



Wellbeing Board

Date	6 March 2024
Report title	Implementing Health in All Policies and Joint Reporting: Discussion
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Report has been considered by	None

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- (1) Review the approach taken in implementing a Health in All Policies approach, in line with previous board reports.
- (2) Note the example of working with Housing, Property and Regeneration.
- (3) Advise on potential collaboration, joint working and propagation of work from across West Midlands Combined Authority region partners

1.0 Purpose

- 1.0 To provide an update on the implementation of a Health in All Policies approach within the West Midlands Combined Authority. It highlights this through the example of work with Housing, Property, and Regeneration Directorate. Additionally, the paper seeks to garner insights and recommendations from the Wellbeing Board on enhancing collaborative efforts, expanding joint working initiatives, and further disseminating successful practices across the West Midlands Combined Authority region to strengthen the overall impact of our Health in All Policies approach on public health and wellbeing.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In a paper presented at the Wellbeing Board on 18 January, 2022, details were presented on how the West Midlands Combined Authority planned to take forward the agreed wellbeing priorities across West Midlands Combined Authority areas of responsibilities, including transport, housing, skills, energy and the environment, to act on health inequalities across the wider determinants of health, using a Health in All Policies Approach.
- 2.2 The Wellbeing Board has since received several updates on how this approach has been tested, refined and progressed across various areas of work, including incorporation of the Health Equity Assessment Tool with the Equalities Impact Assessment into an Health and Equalities Impact Assessment, which has been embedded within the governance structure of the West Midlands Combined Authority Single Assurance Framework. It has also included examples of work done with Transport and influencing various policies like the Local Transport Plan.
- 2.3 At the last Wellbeing Board in December 2023, we proposed taking forward plans to have a more defined approach to Health in All Policies, with a clearer focus on joint working, shared outcomes and joint accountability. This paper will build on this and showcase the beginning of implementation of this approach with Housing, Property and Regeneration Directorate.

3.0 Health in All Policies

- 3.1 Health in All Policies approach is a foundational strategy designed to embed health considerations into every aspect of policymaking, with the ultimate goal of improving the wellbeing of its population and reducing health inequalities. This approach is crucial because it acknowledges that health outcomes are not solely the result of healthcare services but are significantly influenced by a range of social, economic, and environmental factors.

- 3.2 By adopting Health in All Policies, the West Midlands Combined Authority is committed to addressing these wider determinants of health through a comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategy that spans across housing, transportation, education, and employment policies, among others. It also builds upon and systematically embeds ongoing work within the West Midlands Combined Authority that impacts on health, like our Thrive into Work and Thrive at Work programmes within Employment and Skills, but also more strategic organisation wide approaches like Inclusive Growth.
- 3.3 A Health in All Policies approach seeks to create a collaborative framework where these determinants are addressed in a holistic and integrated manner, ensuring that health and equity are considered in decision-making across all sectors. Implementing Health in All Policies within the West Midlands Combined Authority involves several key aspects:
- 3.3.1 Cross-Sectoral Collaboration:** Recognising that no single sector can improve health outcomes alone, Health in All Policies fosters collaboration across different sectors and levels of government/agencies/departments. This involves the creation of partnerships with other directorates within West Midlands Combined Authority to ensure that health considerations are integrated into all areas of policy.
- 3.3.2 Policy Coherence:** Health in All Policies promotes policy coherence across the board, ensuring that policies in non-health sectors do not negatively impact health outcomes and where possible, contribute positively to them. This requires a comprehensive review and adjustment of existing policies, as well as the design of new policies with health considerations at their core, which will take time to implement, but starts with the commitment to work together.
- 3.3.3 Integration with Inclusive Growth:** The West Midlands Combined Authority's Inclusive Growth Framework is structured using Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economics Model to group the Sustainable Development Goals in a way which relates to West Midlands Combined Authorities functions, creating 8 'fundamentals', or missions, that we focus on to build a fairer, greener, healthier and better connected West Midlands. The Health and Wellbeing Fundamental aims to reduce avoidable differences in health outcomes so that everyone can live longer, healthier, and happier lives. The Framework acknowledges that not everyone will have or be able to work towards optimal health but should still be supported to maximise their potential and their quality of life. It also recognises that a healthy and resilient population can be a foundation of creating and maintaining an inclusive economy. We intend to build on this to amplify the health and wellbeing implications, supporting colleagues across the West Midlands Combined Authority with the arguments, evidence, tools, and best practice they need to tackle health inequalities through their work, at pace and at scale. Adopting a Health in All Policies approach is a means by which the West Midlands Combined Authority can develop and implement policy that not only improves health outcomes but aligns and contributes to all of the eight inclusive growth fundamentals.

