

HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 JUNE 2026

ORAL HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY 2026 – 2029

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To share the draft Darlington Oral Health Promotion Strategy (2026 – 2029) for review and consideration.

Summary

2. Good oral health is an important part of someone's overall health and wellbeing. Oral health promotion is part of the public health responsibilities of the local authority, and the Oral Health Promotion Strategy sets out a vision for a future where everyone has the knowledge, resources and support to maintain good oral health throughout life, recognising that prevention is far more effective and less costly than treatment.
3. The priorities set out in the strategy are based upon the principles of prevention, addressing inequalities and collaboration. A life course approach is taken, with a key focus on:
 - (a) reducing childhood tooth decay and tooth extractions in children due to decay
 - (b) improving oral health care for older people in residential care
 - (c) increasing awareness of oral health promotion messages
 - (d) reducing oral health inequalities through targeted interventions for vulnerable groups
4. Delivery of the strategy will support the Council's plans to reduce inequalities and deliver on ambitions for local people to live well and stay healthy.
5. The strategy has been developed in partnership with others through the establishment of an Oral Health Alliance, which has included public health and wider council colleagues, NHS services such as the oral health team, 0-19 service and stop smoking service, the primary care network, health watch and voluntary and community sector representation.
6. Delivery of the strategy will also support the work of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, which has responsibility for dentistry services.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that :-

- (a) Members review the Oral Health Promotion Strategy
- (b) Members share any comments or feedback on the Oral Health Promotion Strategy

Lorraine Hughes
Director of Public Health

Background Papers

Oral Health Promotion Strategy

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Council Plan	The strategy supports the Council Plan ambition of living well and staying healthy.
Addressing inequalities	The strategy considers inequalities in oral health and identifies actions to address these.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme. The targeting of resources towards identified need will support the effective use of resources.
Health and Wellbeing	The priorities and actions identified in the strategy will support improvements in health and wellbeing for residents across all life stages and those most in need.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	The data presented in the report covers all wards.
Groups Affected	The strategy considers priorities for the population of Darlington, but there is a particular focus on children and older people.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no direct impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers, although actions within the strategy and delivery plan may help to improve their oral health.

