

<b>Meeting Name:</b>	Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Date:</b>	14 November 2024
<b>Report title:</b>	Health Protection Annual Report 2023/24
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>	All
<b>Classification:</b>	Open
<b>Reason for lateness (if applicable):</b>	Not applicable
<b>From:</b>	Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health Southwark Council

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. The Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board notes the Health Protection Annual Report 2023/24 and health protection activity across the system during this period.
2. The Board agree to receive a health protection report annually.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3. Oversight and assurance of the local health protection system is via the Health Protection Board, established in July 2022 and chaired by the Director of Public Health.
4. The Health Protection Board approved the Health Protection Annual Report 2023/24 in September 2024.
5. This report provides an overview of activity, incidents, risks and achievements relating to health protection, infectious diseases, environmental risks and screening programmes in Southwark.

### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

6. The scale of potential health protection threats faced locally and globally is significant, ranging from emerging illnesses to adverse weather, antimicrobial resistance and chemical hazards. The impact of climate change is likely to amplify many of these threats.
7. The impacts of the pandemic continued in 2023/24, which exacerbated some health protection risks. Low vaccination rates, partly due to vaccine fatigue,

increased the risk of measles and whooping cough cases and outbreaks, and other infections remained in circulation, such as mpox and Group A Streptococcus.

8. There are many underlying and connecting themes, of which inequality and inclusion is particularly important. Addressing health inequalities and working closely with our communities is critical to improving and protecting the whole population.
9. It is evident that close partnership working promotes more effective management and mitigation of the impacts of health protection incidents. This is illustrated by the array of successful partnership working in place across the health protection system.
10. Horizon scanning and preparedness to mitigate the impacts of emerging infections and other health protection hazards remains of utmost importance.

### **Policy framework implications**

11. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) - the lead agency responsible for infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents - highlight three main goals in their 2023-26 strategy:
  - To be ready for and prevent future health security hazards.
  - To save lives and reduce harm through an effective response.
  - To build the UKs health security capacity.
12. The Future of the Health Protection System (FHPS) is a national collaboration between Health Protection strategic system partners to enhance the resilience, effectiveness & scalability of the national and local health protection system. It has a vision to enhance the current system to ensure it is locally delivered, regionally enabled, and nationally supported. Its ambition is to design, develop and deliver improvements to achieve a joint ambition of having the best possible health protection system for England.
13. This national vision and emphasis on effective and resilient health protection systems aligns with the local aim to support the UKHSA in protecting our residents, workforce and visitors to the borough against health protection threats.
14. The national risk register outlines some of the most serious risks facing the UK, including health protection threats such as pandemics, zoonotic illnesses and adverse weather. It highlights the importance of preparation and supporting communities.
15. More locally, the South East London Integrated Care System has a focus on protecting health and wellbeing and supporting people to stay healthy. Southwark Council is committed to a healthy environment for its residents, supporting families and investing in our communities.

## **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

### **Community impact statement**

16. Health protection action across the system requires close working with communities to ensure activities are tailored towards those individuals, groups and communities most at risk.
17. Throughout 2023/24 there are numerous examples of work done to collaborate with and understand the needs of communities, particularly more marginalised groups, to make our health protection response accessible and acceptable.

### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

18. Health protection programmes across Southwark strive to tackle inequalities of access and outcome at every opportunity.
19. Using a hyper-local approach, additional support and actions to mitigate impacts are taken with populations that have the poorest outcomes, with a focus on the most disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities in Southwark.

### **Health impact statement**

20. The aim of all areas of work contained in this report is to protect our residents, our workforce and visitors to the borough against health protection threats.

### **Climate change implications**

21. The impact of climate change is likely to amplify many health protection threats faced locally and globally making it essential to prepare for and respond to threats and risks as they arise.

### **Resource implications**

22. There are no direct resource implications arising as a result of this report.
23. Responding to emergencies and incidents as they arise requires additional staff time and resource across the system to support the response. The amount of resource required will vary depending on the incident.

### **Consultation**

24. The report was produced in collaboration with teams across the system, and relevant individuals and organisations were consulted with.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Head of Procurement

25. None sought.

### Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance

26. None sought.

### Strategic Director of Resources

27. None sought.

### Other officers

28. None sought.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Health Protection Annual Report 2023/24

## AUDIT TRAIL

*This section must be included in all reports.*

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Sarah Robinson, Senior Public Health Programme Manager (Health Protection and Screening)	
<b>Report Author</b>	Sarah Robinson, Senior Public Health Programme Manager (Health Protection and Screening)	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	September 2024	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Resources	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	1 November 2024	