

# Scrutiny Report



**18 July 2023**

## **Introducing the shared Public Health service and our priorities for 2023/24**

### **What we're here to do**

The Public Health service is shared with two of our neighbouring councils and we are here to improve the health and wellbeing of all children and adults living or working in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes.

Our biggest focus is on improving the health of those whose health is poorest. We can't do this on our own, so we need to work closely with colleagues in each of the three Councils and the NHS, as well as businesses and our residents.

### **We do this by:**

- Providing health improvement services such as smoking cessation, weight management, drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services, contraception and sexual health services, the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme and NHS Health Checks;
- Providing high quality evidence and data insights so that our councils and the NHS can understand health needs and make informed decisions;
- Collaborating with the NHS and other partners through the Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System (BLMK ICS) to increase the focus on prevention and health inequalities across health and care services;
- Working with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to ensure arrangements are in place to protect our residents from the impact of infectious disease and environmental hazards; and working with NHS England and the BLMK Integrated Care Board (ICB) to improve the uptake of screening and immunisations;
- Working with colleagues in planning, transport and housing and with workplaces to help create healthier places for people to live, learn, work and play.

## **Our resources**

The Public Health service is funded mainly by the public health ring-fenced grant from the Department of Health and Social Care. In 2023/24 Milton Keynes will receive £12.2m which must be spent on public health activities. Our three largest contracts account for more than half of our total budget: the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (£4.5m), contraception and sexual health services (£2.6m), and drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services (£2.1m). £1.3m is transferred to other council directorates and projects to support public health objectives, funding a range of programmes including Children's Centres, support for vulnerable adults, community engagement and improving health outcomes on regeneration estates in Milton Keynes.

## **Areas for development in 2023/24**

In 2023/24, the areas we will focus on for developing and improving our impact are as follows:

### **1. We will continue our focus on reducing health inequalities**

- We will work closely with the BLMK ICB to reduce health inequalities across our local authority areas, including inequalities in access to and quality of healthcare. We will lead the development of an ICS inequalities strategy, influence the allocation of NHSE funding intended to reduce inequalities, and identify evidence-based priorities for prevention.
- We will identify and address inequalities in access and provision to the health improvement services that we offer. When providing these services, we will focus on supporting those who are likely to have the greatest levels of need.
- We will support our new Public Health Outreach Officers to work with our communities, with a focus on engaging with underserved groups to increase access to preventative services.

### **2. We will increase the number of people engaging with our health improvement services and make sure they are as accessible as possible to those with the highest level of need**

- We will develop a new model of delivery to integrate our health improvement services (stop smoking, weight management and NHS Health Checks) and strengthen the links to primary care, social prescribing and NHS talking therapies. This will ensure that more people are able to easily access the services they need.
- Incorporating NHS Health Checks into the new delivery model will provide an alternative to residents attending their GP practice. This will create extra capacity and allow us to better identify and support those people with the greatest needs.

**3. We will work with council colleagues and wider partners to support the creation of healthier places for people to live, learn, work and play**

- Our Healthy Workplace Standards are one way we work with employers to create workplaces to support people's physical and mental health.
- We will continue to work with colleagues in planning, transport and housing to ensure that health is a prominent driver of policy-making in each council.
- We will expand our focus on food, including exploring the use of procurement to support healthy eating and restricting the promotion and advertising of unhealthy foods where possible.

**4. We will improve the use of data and population health management capacity across the ICS**

- We will work with the ICB to establish a joint Population Health Intelligence Unit, bringing together and supporting analysts from across BLMK in order to improve the quality and impact of population health analytics; making sure we are using the data we have to ask and answer the right questions.
- We will continue to transform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (<https://bmkjsna.org/milton-keynes/>), where we work with the ICB to assess the current and future health and care needs of the local community. We will launch a dedicated website to host our JSNA work, increasing its accessibility and impact.

**5. We will focus on specific priorities identified for each council through local Place Plans and Health & Wellbeing Strategies. These will intersect with priorities listed above and present opportunities to do things differently at a local level.**

- We will lead a focus on obesity, working with our partners in health to make it easier for people to make healthier choices and to support more people who choose to lose weight.
- We will continue our work to develop the offer for children and young people's mental health, working with partners in Children's Services, CNWL, the ICB and the voluntary sector, with a specific focus on prevention and early support.
- We will play an active part in Milton Keynes City Council's approach to integrated neighbourhood working, with an initial focus in Bletchley, working closely with the ICB, to strengthen preventative approaches and improve access to Primary Care.

**Other areas of change/additional work this year are:**

Alongside our focus on the development areas listed above, the following activities will be delivered this year:

- Contributing to the effective local delivery of the new Combatting Drugs Strategy arrangements, including taking forward actions identified in the delivery plan;
- Continuing to review the capacity of our commissioned/provided services in light of changes in demand and delivery following the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living pressures.
- We will work on transforming our public health preventative services offer, moving towards a more Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service, with a focus on Healthy Weight, Stop Smoking and NHS Health Checks.

