

**From:** Dan Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health  
Dr Anjan Ghosh, Director of Public Health

**To:** Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee – 17 September 2024

**Subject:** **Public Health Communications and Campaigns Update**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** None

**Future Pathway of Paper:** None

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** This paper reports on the campaigns and communications activity delivered through the Public Health Team in 2024 and outlines plans for the remainder of the financial year.

The report notes the ongoing health protection communications (heat health and vaccinations) and other Public Health priorities. A campaign completed over summer to raise awareness of alcohol consumption, mental health awareness days activity and planning for increased campaign activity to promote stop smoking services in Quarters 3 and 4 2024/2025

**Recommendation:** The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the progress of Public Health communications and campaigns in 2024 and the need to continue to deliver throughout 2024/2025.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Marketing and Communications activity continues to play a critical role in supporting the people of Kent and providing trusted, timely information throughout the year.
- 1.2 Our communications includes both reactive and proactive support. Through reactive communications such as media opportunities and amplifying partner content we can inform the people of Kent on the impact of severe weather, Covid-19 and other infectious outbreaks. This year there has been an increase in whooping cough cases and measles outbreaks in children and young people. Between April – August 2024, Kent County Council (KCC)'s Marketing and Resident Experience team has shared 15 media releases and coordinated 6 media interviews across the health and wellbeing portfolio.

- 1.3 Proactive campaign activity supports the public health division in reaching the people of Kent. KCC provides trusted information and signposting to preventative services including lifestyle services such as weight management, stop smoking services, sexual health, drugs and alcohol, children and family public health services (health visiting and school nursing).
- 1.4 We support the work to reduce health inequalities within Kent, using targeted communications methods to reach different geographical areas and groups of individuals across the county.
- 1.5 Our statutory warn-and-inform responsibilities, as lead for the Kent Resilience Forum Outbreak Control Management Plan, has seen KCC's Director of Public Health and the KCC communications team at the forefront of media and Public Relations (PR), social media and marketing, stakeholder and partnership engagement.
- 1.3 As we work across public health communications, we can identify opportunities to work more efficiently where we want to reach similar audiences. This also helps us purchase advertising space at more competitive rates.
- 1.4 Marketing and Communication activity has continued to focus on three main drivers:
- Promoting healthier behaviours and self help
  - Giving information and advice
  - Promoting local services where available and also highlighting online and digital support.
- 1.5 This paper covers communications activity for 2024, along with key activities and plans for this financial year.

## **2. Public Health Campaigns and Communications 2024/2025**

### **2.1 Overview of activity from April 2024:**

- Alcohol awareness summer campaign – promoting the 'Know Your Score' online tool and local support services
- Health protection – summer health (heat health alerts), whooping cough and Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccinations and air quality.
- Mental health and wellbeing – promotion of 'Release the Pressure' helpline and text service, Every Mind Matters online tool and Live Well Kent Services
- Healthy weight – National Walking Month, 'One You Kent' local support services and promote online tools
- Smoking cessation – targeted signposting to 'One You Kent' local support services

### **2.2 Alcohol Reduction – 'Know Your Score' online tool promotion app**

- 2.2.1 A campaign to promote the 'Know Your Score' Audit C online tool at [www.kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore](http://www.kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore) has been developed to support a summer awareness raising campaign in line with Alcohol Awareness Week in July through to August. During Alcohol Awareness Week, we generated 15,000 impressions with 300 engagements over Facebook and X.
- 2.2.2 Key messages continue to raise awareness among all adults about long term health messages linked to alcohol, including the risk of stroke, and the impacts on mental health, work and relationships. Content is focused around key behaviours with some targeted assets for parents and middle aged men. Channels for promotion included audio (DAX, Heart FM, Spotify), digital (Mobile alerts, Mumsnet, Facebook, Instagram and geo-targeted mobile adverts) along with media and PR opportunities and sharing encouraged by partners across Kent. A further campaign burst is due to run in January, signposting to support services through commissioned providers Change Grow Live (CGL), Forward Trust and One You Kent.
- 2.2.3 Interim campaign data as of 14 August 2024:
- 3,374 webpage views: [kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore](http://kent.gov.uk/knowyourscore)
  - 550 webpage views: [kent.gov.uk/lowermydrinking](http://kent.gov.uk/lowermydrinking)
  - 1,546 'Know Your Score' Quiz completions through the website (1,455 of these between July-Aug to date as part of paid campaign activity). Data shows an increase in completions of the Know Your Score quiz compared to the same period in 2023.

