

ORAL HEALTH PROMOTION UPDATE**Report of the Director of Health, Housing & Communities****1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To provide the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee with an update on the oral health promotion work following the publication of the Oral Health Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1. Local authorities are statutorily required to provide or commission oral health promotion programmes to improve the health of the local population. They are also required to provide or commission oral health surveys to facilitate assessment and monitoring of oral health needs and the planning and evaluation of oral health promotion programmes and dental surveys.

- 2.2. Sunderland's Oral Health Needs Assessment (OHNA) [OHNA Sunderland Sep23.pdf](#) was completed last year. The OHNA examined the status of oral health and identified effective interventions which informed Sunderland's Oral Health Strategy [oce23043_An_Oral_Health_Promotion_Strategy_A4.pdf \(sunderland.gov.uk\)](#).

- 2.3. Some of the key challenges the health needs assessment highlighted include issues in relation to accessing a dentist; evidence-based prevention schemes such as the Supervised Toothbrushing Programme which were halted during the lockdowns as schools were closed, and a growing divide in relation to poor oral health amongst those living in more deprived areas compared to those living in more affluent parts of the city.

3. Current Position

- 3.1. The strategy which aims to improve oral health of all people living in Sunderland describes the proven relationship between oral and general health. It places emphasis on working with our communities and partners to improve oral health through our oral health promotion programmes targeting vulnerable key groups that will help to address health inequalities.

- 3.2. These groups include young children, children in care for accommodation, people with diabetes, people who smoke, consume high quantities of alcohol or use drugs, people with a learning disability, older people and migrant/asylum seeker population.
- 3.3. A presentation attached to this report gives a brief overview of the national and local context around oral health and outlines the five strategic priorities including the objectives to support this work.
- 3.4. The presentation highlights the recommendations in the strategy and provides an update in response to these key areas.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the oral health promotion update.