## Contacting the Public Health team

You can reach us at [public.health@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:public.health@bedford.gov.uk) or you can contact the Director of Public Health or the Deputy Director of Public Health directly:

Vicky Head (pronouns she/her)  
 Director of Public Health  
[vicky.head@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:vicky.head@bedford.gov.uk)

Marimba Carr (pronouns she/her)  
 Deputy Director of Public Health  
[marimba.carr@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:marimba.carr@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## Public Health Commissioned Services and Work Areas

Service Area	Provider	Website	Summary of Offer
<b>0-5 Health Visiting</b>  <b>5-19 School Nursing</b>	Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust	<a href="https://www.mkchildrenshealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/">https://www.mkchildrenshealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/</a>  <a href="https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/childrens-health-and-wellbeing">https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/childrens-health-and-wellbeing</a>	<p>Health Visitors can support parents and children under 5 yrs. with a wide range of health issues, such as support with parenting, maternal mental health and infant feeding.</p> <p>School Nurses can support on a one to one basis, virtually or in school, where there is a need for talking therapy and guidance with issues of exam pressure, relationships and other health issues or conditions.</p>
<b>Contraception &amp; Sexual Health</b>	<b>iCaSH</b> Cambridge Community Services NHS Trust	<a href="https://www.icash.nhs.uk/where-to-go/icash-milton-keynes">https://www.icash.nhs.uk/where-to-go/icash-milton-keynes</a>	A free and confidential service that supports all aspects of sexual and reproductive health including contraception, sexually transmitted infection (STI) and HIV testing and treatment.
<b>Mental Wellbeing – Young People</b>	<b>Reflect</b> Mental Health Innovations	<a href="https://giveusashout.org/">https://giveusashout.org/</a>	Reflect is a free, confidential and 24/7 text support service delivered by trained volunteers and clinicians who are available around the clock to listen and support young people who are feeling anxious, lonely, overwhelmed or not quite themselves. It is part of the wider ‘all ages’ network of Shout services across the UK.

Service Area	Provider	Website	Summary of Offer
<b>NHS Health Checks</b>	GP Practices	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check">http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check</a>	A free check aimed at adults aged 40 to 74, to check their vascular or circulatory health. It's designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia.
<b>Oral Health Improvement</b>	<b>Milton Keynes Children and Family Centres</b> <b>CNWL Health Visitors and School Nurses (0-19 service)</b>	Top Tips for Teeth: <a href="https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/69-top-tips-for-teeth/resources">https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/69-top-tips-for-teeth/resources</a> <a href="https://www.mkchildrenshealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/parents-and-carers/health-and-wellbeing-zone/dental-health/">https://www.mkchildrenshealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/parents-and-carers/health-and-wellbeing-zone/dental-health/</a>	Oral Health promotion is embedded within the Children and Family Service offer and within the Health Visitor and School Nurse 0-19 service offer in Milton Keynes.
<b>Social Prescribing</b>	<b>Age UK Milton Keynes</b>	<a href="https://www.ageuk.org.uk/miltonkeynes/our-services/live-life-milton-keynes/">https://www.ageuk.org.uk/miltonkeynes/our-services/live-life-milton-keynes/</a>	Age UK Social Prescribers provide a personalised service to all adults 18+ living in Milton Keynes and registered with a GP.  They provide support to help residents improve everyday living, talking things through and helping with any worries they may have, and signposting to further support. This may be managing daily challenges; debt worries or housing problems.
<b>Stop Smoking</b>	Public Health Stop Smoking Team	<a href="http://www.thestopsmokingservice.co.uk">www.thestopsmokingservice.co.uk</a>	Specialist advisors offer free advice and support to help people to stop smoking.
	My Quit Route App	<a href="http://www.thestopsmokingservice.co.uk/2019/08/my-quit-route-app">www.thestopsmokingservice.co.uk/2019/08/my-quit-route-app</a>	A personalised programme, accessible 24/7 via an app which allows the person to self-assess their level of nicotine dependence, get advice on the dangers of continuing to smoke, receive tailored behaviour change support, track their progress and expenditure, plus relaxation techniques.
<b>Substance Misuse</b>	Addiction Recovery Community Milton Keynes (ARC-MK)	<a href="https://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/services/mental-health-services/addictions-and-substance-misuse/arc-milton-keynes">https://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/services/mental-health-services/addictions-and-substance-misuse/arc-milton-keynes</a>	A free, confidential service for adults at any stage of their alcohol or drug difficulties. A single point of access offers assessment and treatment for both substance misuse and associated emotional / mental health needs.

Service Area	Provider	Website	Summary of Offer
	SAMAS	<a href="http://www.communityled.org.uk">www.communityled.org.uk</a>	Provides peer led recovery support to individuals, carers and family members. SAMAS mentors offer one to one mentoring support, provide links into community resources and group activities.
<b>Substance Misuse – Young People</b>	Milton Keynes City Council	<a href="https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/support-drugs-alcohol-and-gambling/drugs-alcohol-and-young-people">https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/support-drugs-alcohol-and-gambling/drugs-alcohol-and-young-people</a>	The service works with young people who are affected by their own, or someone else's, substance use or those who would like to gain more knowledge, whether they use substances or not. The team also provide drug and alcohol awareness sessions to professionals, schools, individuals and groups.
<b>Veterans – Armed Forces</b>	National portal	<a href="http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk">www.veteransgateway.org.uk</a>	Website available 24/7 and provides the first port of call for information and support for veterans and their families.
<b>Weight Management</b>	MoreLife UK Ltd	<a href="http://www.more-life.co.uk/what-we-do/our-services/in-your-area/bedsmk">www.more-life.co.uk/what-we-do/our-services/in-your-area/bedsmk</a>	Free weight management programmes for people of all ages, which create long-lasting shifts in behaviour and give individuals and families the tools and support they need to achieve their health goals.
<b>Workplace Health</b>	Public Health Workplace Health Team	<a href="http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and">www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and</a>	The team works directly with local workplaces and a range of local service providers to boost employee health and wellbeing. This includes implementation of a best practice framework and award scheme, free health and wellbeing training and support for employees to adopt a healthy lifestyle.