## **2.3 Health Protection – Heat health alerts, vaccinations and air quality**

- 2.3.1 Throughout the summer we have reshared the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Met Office warnings about hot weather and 'Heat Health Alerts', and we generated our own refreshed content for social media and [kent.gov.uk/heatwave](http://kent.gov.uk/heatwave). Through organic KCC social media (posted directly from KCC channels), we have reached 56,000 people and engaged with 1,500 people this to date. The Director of Public Health (KCC) features in heat alert videos issued to help inform the public and support those more vulnerable.
- 2.3.2 Due to a national rise in Measles, we have been working closely with the Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) and NHS partners to promote community clinics where people aged under 19 can get a Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination. Media releases alongside NHS and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) social media posts were shared to raise awareness of this issue and ways to get vaccinated.
- 2.3.3 With whooping cough cases continuing to rise across England, a joint media release with Kent and Medway NHS was shared to increase vaccinations with pregnant women and children. The Deputy Director of Public Health at KCC completed an interview on BBC Kent and UK Health Security Agency social media content was also shared.

- 2.3.4 Video content was co-created with the Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) community to highlight the importance of immunisations such as MMR (Measles Mumps and Rubella) and Whooping cough to protect their families. A member of the GRT community took part in the filming and was integral in sharing these videos across GRT groups/networks to raise awareness and engage with the community.
- 2.3.5 As part of 'Clean air day' on 20 June 2024, social media content was shared across channels and with partners over the week. Signposting to [kent.gov.uk/cleanairday](https://kent.gov.uk/cleanairday), tools to help you walk/cycle more (Kent Connected) and the Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership air-quality email alerts. These generated 14,974 impressions with 130 engagements over Facebook and X and were shared across partners channels. A media release was also shared - [Celebrate Clean Air Day - News & Features - Kent County Council](#)
- 2.3.6 Where possible, health inequality research and lived experience form the basis of campaign and communications engagement, finding new innovative ways to reach people who are most at risk of serious illness.

## **2.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing – Release the Pressure, Live Well Kent & Every Mind Matters**

- 2.4.1 Communications for Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) in May signposted to local support services including Live Well Kent, One You Kent and Every Mind Matters at [www.kent.gov.uk/everymindmatters](https://www.kent.gov.uk/everymindmatters). This also coincided with 'Hoarding Week' supported via social media through the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB). We also reshared content through Mind, promoting their mental health online training. During MHAW, we generated over 20,000 impressions through our social media posts and over 200 engagements.
- 2.4.2 Themes have included tackling loneliness, and finding tools and local support to empower people to find help with anxiety, stress, low mood and sleep issues.
- 2.4.3 The 2024 Better Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Grants were given to support suicide prevention across Kent and Medway. This was promoted with a media release - [Grants to support suicide prevention and give hope - News & Features - Kent County Council](#)
- 2.4.4 In preparation for World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) on 10 September 2024, the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Programme commissioned a follow up film to the one released 4 years ago, featuring updated stories from the Living Warriors talking about their lived experience around mental health and suicide. This is currently in editing and due to be released on World Suicide Prevention Day, with wider communications promoting Mind Suicide prevention training and 'Release the Pressure' signposting.
- 2.4.5 KCC Public Health has ongoing promotion of the suicide prevention 'Release the Pressure' campaign through Social media and Google AdWords.

- 2.4.6 Advertising boards at selected football grounds in areas of deprivation have also been agreed to target males, with Dartford FC, Folkestone Invicta FC and Dover Athletic FC featuring 'Release the Pressure' pitch side advertising boards and match day programme ads for the 2024/2025 season. Further targeted paid-for promotion is being planned for December and January. In the 2023/2024 season attendance at these clubs combined achieved approximately 50,000 visitors.
- 2.4.7 We also shared promotion of partners' campaigns such as Kooth mental wellbeing for children and young people.

