

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2016, AT 7.00  
PM

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PRESENT: N Symonds (Chairman)  
Councillors D Abbott, A Alder, S Cousins,  
H Drake, Mrs D Hollebon, J Kaye and  
M McMullen

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M Allen, E Buckmaster and  
P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Claire Pullen	- Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants)
Brian Simmonds	- Head of Community Safety and Health Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Environmental Health Manager - Commercial
Sheila Winterburn	- Environmental Health Manager - Housing

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565 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors P Moore and R Standley.

566 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

567 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Rachel Elsom (Public Health for England) who was observing the meeting.

The Chairman commented that Jim McManus (HCC, Director of Public Health) was due to attend the meeting but had to subsequently submit his apologies.

568 STATEMENT ON LICENSING POLICY: DRAFT

The Head of Community Safety and Health Services submitted a report updating Members on the progress of promoting health and wellbeing within the Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Head of Community Safety and Health Services provided a summary of the report. He stated that Jim McManus, Director of Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council, had contributed to the development of the Draft Licensing Policy. He had also facilitated obtaining Counsel's Opinion which had identified a gap in the policy in terms of the need to provide data on specific licenced premises in the District and how this could impact on public health when considering licensing applications.

In response to a query from Councillor A Alder, the Head of Community Safety and Health Services explained that Officers had attempted to identify "hot spots" and sources of

concern possibly by “mystery shopping” and overlay the information obtained onto that provided by the County Council in order to establish public health “hot spots”, e.g. whether a particular area suffered high levels of abuse, or other serious health issues.

In response to a query from Councillor S Cousins regarding crime in general, the Head of Community Safety and Health Services said that, as a District, East Herts had low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. He referred to his concerns regarding issues around individuals “pre-loading” before they went out and the need to gain further information and ensure that the supply, possibly by off licences, was controlled.

The Chairman commented that frequently, alcohol and cocaine were used together. The Head of Community Safety and Health Services explained that there was a link between alcohol and cocaine and aspirational social strata and commented on the ongoing and good relationship the Council had working with the Police to take action where appropriate.

The Chairman asked Members whether they would support a letter of thanks being sent to Inspector Gerry McDonald, referring to the continuing good working relationship East Herts had with the Police and that the Members appreciated being able to sit on the Divisional Management Meeting (DMM) meetings. This was supported.

The Committee noted the report and confirmed their support for the approach as detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) in respect of Licensing issues, the approach as now detailed, be supported; and

(B) the Head of Community Safety and Health Services write a letter of thanks to Inspector Gerry McDonald referring to the continuing good working relationship East Herts had with the Police and that Members appreciated being able to sit on DMM meetings.

569 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS PROGRAMME - UPDATE

Following a request from Members, the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report updating Members on the Disabled Facilities Grants programme and the results of a countywide review of housing adaptations services, eligibility and process. The Environmental Health Manager - Residential, provided a summary of the report including statistics on grants approved in 2014/15 and in the year to date.

In response to a query regarding promotional literature, the Environmental Health Manager – Residential said that she would arrange for posters to be sent to Members for public display.

Councillor A Alder referred to people in private rented accommodation who might apply for a grant. The Environmental Health Manager – Residential explained that the scheme was open to private rented tenants and that the Council had given two such grants in the past year.

Councillor J Kaye referred to means testing, specifically in relation to war veterans. The Environmental Health Manager – Residential explained the special arrangements enshrined in legislation for these individuals and explained generally, how the referral process worked. The Chairman commented that war veterans could also contact the British Legion for help.

The Chairman expressed concern that the referral rate was falling and hoped that the Council could be more proactive. The Environmental Health Manager – Residential explained that there was a waiting list for Occupational Therapist (OT) referrals at the moment.

Members also expressed their concern about falling levels of referrals and supported a suggestion that Officers should investigate this and to see what could be done to establish a closer working relationship with OTs and to seek a swifter referral process. The Chairman stated that if Members knew of any families needing help that they should contact the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing agreed that a closer connection with OTs would be beneficial to a speedier process.

The Committee supported the recommendation as now detailed and that Officers write to appropriate Officers at Hertfordshire County Council expressing concern about the falling levels of referrals and seeking a way forward to work closer with OTs, resulting in a swifter referral process.

RESOLVED – that (A) flyers be distributed to Members to promote Disabled Facilities Grants to residents; (B) the approach being taken by the ongoing Herts review of Adaptations to support independent living be supported, in principle; and

(C) Officers write to appropriate Senior Officers at Hertfordshire County Council expressing Members' concerns about the falling levels of referrals and seeking a way forward to work closer with Occupational Therapists to enable a swifter referral process.

