

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

29 JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SBC CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE: HEALTH INEQUALITIES

SUMMARY

Addressing and mitigating the impact of health inequalities is a key principle of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023. In September 2019, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) hosted a team of Elected Members and senior officers from other local authorities together with advisors from the Local Government Association to carry out a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC). The CPC set out a recommendation to:

‘Seize the chance to fulfil a real place leadership role around health inequalities and accelerate and enhance partnership working.’

This paper summarises SBC’s agreed approach to addressing and mitigating health inequalities as a response to the CPC recommendation, to inform the Board’s work on health inequalities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Note SBC’s approach to addressing and mitigating the impact of health inequalities.
2. Consider how the approach can support partnership- and systems-working around health inequalities.
3. Consider how the approach can help the Board refine its own strategic approach to addressing and mitigating the impact of health inequalities systematically and at-scale.

DETAIL

Context

1. Addressing and mitigating the impact of health inequalities is a key principle of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023. To effectively address health inequalities, work needs to be strategic, systematic and at-scale across all Board organisations.
2. Health inequalities are detrimental in themselves, as people living in more unequal societies and communities suffer detriment to their health and wellbeing as a result (the visible difference within communities impacts people in them across the Board) (Marmot’s Review of Health Inequalities 2010).
3. Stockton-on-Tees Borough has one of the widest gaps in life expectancy in England. When comparing electoral wards:

- Life expectancy for males is 21.2 years less in Stockton Town Centre ward (64.0 years) compared to Billingham West ward (85.2 years).
 - Life expectancy for females is 14.9 years less in Stockton Town Centre ward (73.6 years) compared to Northern Parishes ward (88.5 years).
4. Health inequalities in Stockton-on-Tees impact across local communities both socially and economically and therefore impact the work of SBC as a whole e.g. demand on social care and other services; availability of a healthy population who can contribute economically; cohesive communities; ability of children to develop to their maximum potential; and work to improve the health and wellbeing of employees (both SBC and wider) and their families.
 5. In September 2019, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) hosted a team of Elected Members and senior officers from other local authorities together with advisors from the Local Government Association to carry out a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC). The CPC complements and adds value to a council's performance and improvement focus through challenge and shared learning.
 6. The CPC recognised the current good practice in the Council and also set out a series of recommendations, one of which was to:

'Seize the chance to fulfil a real place leadership role around health inequalities and accelerate and enhance partnership working.'
 7. This paper summarises SBC's approach to addressing and mitigating health inequalities as a response to the CPC recommendation, to support partnership- and systems-working around health inequalities; and to inform the Board's own work on health inequalities.
 8. Some factors impacting on health inequalities are national policy issues e.g. benefits policies; national minimum / living wage. However, there is also strong evidence for a range of actions that can be taken locally to address or mitigate the impact of health inequalities. The success of these interventions and approaches is dependent on them being implemented systematically (across organisations and partners) and at-scale. The role of SBC as a whole organisation is therefore key as a leader of shaping the Borough to be a healthy and vibrant place.
 9. Much good work is underway. The refreshed SBC approach will encourage more systematic, coordinated and strategic action across the whole Council. Working with partners is an integral way of SBC-working, which is a crucial part of successfully planning and delivering the work. The refreshed approach is set out as follows.

Approach

10. The current refresh of the SBC Council Plan is a timely opportunity to consider the Council's approach to health inequalities, particularly in highlighting the Council's position as leader and shaper of 'place'. The new Council Plan is being developed to promote a matrix-working approach across all areas of the Council's business, which fits with the broad-reaching nature of the determinants of health and health inequalities. For example work and income, housing, cohesive and safe communities, access to facilities and open space, and early years and education. The relationship between health inequalities and other areas of Council work is often

two-way i.e. a healthy population is needed to support economic growth and development; and economic growth provides the circumstances for a healthier population.

11. SBC will be undertaking a piece of cross-Council work to deliver on the Council Plan. This will be to analyse and interpret key data, evidence and intelligence, to identify key strategic issues that sit at the interface across all key areas of Council business. Addressing health inequalities is one of the issues sitting at this interface. The work to define the issue of health inequalities within the context of the range of Council business is proposed to include:
 - Glean learning from other Local Authority areas who have taken a Council-wide approach to addressing health inequalities.
 - Develop a simple set of indicators across the Council Plan, to support a focus on health inequalities and help target activity (based on the work done by the Institute of Health Equity). For the majority of indicators, this will be to highlight the performance against the indicator for the Borough as a whole, and for the population in quintile 1.
 - Embed work to address and mitigate health inequalities in the key partnership strategies to underpin the new Council Plan, as they are developed.
 - Define a brief narrative to set out the case around health inequalities, to support discussions both across the Council and with partners, with links to the appropriate evidence base.
 - Consider support offered from the Local Government Association around addressing health inequalities.
12. As well as exploring new areas of mutual benefit, the Council-wide approach described would be rooted in the existing work that is in place in many areas, focusing on scaling this up and implementing best practice and evidence in a systematic way.
13. The refreshed SBC approach set out in this paper is shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board to support systems- and partnership-working and to inform and refine the Board's own thinking in addressing health inequalities across the health and wellbeing system.
14. The Board is asked to support SBC in its implementation of the approach, particularly in relation to working in partnership around key factors that impact health inequalities.
15. The Board is asked to consider how to ensure health inequalities and their impact are considered systematically and at-scale across its work, particularly across its strategic priorities. It is proposed further thinking could be done on this and brought back to the Board for consideration e.g. embedding an approach across all Board organisations; and highlighting the impact of work to address health inequalities through indicators that help tell the 'story' of the Board's work i.e. rather than a detailed performance management framework that could miss the bigger picture.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LGA offers a free one-day workshop to Councils. Should there be cost implications of any further work, this will be scoped for consideration as needed.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None noted

RISK ASSESSMENT

There are no foreseen risks of undertaking the work. There is a risk of health inequalities growing and their impact increasing, should action not be increased to address them.

COUNCIL PLAN IMPLICATIONS

A coordinated and strategic approach to addressing health inequalities would impact positively across the Council.

CONSULTATION

The JSNA will be used as a basis of the work, and community engagement and consultation is an inherent part of this tool. Further engagement and consultation work may be undertaken to progress the approach described as well as applying a community assets-based approach where possible.

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