



Meeting:	Council
Meeting date:	16 July 2026
Report of:	Peter Roderick, Director of Public Health
Portfolio of:	Councillor Steels-Walshaw, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/26

Subject of Report

1. Under section 31 of the Health and Care Act 2012, each Director of Public Health must produce (and their local authority must publish) an annual report on the health of the local population.
2. This report presents the 2025/26 Director of Public Health Annual report to Council: *You Bet, They Win: Gambling Harms in York*.

Benefits and Challenges

3. An assessment of the health needs of the population is a prerequisite for the council to fulfil its duties under the NHS Act 2006 to improve the health of the public. This assessment, in turn, highlights strengths within our population's health as well as challenges relating to the increasing levels of ill health, the effect of poverty and inequality on health, and the wider determinants within society which create the conditions for health.

Policy Basis for Decision

4. The publication of an Annual Report enables a focus on one or more areas of health in the city, highlighting areas for action from the council and from partners.
5. This year's report focusses on gambling harm, and covers issues relating to the core commitments within the Council Plan 2023-

2027, including **affordability** and cost of living issues faced by those who gamble, **equalities** and the way gambling affects some communities disproportionately, and, of course, **health** harms, which are outlined extensively in the report.

Financial Strategy Implications

6. There are no direct financial implications involved in publishing this report. The recommendations made by the report are all funded through existing and approved programmes within public health and other partner resources, including the OHID Local Government Act 2003: Section 31 local authority grant for preventing Gambling Related Harms 2026-2028, which is worth £33,022 to York in 2026/27.

Recommendation and Reasons

7. Council is recommended to publish the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/26.

Reason: To fulfil its duty under the Health and Care Act 2012, and to progress work on improving the health of young people in the city.

Background

8. The substance of this report is found in Annex A, the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/26.
9. Whilst DPH annual reports can focus on a broad overview of health, they frequently choose a topic or theme to focus on. This year, the topic is 'You Bet, They Win: Gambling Harms in York'
10. The report outlines the harms to health and wellbeing in York which are driven by the gambling industry. Gambling products have evolved and morphed over the last few decades, with powerful new technologies and insights into human behaviour and addiction meaning that huge sums of money can now be extracted from vulnerable people like never before (industry profits have doubled in 15 years from £8bn to £15bn).
11. What is becoming clear is that gambling and betting can lead to financial catastrophe, suicide, relationship breakdown,

homelessness, early death, and wider societal harms. These issues affect a sizeable proportion of the UK population, with an estimated 1 in 9 directly or indirectly affected by gambling.

12. The report identifies a framework of **six areas** to focus on in our response to preventing gambling harm in York and makes **ten recommendations**.

Consultation Analysis

13. The report was produced after a series of consultation and engagement opportunities, to inform its contents. This includes engagement events with key third sector and partner groups including direct conversations with people affected by gambling to gain their lived experience, a professional survey on the topic, and use of data from a number of sources such as GPs and the Schools Health and Wellbeing Survey.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

14. Given the statutory duty for the council to publish this report, that is the only option available to Council.

Organisational Impact and Implications

- ***Financial***

There are no direct financial implications involved in publishing this report. The recommendations made by the report are all funded through existing and approved programmes within public health and other partner resources. Any assessment of health need inevitably highlights the severe financial strain the health and care system in York faces, in line with national pressures.

- ***Human Resources (HR)***

There are no direct HR implications of publishing an Annual Report.

- ***Legal***

The publication of this Annual Report by the council is a statutory duty under section 31 of the Health and Care Act 2012.

- ***Procurement***

There are no direct procurement implications of publishing an Annual Report.

- ***Health and Wellbeing***

The publication of this report is intended to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents through raising key issues affecting the health and wellbeing of young people, and making recommendations.

- ***Environment and Climate action***

It is clear that climate breakdown is a key issue for our young people, as the generation most likely to be affected. The report draws attention to the need to balance realism around this situation with a sense of hope and capitalising on the positive activism and solutions that future generation in York will bring.

- ***Affordability***

The report reports on the impact of poverty and low income on young people, and the adverse consequences on their health, and makes recommendations which aim to address these.

- ***Equalities and Human Rights***

There are no direct equalities implications of making the decision to publish this report, and no EIA is therefore required. However, equalities issues are key in tackling poorer health in our younger people, including disparities of health around gender and ethnicity, and this report lays these issues out.

- ***Data Protection and Privacy***

There are no direct data protection implications of publishing an Annual Report.

- ***Communications***

There are no direct communications implications of publishing an Annual Report.

- ***Economy***

There are no direct economy implications of publishing an Annual Report.

Risks and Mitigations

15. There are no risks associated with the publication of this annual report.

Wards Impacted

16. This report covers all wards in York.

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

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Annexes

- Annex A: Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025/6