

# North Yorkshire County Council

## Health and Wellbeing Board

9 May 2014

### Health Protection Assurance Arrangements

#### Report of the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of report</b>
1.1	The paper outlines the arrangements for ensuring that residents of North Yorkshire are protected from health threats including major emergencies and describes the process for providing assurance to North Yorkshire County Council that these arrangements fulfil its duty for health protection of the population.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 placed a duty on local authorities in England to protect the health of the local population. This duty is discharged through the Director of Public Health (DPH) who is responsible for ensuring that North Yorkshire County Council and partners, including District Councils, Public Health England and the NHS, plan for, and respond to incidents that present a threat to the public's health.
- 2.2 Health protection is the area of public health that is concerned with preventing or reducing harm caused by communicable diseases and minimising the health impact from environmental hazards such as chemicals and radiation. It includes national programmes such as immunisation as well as local provision of services to diagnose and treat infectious diseases. Health protection also involves planning, surveillance and response to incidents and outbreaks.
- 2.2 In discharging their duty, local authorities should produce a health protection plan which may be an overarching health protection assurance framework agreed with local stakeholders to include:
- Identification of key elements of health protection, with appropriate lead,
  - Assessment of risks for each element of health protection and control measures in place,
  - Mechanisms to monitor health protection risks which should be reviewed on a regular basis, or at least annually, and
  - Governing arrangements to oversee health protection work e.g. health protection assurance group.

### **3.0 Health Protection Assurance Framework**

3.1 Directors of Public Health across North Yorkshire, York and the Humber have adopted a common health protection assurance framework initially developed by colleagues in South Yorkshire. This framework has been tailored to individual local authorities to suit local situations. The key elements of the framework are:

- Prevention
  - Vaccination and Immunisation
  - Screening – nationally defined and commissioned cancer and non-cancer programmes
  - Infection prevention and control (IPC) – usually within the health and care setting
  - Environment, enforcement, trading standards, food, animal health, water, and health & safety
  - Drugs and substance misuse
  - Prevention of injury including Suicide prevention
  - Sexual health
- Emergency preparedness, resilience, and response (EPRR)
- Incidents and outbreaks
- Surveillance

### **4.0 Arrangements for identifying and managing risks**

4.1 Responsibilities for planning and responding to health protection risks across North Yorkshire rest with several agencies and partnerships. Relationships and arrangements continue to develop after 1 April 2013 when upper tier local authorities, Public Health England, NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) took on new responsibilities for Health Protection.

4.2 There is clear leadership for most areas of the Health Protection Assurance Framework but greater clarity is needed about countywide leadership for infection prevention and control in a county with 6 CCGs. With two tiers of local government, the same clarity is needed for issues related to environmental health, enforcement, trading standards, food, animal health, water, and health & safety where responsibilities rest with seven Districts as well as the County Council.

4.3 For all areas of the Health Protection Assurance Framework, groups and structures are in place which can identify and manage risks in relevant areas. However, some of these arrangements are historical and need to be reviewed in light of post-April 2013 changes. Further assurance is needed that existing groups and structures have a formal process for identifying, managing and reviewing risks.

### **5.0 Governance arrangements**

5.1 It is proposed that the DPH will chair of a local Health Protection Assurance Group to meet 6-monthly to formally review health protection arrangements and agree Statements of Assurance for the Council and Health and Wellbeing Board. This group will have representatives from relevant lead agencies.

- 5.2 The DPH, on behalf of the local authority, will raise issues and concerns with agencies where assurance of the delivery of their health protection responsibilities is inadequate. Responsibility for responding appropriately to the information and advice of the local authority (and accountability for any adverse impact if that advice is not heeded) rests with these agencies.

**6.0 Recommendation(s)**

- 6.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:
- note the current arrangements for assuring the health protection responsibilities of the Council and,
  - support the proposal for a local Health Protection Assurance Group of representatives from relevant lead agencies and chaired by the DPH to meet 6-monthly to formally review health protection arrangements and agree Statements of Assurance for the Council and Health and Wellbeing.

Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire

County Hall  
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9 May 2014