

REPORT TO:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD 19 January 2022
SUBJECT:	Director of Public Health annual report: The Magnificence of Croydon during the COVID-19 pandemic
BOARD SPONSOR:	Rachel Flowers – Director of Public Health
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to produce an annual independent report to advise professionals and the public and to improve population health and for the Council to publish this.

Due to the unequivocal impact of COVID -19, the focus of this year's report is the impact of COVID-19 on inequalities through the experience of Croydon residents. The report's recommendations will address how we in Croydon can best protect ourselves and keep healthy together.

Video has been chosen as the best medium for this report, it has closed captions to allow for translation to other languages and is accessible to British Sign Language signers. In addition, a data document sit alongside the video report and provides a background and recommendations to the themes explored within the video.

The report will be launched at the full Council meeting.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024

- This report will address opportunities to reduce inequalities within Croydon. It is for the public and will reflect the diverse range of residents within Croydon.
- Eighteen percent of Croydon's population live in areas identified as the 20% most deprived areas of the country and an estimated 43% of residents are within the Black or Asian ethnic group. The risk of severe outcomes and death from COVID is higher in those living in more deprived areas, and in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.
- The message of the video report will have a broad reach and will be accessible throughout the community. This will mitigate the risk that the public may overlook the learning of the last 20 months and become complacent in their health related decision making, potentially leading to further infections and COVID-related deaths.

This report also addresses the following joint health and wellbeing strategy priorities by:

- supporting strong, engaged, inclusive and well connected communities
- promoting good mental health

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no direct financial impact of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note the content of the Director of Public Health's independent Annual Report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Director of Public Health has a statutory duty to produce an independent annual report to advise and make recommendations to professionals and the public, to improve population health. The Council also has a statutory responsibility to publish the Annual Report. Due to the unequivocal impact of COVID -19, the focus of this year's report is, the impact of COVID-19 on inequalities through the experience of Croydon residents, with recommendations on how we in Croydon can best protect ourselves, keep healthy and tackle inequalities together.
- 2.2 This year's report is in video format and a data document which will allow for the widest reach, it is easily understandable, can be shared through multiple social media channels, and can be easily translated to support wider dissemination. The video report aligns with the Council's communications strategy to use a variety of communications and engagement channels and platforms to inform and reach out to as many people as possible about the health of our residents across the borough. The data document provides a background to themes explored within the video an overview of the resulting recommendations.

3. DETAIL OF THE REPORT**Covid-19 in Croydon**

- 3.1 Over the last 18 months approximately 1 in every 8 Croydon residents have tested positive for COVID-19 (over 46,000 people). This figure is likely to be an underestimate. The most recent figures reveal that during this time Croydon has experienced over 1,000 COVID-related deaths; accounting for almost 1 in every 4 deaths in the borough.
- 3.2 The report is focused on Croydon's experience of the pandemic over the last 19 months based on the lived experiences of its residents. It looks at the impact of Covid-19, how residents were supported, how inequalities were impacted on and aims to highlight how Croydon can emerge fairer, more connected and more resilient from the pandemic.

Format of the Director of Public Health's report to the public

- 3.3 Video has been chosen as the best medium for this year's annual report. This is both pragmatic and because it best serves the purpose of the report. It is pragmatic as it means that it requires the least amount of input from the public health team, as our resources are stretched due to ongoing pressures in response to Covid, it is also quicker, cheaper and more straightforward than commissioning a written report.
- 3.4 Video also has the benefit of having the widest reach, is easily understandable, can be shared through social media channels, and easily translated to support wider dissemination. In July the Director of Public Health did a video message which was well received by residents with positive feedback saying how important people felt it was to be seeing the Director of Public Health speaking directly in this manner and the Council communicating openly. The use of video also allows us to ensure the report is accessible, as it is able to include British Sign Language (BSL), a language group which is unable to be catered for in a written report, and the audio focus means it is also more accessible to our residents with sight loss. In addition, the video will have closed captions which would allow those with hearing impairments who do not use BSL to access the video. This means we are demonstrating reasonable adjustments to allow access to these individuals who themselves are likely to suffer the impacts of widening health inequalities. Being a video with closed captions also increases the ability to translate the report into multiple languages.
- 3.5 The video has been produced in a manner to reflect the diversity of Croydon residents in a way which cannot be captured in a written report, allowing their experiences and stories to be used to augment all ongoing Covid communication over the next year, and depending on the content of the interviews will provide footage for wider ongoing health communication too.

In addition the data document captures the themes explored within the video and gives a background to the inequalities within Croydon and the recommendations made.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Director of Public Health's annual report has been created with Croydon resident's voice throughout and is an independent report that others can then use to inform and shape any subsequent consultations. Voices from the Asian, Caribbean, African and European communities is reflected within the video report.

5 PRE-SCURTINY REPORT

This report has not yet been to scrutiny. The Director of Public Health will discuss the report and plans for scrutiny with Councillor Sean Fitzsimons and propose that this would come in early 2022.

6 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The cost of designing and producing the video report is funded through the COVID-19 Contain Outbreak Management Fund. Spend against the COVID-19 Contain Outbreak Management Fund grant is reported back to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure that it is used for the correct purposes, this is an appropriate use of this grant.

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Approved by: Mirella Peters, Head of Finance

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the interim Director of Law and Governance that under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 section 31(5) the Director of Public Health for a local authority must prepare an annual report on the health of the people in the area of the local authority which by section 31(6) the local authority is required to publish.

7.2 There are no additional legal considerations arising directly as a result of recommendations in this report.

Approved by Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the interim Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

8.1 There are no immediate HR issues arising from this report for Croydon Council employees or staff.

Approved by: Gillian Bevan, Head of HR Resources, on behalf of the Director of Human Resources)

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 The purpose of this report is to understand the impact of the pandemic on Croydon through the lived experiences of Croydon residents. The report will address the inequalities that exist and is aimed at supporting discussions and action to reduce this inequalities. This report will also highlight how Croydon can emerge as a more connected, fairer and resilient community.

Approved by: Denise McCausland; Equalities Manager on behalf of Director of Policy, Programmes and Performance

10. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

10.1 There are no environmental or climate change implications of this report.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

11.1 There are no implications of this report for the reduction or prevention of crime and disorder.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

12.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Director of Public Health to produce an annual report which the Council is required to publish.

13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

13.1 The recommendations are required to meet statutory requirements.

14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO - There is no personal identifiable data that has been used in the video or within the written addendum. Residents have told their stories however their personal identifiable information has not been used for the purpose of this report. All residents interviewed are over the age of 18 years and have signed the Council's media release form giving permission for their images captured to be used.

14.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO - There are no data protection implications in this report. Rachel Flowers will sign off the final video report.

All residents interviewed are over the age of 18 years and have signed the Council's media release form giving permission for their images captured to be used.

Approved by: Rachel Flowers, Director of Public Health

CONTACT OFFICER:

Denise Dixon, Public Health Principal

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

None.