 2026. These events will be complemented by Paula Radcliffe's, former women's marathon world record holder and world champion, 'Families on Track' relay at Albert Park on Saturday 29 August 2026. These events will link with local running programmes and other running events to increase the uptake of running by local residents as well as contributing to shining a positive light on Middlesbrough. Further details about Run Middlesbrough 2026 can be found via the following link [Middlesbrough Runs – Events of the North](#)

1.18 Homeless Football

Working with our partners Street Soccer London/Scotland, Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation and Everyone Active; Public Health South Tees and the Council were proud to host the first northern regional trials to select a team to represent England at the Football Homeless World Cup that took place in Oslo in August. The northern trials, that took place at Middlesbrough Sports Village in May, attracted over 100 participants from across the North East, Liverpool and London, that had either experienced homelessness, addiction or social isolation. The northern trials proved to be an enormous success that was received well by its participants and provided two players to represent England at the Homeless World Cup in Oslo. Moving forwards Public Health South Tees will seek opportunities to provide a year round programme of homeless football activation, sustain the delivery of the northern trials for the annual Homeless World Cup event, and consider the viability of a bid from Middlesbrough to host the Homeless World Cup in 2030.

1.19 Sport Gifted and Talented Identification Project

Working in partnership with Middlesbrough Mandale Athletics Club, Public Health South Tees has attracted funding to support the delivery of a pilot sports gifted and talented identification project. The project will see the delivery of an identification programme for all year 5 and 6 children across 6 primary schools in East Middlesbrough. Up to 48 children will then be invited to a free 2-day holiday programme at Middlesbrough Sports Village linked with local sports clubs. It is hoped that the project will identify children that didn't realise they had a talent in sport, link them directly with local sports clubs and facilities where they can express their talents, and in so doing contribute to raising the aspirations and confidence of children identified.

1.20 Managing Undernutrition South Tees (MUST): Elderly Care Homes

All care homes in Middlesbrough are now either actively working towards or already exceeding national nutrition standards. This milestone reflects our strong commitment and the dedicated efforts of care homes to improve nutritional standards for every resident despite the nutritional needs.

Eat Well

Healthy Weight Declaration (HWD)

1.21 Marketing & Comms Workshop

HWD & Marketing workshop held in September 2025, where commitments aligned to marketing & comms were presented for discussion and actions on how to improve the cross-department priorities around healthy weight messaging were agreed. Where HWD can be conflict of interest to priorities of the Council's comms such as regeneration of the town we have seen positive steps to reframe messages. We are working with Marketing to use nutrient profile modelling (which reduces the calorific value of advertisements and dependant on the scoring selects whether certain food or drinks can be used when advertising food and drink related content). Changes have also been made to staff

discounts on staff website, 'Meal out in Middlesbrough' and social media posts relating to unhealthy food. In addition, no photos of unhealthy foods are seen on the landing pages or social media.

1.22 Good Food Local

In July 2025, as part of the Good Food Local programme, colleagues from Middlesbrough Council attended a workshop hosted by Sustain and the Association of Directors of Public Health. The workshop looked at how to drive forward change and improve food-related outcomes for Middlesbrough residents while leveraging co-benefits to meet the Council's environmental, economic growth and health and wellbeing objectives.

1.23 Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The HAF programme continues to offer a great programme to our children and young people in receipt of benefit related free school meals, with a good and consistent number of providers delivering programmes across Middlesbrough. HAF is now delivering programmes during the October and February half term periods, through funding awarded from the Mayors Priorities Fund.

Funding for the HAF programme has now been extended for an additional 3 years 2026-2029. Detailed planning will take place once guidance has been issued from the DfE – this is expected at the end of the year.

Best Start in Life

1.24 Oral Health

We have commenced distribution of the Colgate toothbrushing resources for settings and services, starting with early years settings initially, including nurseries, before moving on to schools. Commissioning continues with dental practices across South Tees to award contracts for the targeted schools fluoride varnish programme. We have received additional funding from the NHS ICB for the fluoride varnish programme, to contribute towards the three-year programme.

1.25 Healthy Weight

We are engaging with schools to recruit into the SHINE research programme (Studying Happiness, Self-Image, Nutrition and Eating in children) across South Tees, working with University College London (UCL). This research will also look at the cost effectiveness of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP).

1.26 Infant Feeding

The "Mamazing" breastfeeding campaign, a collaborative project involving colleagues from Public Health, Family Hubs, Marketing and Communications, Maternity Services and the Middlesbrough 0-19 team was delivered between April and June 2025, with further marketing messages delivered during World Breastfeeding Week in August 2025. During this week, one of the "Mamazing" Ambassadors featured on BBC Radio 5 Live, engaging in a discussion about the importance of breastfeeding and the benefits for mother and baby. We are currently undertaking public consultation on the campaign, with the aim of using this information to inform the next phase of the campaign, which will take place between January and March 2026.

1.27 Health Determinants Research Collaboration South Tees

Coming into our third year, under our Research Support Process and Coordination workstream we continue to work to develop research questions into robust funding applications. Since the programme began the number of research ideas submitted by Council staff has doubled and surpassed the number from academics. Through our Culture Change workstream we have conducted a “sandpit” to explore the barriers and facilitators to research in Adults and Communities and plan to do so in Children and Families (Education), Regeneration, and Environment and Commercial Services (Neighbourhoods management team).

We have launched our HDRC ST Training and Development Programme that consists of a series of online sessions that LA staff can sign up to. The session recordings are saved on our HDRC Portal <https://hdrcsouthtees.co.uk/> . Engaging with elected members is an essential part of our work and we continue to attend Council meetings to promote the HDRC and share our progress.