## **2.5 Healthy Weight - One You Kent/Better Health**

- 2.5.1 New creative assets including animated videos have been developed with One You Kent partners to promote physical activity and healthy eating including meals on a budget. Creative targets older adults and families.
- 2.5.2 Animated videos and images are planned to be shared in GP surgeries, through social media and selected paid for advertising screens in hospitals in Kent.
- 2.5.3 As part of 'National Walking Month' in May, we created a social media tool kit for our social channels and to share through our 'One You Kent' and NHS partners. The content included links to 'Kent Connected' the free walking app, local walking groups and 'Living Streets' who lead the awareness month. Over May, we reached 23,000 people with our social media content.
- 2.5.4 We also share promotion of partner's campaigns around healthy weight and staying active for children and families through Better Health Families and KCC partners.

## **2.6 Smoking Cessation – One You Kent services promotion**

- 2.6.1 As part of our ongoing social media activity, we share content around stop smoking services signposting to One You Kent commissioned support services. Key messages focus on the physical and mental health harms of smoking plus the financial impact and the quitting benefits to these. The call to action signposts people to [www.kent.gov.uk/smokefree](http://www.kent.gov.uk/smokefree) where they can refer to the One You Kent support services plus self-help tools including the NHS Quit Plan app.
- 2.6.2 Between 1 April 2024 and 14 August 2024 there have been 2,056 webpage views: [kent.gov.uk/smokefree](http://kent.gov.uk/smokefree) (41% increase in visits compared to the same period in 2023).
- 2.6.3 As a result of additional central Government funding , we have been planning multichannel campaigns across Kent and targeting key audiences in areas of deprivation and targeted elements to reach routine and manual workers. This includes brand awareness activity such as stadium advertising and google

ads and well as targeted advertising through social media and digital channels.

- 2.6.4 New creative materials such as videos from people who have quit smoking through One You Kent service are currently being planned for September ahead of 'Stoptober' and another campaign in the New year (January).

### **3. Integrated Care System**

- 3.1 KCC plays an integral role in how the health and care system communicates with the public As the Integrated Care Board develops its delivery plans, an engagement programme is being planned to support the development of the key themes and priorities. The first piece of activity planned is to engage with people in Kent to understand more about how current factors are affecting their wellbeing. This engagement will help KCC to shape future Public Health priorities and will provide meaningful qualitative feedback to ensure that the person's voice plays a critical role in decision making within the Integrated Care System. More information on the engagement programme will be provided in future reports.
- 3.2 KCC Marketing and Resident Experience Team is a key member of the Communications and Engagement Board which reports directly to the Integrated Care Board and Steering Group and continues to play an integral role in planning and delivering integrated communications activity to people across Kent.

### **4. Financial update**

- 4.1 £110,000 has been allocated to campaign and marketing activity in 2024/25 which some additional funds available directly from service budgets.

### **5. Conclusion and Next Steps**

- 5.1 We continue to develop key Public Health campaigns based on priorities identified by the Director of Public Health. These include:
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
  - Start for Life (Family Hubs)
  - Obesity – adult and children
  - Smoking
  - Alcohol
  - Breastfeeding and infant feeding
  - Seasonal health – heatwave and winter
  - Sexual health
- 5.2 Data, insight and localised information is used to shape these campaigns.
- 5.3 Previous successes and learning will be integrated in future campaigns, focusing on the most effective communications methods and channels to

target key groups and issue areas, and on the benefits of developing and utilising social media and digital platforms.

- 5.4 It has long been recognised that long-term change requires long term, consistent messaging, and it is important to continue working with local partners and nationally with UK Health Security Health Agency (UKHSA) to create and deliver consistent Public Health campaigns and marketing activity.

## 6. Recommendation

**Recommendation:** The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to:

**NOTE** the progress of Public Health communications and campaigns in 2024 and the need to continue to deliver throughout 2024/25.

## 7. Report Author

Jo Allen  
Marketing and Resident Experience Partner  
03000 415773  
[jo.allen@kent.gov.uk](mailto:jo.allen@kent.gov.uk)

Lucie Beer  
Campaigns and Communications Manager  
03000 414586  
[Lucie.beer@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Lucie.beer@kent.gov.uk)

### Relevant Director

Dr Anjan Ghosh  
Director of Public Health  
03000 416659  
[Anjan.ghosh@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Anjan.ghosh@kent.gov.uk)