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**Portsmouth**  
CITY COUNCIL

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing Board</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on the wider determinants of health during the COVID 19 pandemic
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020
<b>Report by:</b>	Dominique Le Touze, Consultant in Public Health, Portsmouth City Council, Bethan Mose, Health Development Manager, Andrea Wright, Health Development Manager
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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**1. Requested by** Health and Wellbeing Board

## **2. Purpose**

The COVID-19 global pandemic has highlighted existing health inequalities in our population. Greater risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19 has been seen in black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, older people, and people living in socioeconomically deprived areas. Those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods are more than twice as likely to die from COVID-19 as those living in the most affluent areas. Long-term, preventable conditions such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes are also major risk factors for contracting and experiencing serious illness from COVID-19, and these disproportionately affect people living in disadvantaged areas and from ethnic minority backgrounds.

In Portsmouth, around 60% of the most common causes of preventable death and disease (liver disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory conditions) can be linked to four risk factors - alcohol misuse, poor diet, physical inactivity and smoking. It is also estimated over the long-term, air pollution can be attributed to between 28,000 to 36,000 deaths in the UK each year. Risk factors such as these are intimately linked to the way people live. The local environment, availability of good quality food, options for travel, housing, employment, education - all have a huge impact on health, and individuals' ability to be healthy. These wider determinants are sometimes referred to as the 'causes of the causes' of illness.

This paper gives an update on work across the city, and with multiple partners to address the 'causes of the causes' in Portsmouth during the pandemic, and ongoing work to reduce inequalities and prevent further ill-health.

### **3. Information Requested**

#### **3.2 Air Quality**

- 3.3** A public consultation on Clean Air Zone (CAZ) proposals took place over the summer. Having been legally directed to implement a Class B CAZ, the purpose of the consultation was to seek views on how the CAZ should operate. The consultation ran for 6 weeks and is now closed. A report will be taken to Cabinet on 06<sup>th</sup> October to discuss the findings of the consultation and next steps.
- 3.4** The CAZ is a small part of the solution to cleaner air in the city, in addition to a variety of measures to improve active travel, outlined in the Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and other measures such as Portsmouth Port's ambition to become the UK's first carbon neutral port.
- 3.5** The COVID-19 has created a very clear reduction in traffic volumes and associated improvements in roadside air quality, seen consistently across the UK. The Transport team have run a number of sensitivity tests on air quality and transport modelling to consider the impact of changes in travel behaviour/ patterns following the pandemic and associated impact on NO2 concentrations.
- 3.6** Traffic volumes have now reverted to near normal, with Portsmouth at times seeing traffic volumes higher than pre-lockdown levels as a result of good weather, furlough and 'staycations'. However, emerging evidence from residents indicates an appetite for increased active travel opportunities, with 50% of residents in the Portsmouth residents survey walking more since lockdown, and 78% keen to retain temporary road closures and other travel measures.

### **4. Active Travel**

- 4.2** In response to the pandemic, the Department for Transport has outlined a number of changes to local transport to support the recovery of the economy and in response to the green and active travel agenda. Central government identify local transport networks as being central to local economic recovery and therefore it is expected that changes to the local travel network should be quickly mobilised and should help embed altered behaviours and demonstrate the positive effects of active travel.
- 4.3** Portsmouth City Council's approach to addressing the changes needed to the transport network to support the economic recovery of the city is set out in the [Emergency Transport Recovery Plan](#). The Plan aligns with the objectives of the [draft Local Transport Plan 4](#) and sets out the initial activity that will take place over the next year to support the restart of local transport, including identifying a number of sustainable and active travel measures that will be delivered. The Draft Local Transport Plan 4 was approved in March 2020 and will be consulted on at the end of September together with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- 4.4** The Emergency Active Travel Fund awarded PCC £214,515 from the Department of Transport to allow for greater social distancing for cyclists and pedestrians. Measures include additional space to walk and cycle by temporary road closures along the Seafront, City Centre and Castle Road, temporary pedestrian crossings

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and segregated cycle routes. Additional space for hospitality and local businesses to allow customers to socially distance has been provided on Palmerston Road South, Albert Road, Marmion Road. On 7 August the Council submitted a bid into Tranche 2 of the fund which, if successful could see an additional £769,000 to be used towards further improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in the city.