570 UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING FUND (YEAR 1)

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report updating Members on the progress of the East Herts Community Health and Wellbeing Fund 2015 and its supported projects. He also provided feedback on the scoping and research undertaken for potential projects with match funding support. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided a summary of the report.

Members provided feedback on projects they had visited throughout the District which had been supported by Council funding. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer assured Members that an evaluation exercise and feedback on the projects would be reported back to Members.

Members supported a suggestion that local GPs and Patient Participation Groups be contacted in order to promote the

projects and as a means of promoting good health.

The Committee received the progress made on the Health and Wellbeing Community Fund Projects.

RESOLVED – that (A) the progress made on the Health and wellbeing Community Fund Projected be received; and

(B) GPs and Patient Participation Groups be contacted in terms of promoting the projects as a means of promoting good health.

571 APPROVAL OF DRAFT EAST HERTS HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTION PLAN 2016/17

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report seeking approval of the work plan for 2016/17 as detailed within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided a summary of the report.

The Chairman referred to self-harm and the use by some individuals, of poisoning to bring about harm. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stated that he was not aware of this aspect particularly, however, a project started by East Herts last year was continuing and that self-harm was a subject that other Districts and Hertfordshire County Council were working on together.

The issue of isolation, both rural and urban, in East Herts was discussed. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer advised that a report was being progressed to consider this issue and the Scrutiny Officer advised that this was on the Committee's forward plan for November 2016.

Councillor D Abbott stated that men could also be victims of domestic abuse and referred to the very good work done by the Crucial Crew Team.

The Committee agreed the proposed workplan for 2016/17 as detailed within the East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

RESOLVED – that the proposed workplan for 2016/17 as detailed within the East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy, be agreed.

572 HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY - WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee submitted a report reviewing the Committee's work programme for 2015/16 and which considered the work programme for 2016/17. The Scrutiny Officer asked Members to complete the evaluation questionnaire which she would distribute at the end of the meeting reviewing past work and the outcomes achieved.

Councillor Mrs D Hollebon suggested that mental health charities such as MIND, should be a topic of further scrutiny and that locality lead GPs from the District and from the Clinical Commissioning Groups be invited to attend a future meeting to consider this and the NHS's progress on its strategic shift to prevention.

The Chairman commented on how churches were usually central in village life and how these could be developed to help combat rural isolation by the introduction of more activities. Councillor A Alder stated that the issue of working as a carer for an individual with dementia could also be lonely.

Councillor Mrs D Hollebon suggested that Carers in Herts should be approached for more relevant data.

Councillors J Kaye and S Cousins sought assurances that the District Plan had public health at its core and that East Herts remained a good place to live and work.

Members referred to devolution and the importance of continued partnership working and particularly with community groups.

The Scrutiny Officer stated that the District Plan would be reported to Members in September 2016 and a report on the

evidence gathered in relation to the implications of isolation would be reported back to Members in November 2016. She stated that if at that time, Members decided they wanted to look at this in more detail, then faith groups could be invited to give evidence. The Scrutiny Officer explained that an invitation to the Clinical Commission Groups would be incorporated into the work programme where appropriate.

The Committee approved the report, as now amended.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as now amended, be agreed.

573 HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES: 16  
DECEMBER 2015

The Minutes of Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny meeting of 16 December 2015 were submitted for information.

The Committee noted the Minutes.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes be noted.

574 HEALTH AND WELLBEING OFFICERS' GROUP - MINUTES:  
20 JANUARY 2016

The Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Officers' Group held on 20 January 2016 were submitted for information. The Scrutiny Officer suggested that as health and wellbeing was now a full scrutiny committee, these Minutes could be sent electronically as and when necessary, rather than include them on future agendas. This was supported.

The Committee noted the Minutes.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Minutes be noted; and

(B) future Minutes of this group be circulated electronically.



575 AGEING WELL STEERING GROUP - MINUTES: 26  
JANUARY 2016

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The Minutes of the Ageing Well Steering Group held on 26 January 2016 were submitted for information. The Scrutiny Officer suggested that as health and wellbeing was now a full scrutiny committee that these Minutes could be sent electronically as and when necessary, rather than include them on future agendas. This was supported.

The Committee noted the Minutes.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Minutes be noted; and  
  
(B) future Minutes of this group be circulated electronically.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....