3.3.4 Evidence-Based Decision Making: By integrating health considerations into policy making across sectors, we aim to create the conditions that promote equitable access, healthier environments, and economic opportunities for everyone, contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable region. This relies on evidence to inform policy decisions, incorporating data and research to understand health impacts and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies in improving health outcomes. As such, our Health of the Region Report will outline logic models for a systematic process that enables us to formulate a sequence of educated conjectures regarding the implementation of Health in All Policies across the West Midlands Combined Authority, establishing critical connections between policy objectives and the region's longer-term health and health equity.

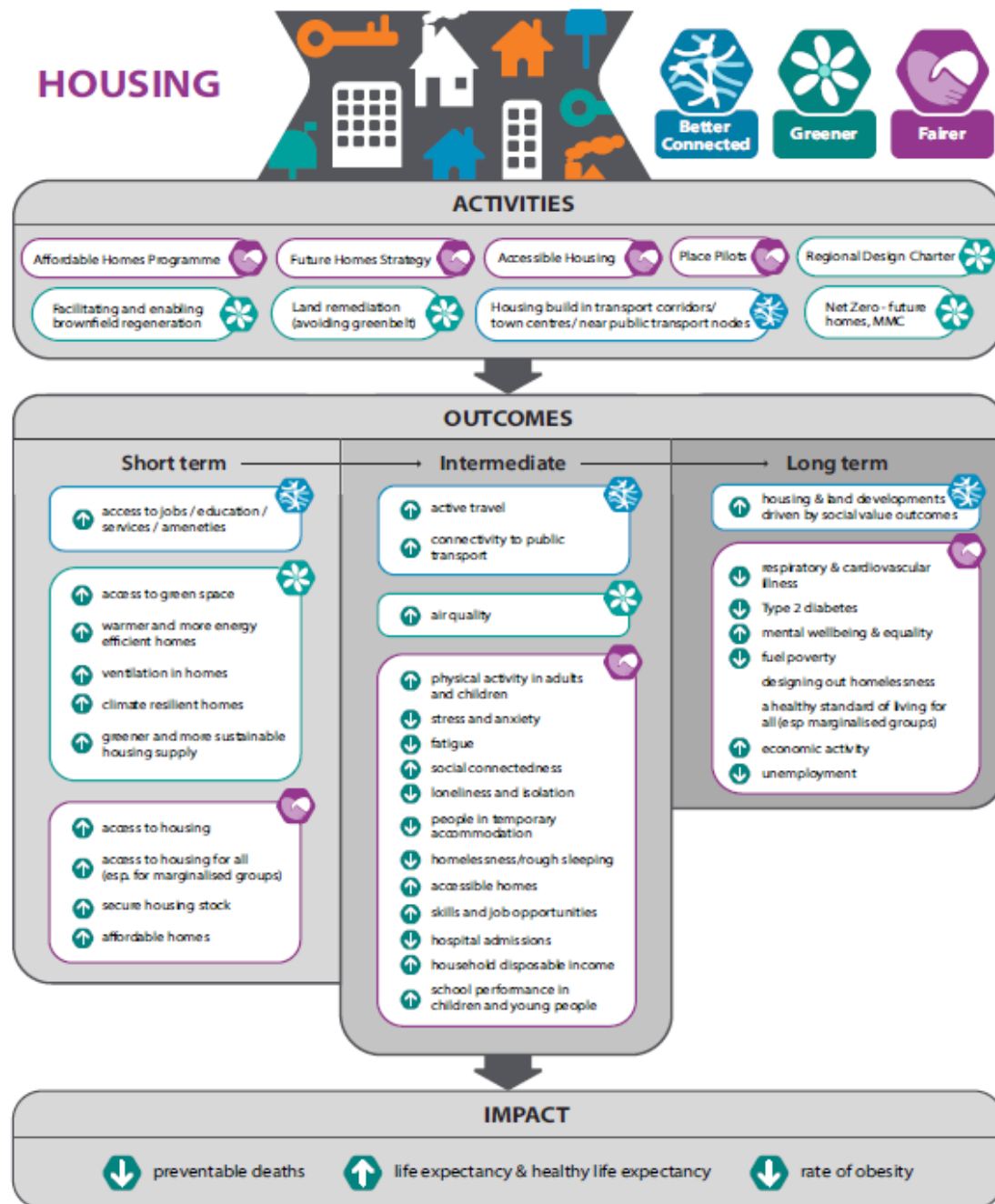
4.0 Joint Working to Embed Health in All Policies