- 4.5** Transport regularly review all temporary road changes to ensure they are working during the pandemic. Data will be gathered on the route usage, road safety audit and current information from Public Health and the Police, and feedback received will also be reviewed. The reviews could lead to alterations, removal of the road closure or adapting designs to make them permanent depending on how well the change works.
- 4.6** In July 2020, the Government published a new physical activity strategy in July 2020 - 'Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking' with a focus on making England a nation where walking and cycling are part of everyday life, from active travel to leisure and recreation. The changes in the Emergency Travel Fund support this strategy.

**5. Childhood Obesity**

- 5.2** Identifying the increased risk of serious illness from COVID among those who are obese, the Government published 'Tackling Obesity: empowering adults and children to lead healthier lives' in July 2020. This paper is supported by some key recent actions from central government and the NHS such as the Better Health Campaign and NHS 12 week weight loss plan. Both are primarily aimed at adults, but hold benefits for the whole family, promoting positive dietary and physical activity behaviours.
- 5.3** A 'Superzone' pilot to address Childhood Obesity was due to start earlier this year, working with Arundel Court Primary Academy to address issues raised by the children around four key themes: healthy food environment, active places, cleaner air and community and safety. The place-based pilot used a new approach coordinating policy and community action in one specific area, aligning actions to maximise impact, achieving joint aims of reducing childhood obesity, reducing air pollution and promoting a safe environment.
- 5.4** The launch scheduled for mid-March had to be cancelled as the country went into lockdown. After careful consideration and in conjunction with the school it has been decided to postpone the Superzone pilot until September 2021, to allow the safe return of children to education without additional demands on teachers and pupils.
- 5.5** Childhood obesity remains an area of concern and both Public Health Portsmouth and all the partners involved are committed to piloting the superzone for the 21/22 academic year. In the meantime we strive to reduce obesity through working in partnership with key agencies across the city, both around improving dietary behaviours and increasing activity levels, amongst the children and their families.

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## **6. Physical activity**

6.2 Public Health Portsmouth is working in conjunction with the other three Public Health teams across SHIP and our regional active partnership - Energise Me - to develop a new physical activity strategy for April 2021. The new strategy will focus on the least active, as encouraging those not active to do some activity has the greatest health gains. In addition the strategy will seek to proactively target the health inequalities so keenly highlighted during Covid-19, focusing on those groups and those areas that have become less active, and are higher risk of COVID and long-term health conditions. The work underpinning the strategy will be developed based on local need, with the Active Portsmouth Alliance playing a vital role in helping address physical inactivity. Over the autumn months there will be opportunities for consultation from a wide range of partners, with the final strategy ready by April 2021.

### **Active Portsmouth Alliance**

The Active Portsmouth Alliance is a multi-agency network who have interest in physical activity in its widest form. Currently membership stands at over 90 members from over 40 organisations across the city, including 7 council departments, NHS, Navy, Fire Service, University, regional/national bodies, key community providers, range a of charities etc. and membership is continuing to grow year on year. The focus of the alliance is to work together to improve inactivity levels across the city and has target audiences based on the greatest need. Currently they are: women and girls, disability and long-term conditions, Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, mental health and lower socio-economic.

There is a commitment from partners to work together to harness opportunities and resources, to improve activity levels of the most inactive, particularly those who have become less active during the pandemic. The Alliance target groups will be refreshed in line with the upcoming Physical Activity Strategy.

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Signed by:

## **Appendices:**

### **Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Office for National Statistics. <i>Health state life expectancies by national deprivation deciles,</i>	<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk">https://www.ons.gov.uk</a>

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<i>England: 2016 to 2018. UK government; 2020</i>	
Office for National Statistics. <i>Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation: deaths occurring between 1 March and 17 April 2020. UK government; 2020</i>	<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk">https://www.ons.gov.uk</a>
Public Health England <i>Health matters: air pollution</i> , 2018	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution</a>
Emergency Transport Recovery Plan	<a href="https://travel.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/portsmouth-transport-recovery-plan-june-2020.pdf">https://travel.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/portsmouth-transport-recovery-plan-june-2020.pdf</a>
Draft Local Transport Plan 4	<a href="https://travel.portsmouth.gov.uk/">https://travel.portsmouth.gov.uk/</a>
Coronavirus Resident Research	Pending publication