

## **Appendix 7 - Public Health**

Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity: Cllr Adam Dance

Executive Director: Professor Trudi Grant

Deputy Director Public Health: Lou Woolway

### **2023/24 Public Health as at the end of March 2024 (month 12)**

- 2023/24 Net Budget £1m, £0.1m favourable variance, £0.1m favourable movement from month ten
- 2022/23 Net Budget £1.3m, no variance at outturn

### **Public Health - key explanations, actions & mitigating controls**

A number of vacant posts within the service has resulted in savings on employee budgets funded from the Public Health Grant, resulting in an £0.1m underspend. Contractual spend has diminished as we strive towards a new targeted operating model to improve the health of our residents across the county. The Somerset Council funding managed by Public Health is anticipated to remain on budget.

### **Public Health - key risks, future issues & opportunities**

Both the Public Health Grant and the Somerset Council funding managed by Public Health are facing significant future pressure caused by contract and pay inflationary increases. This pressure will intensify following an early indication of a 1% increase to the Public Health Grant for the 2024/25 financial year which is again significantly below inflation.

There is a systemic underfunding of public health in Somerset. The Public Health Grant is significantly below the national average being 141<sup>st</sup> out of 153 local authorities nationally. Improvements in whole population health are not achievable within the constraints of the public health budget. A new operating model for public health is underway in order to focus the activity of the Public Health Team towards influencing policy, commissioning and spend right across the Somerset system towards improving health and tackling inequalities.