4.1 One of the keys to ensuring sustainable action through Health in All Policies is to build it around ways of working that encourage joint decision making, accountability, shared outcomes and truly collaborative learning. An approach to put this in action within the West Midlands Combined Authority has been with the Housing, Property and Regeneration Directorate. Recognising that housing is a critical determinant of health, we have approached this joint working through:

4.1.1 Close Working: A senior policy officer from the health and communities team has been embedded within the housing team to ensure a direct line of develop understanding and collaborative working. This role is pivotal in integrating health considerations into housing policies, planning, and development processes such as the impact of the Affordable Housing Strategy and refresh of the West Midlands Combined Authority's Design Charter.

4.1.2 Shared Evidence, Indicators and Objectives: The health and housing teams have collaboratively developed a logic model (see Figure 1) that outlines shared objectives and indicators aimed at improving health outcomes through housing interventions, creating the evidence base, learning and long term impact. This model serves as a roadmap for aligning efforts and measuring progress toward these objectives. Also bringing supplementary evidence to inform policy e.g Accessible Housing supply and demand analysis.

4.1.3 Shared Accountability and added value: A dedicated sub-group is planned, bringing together stakeholders from both sectors to oversee the implementation of the shared objectives. The planned sub-group will be jointly accountable to the Wellbeing and Housing thematic boards, ensuring that both health and housing perspectives are considered in decision-making processes. We have also ensured regional alignment, with the Black Country Integrated Care Board Health and Housing Forum, ensuring there is connectivity between sub-regional and regional priorities.



Causality is underpinned by a range of evidence sources:
[Housing insecurity and mental health: The impact of homelessness on health](#); [Is housing a health insult?](#); [Generation COVID-19: How does housing influence our health?](#)

Figure 1 - Housing and Health Logic Model from Health of the Region 2024 Report (yet to be published)

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this paper, as the West Midlands Combined Authority will only be providing support from existing budgets and resource for the Health in All Policies approach.

5.2 If there are financial requests in the future this should follow West Midlands Combined Authority governance processes and demonstrate value for money.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 It is a statutory requirement that the combined authority has a governance framework in place. Whilst the wellbeing board is not a decision-making board, one of its functions is to provide co-ordination and direction on strategic matters relating to the portfolio needs of the region.

7.0 Equalities Implications to update

7.1 Shifting focus towards health inequalities and the proposed workstreams is likely to have positive impact on race, disability and other protected groups more likely to be affected by health inequalities. Any major project launched as a result of this approach should and will include a complete Health and Equalities Impact Assessment.

8.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

8.1 Reducing health inequality is the headline outcome of the Health & Wellbeing fundamental of the Inclusive Growth Framework. It states “Avoidable differences in health outcomes are reduced so that everyone can live longer, healthier, and happier lives”, and it is therefore right that it is a high priority for the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Wellbeing team, with a substantial work programme aligned to it. Focusing on where the West Midlands Combined Authority can use its capacity and convening role to add value is consistent with the West Midlands Combined Authority’s overall approach to inclusive growth, which requires thoughtful collaboration as a means to pooling and creating different types of value.

8.2 As the work programme is developed and delivered, the inclusive growth implications of each element can be examined in more detail.

9.0 Geographical Area of Report’s Implications

9.1 The work of the Wellbeing Board applies to relevant activity across both constituent and non-constituent areas.

10.0 Schedule of Background Papers

10.1 None.