

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor A Alder (Chairman)  
Councillors D Abbott, S Bull, S Cousins,  
Mrs D Hollebon, J Jones, S Stainsby and  
M Stevenson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors E Buckmaster and P Moore

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Jess Khanom	- Head of Operations
Joseph Liggett	- Leisure Services Development Manager
Claire Pullen	- Scrutiny Officer
Helen Standen	- Director
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Environmental Health Manager
	- Commercial
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co-Ordinator

606 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of

Councillors P Ballam and P Boylan.

607 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

608 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked all Members for sending her “Get Well” cards adding that these were very much appreciated.

609 STRATEGIC VISION FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report which provided an overview of the key ways in which the services of the Council could initiate work and maximise health and wellbeing outcomes. The key elements of East Herts’ current Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 – 2018 and the actions to address priorities were outlined.

It was noted that Essential Reference Paper “B” of the report submitted should have included the need to consult with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) public health on large scale planning applications (of 100 plus dwellings).

The Leisure Services Development Manager explained that one aim of the health and wellbeing strategy was to increase participation in physical activity, targetting the 30,000 residents who, according to a survey, were completely inactive. He referred to the health benefits of activity in relation to heart and other diseases and explained that those not exercising were in the least affluent socio economic groups or were people with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

The Leisure Services Development Manager suggested that in a survey, 69.7% of residents said they were

physically active but there was the possibility that this might not be an accurate figure as many said they were more active than they actually were. He referred to the possible reasons why adults failed to take part in activity as highlighted in a survey by Sport for England.

The Leisure Services Development Manager stated that the Council needed to think creatively and build on its current position of strength (i.e., Forever Active). He suggested joint working with HCC and highlighted the key challenges to overcome in order to enable people to become active.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing drew Members' attention to the fact that the majority of projects addressed sustainable communities, healthy lifestyles and proactive health prevention. Less work had taken place in the areas of "creating health and work together" and "healthy children start off well."

The Head of Operations provided Members with an overview of the draft physical activity strategy which aimed to bring together the Council's priorities and leisure strategies in a sustainable way. Members debated what further steps the Council could take to encourage more to exercise in terms of concessions and health mentoring champions helping to promote local community facilities.

Councillor S Cousins supported the need to promote local health initiatives and that towns and villages should be linked in. The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing felt that this was something which should be looked at and factored in at the planning stage.

Councillor D Abbott suggested lower gym membership costs might encourage more participation in exercise. He explained that in his experience, adults with disabilities were catered for and supported to exercise as it was written into their care plans. The Leisure Services Development Manager referred to the importance of having an efficient grant system in place that was aligned

to emerging health and wellbeing priorities and that a review of the Council's community grant giving arrangements would be taking place over the next several months. The Chairman referred to the role of Members in promoting the grants programme to voluntary and community groups and raising it at meetings with town and parish councils.

The Chairman suggested that the recommendations be amended by the inclusion of wording which increased the number of projects aimed at enhancing good health in the workplace and ensuring that children were given a healthy start in life. Additionally, that staff, especially those on the front line, be encouraged to participate in Dementia Friend training and how to support and interact with people with mental health and learning disabilities. This was supported.

The Committee received the report and supported the recommendations as amended, and now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) Members' views on initiatives undertaken to date to maximise health and wellbeing, including increasing the number of projects aimed at enhancing good health in the workplace and new initiatives to ensure that children were given a healthy start in life, be forwarded to the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Head of Housing and Health;

(B) themes and issues identified at the meeting or thereafter, be forwarded to the Head of Housing and Health for consideration when drafting the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; and

(C) front line staff be encouraged to participate in Dementia Friend training and training in how to support and interact with people with mental health difficulties and learning disabilities.

610 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS - EFFECTS OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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The Executive Member for the Environment and Public Space submitted a report outlining the actions taken to date to tackle air pollution in East Herts with the aim of minimising the negative impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents.

The report set out the Council's three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and detailed what improvements had been made in recent years in air quality at the sites identified and provided an update of work currently underway on a revised Air Quality Action Plan.

The Environment Strategy and Development Manager provided a summary of the report and advised Members that the Council had recently been successful in an Air Quality Bid to DEFRA and had been awarded £163,000 funding to install electric points and to set up an electric car club.

The Environment Strategy and Development Manager referred to initiatives to replace buses to service the Harlow / Bishop's Stortford area which were 95% less polluting than the current EURO 4 buses used.

Councillor D Abbott expressed the concerns of residents in Bishop's Stortford regarding the Hockerill junction levels of pollution and the need to do something quickly. He suggested a "cap" on certain vehicles passing through the area at specific times.

The Environment Strategy and Development Manager explained that there were a lot of actions which could be taken but that these related to highways issues which could in the long term, be costly. Additionally there was an absence of data which could identify which and what type of vehicles were responsible for the high levels of pollution in that some HGVs with full loads were less

polluting than a small family diesel car.

The Chairman referred to the concerns raised by Bishop's Stortford Climate Group in the email circulated to all Members.

Councillor J Jones suggested that the way forward was electric cars but that their capital price needed to come down. Ideally he felt that all East Herts car parks should have charging points. The Environment Strategy and Development Manager stated that there were around 514 electric cars operating in the District and that the battery range was increasing with Nissan hoping to provide a battery with a 200 mile range. He explained that a particular problem was that of sufficiency of electricity which currently took its charge from street lights but that having charging points in all car parks had to be offset against the loss in revenue of two parking spaces.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing referred to National Clean Air Day and gave a summary of how the Council was engaging with schools in this regard. Councillor Mrs D Hollebon asked that future events engage with adults.

Councillor M Stevenson referred to the schools buses provided to children in the USA. The Environment Strategy and Development Manager explained that the Task and Finish Group on sustainable transport had looked at this and explained why this would not work in East Herts.

Councillor S Stainsby referred to pollution levels and the number of homes planned for the District. The Environment Strategy and Development Manager explained that pollution levels were reducing but were increasing in respect of particulates, such as soot from tyres. He referred to the District Plan and the transport framework for Bishop's Stortford which he said, was continually evolving.

The Committee agreed to support the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) Members' concerns, including those of the Bishop's Stortford Climate Group on how to improve air quality be forwarded to the Executive Member for Environment and Public Space and the Head of Housing and Health; and

(B) Officers continue to move forward on the development of the Action Plan.

611 REVIEW OF DRAFT 2017/18 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

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The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report seeking approval of the 2017/18 East Herts Health and Wellbeing Work plan. The Environment Health and Promotion Officer provided a summary of the report and the four new projects selected for inclusion after consultation and a comparative assessment process. One of these projects was the Safe and Well initiative proposed by the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Members debated the key role of fire crews in reaching vulnerable people with health, wellbeing and safety messages.

In response to a question from Councillor M Stevenson, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer said that he would provide information on suicide deaths in the District.

The Committee approved the work plan as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) Members' comments regarding the East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy Work plan for 2017/18 be noted; and

(B) the East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy Work plan for 2017/18 be approved.

612 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY

The Chairman provided an update in relation to Herts Valley's Clinical Commissioning Group which had been offered funding of £8.4Million which had later been rescinded and reduced to £5.5Million. She advised Members that a further meeting would be held on 30 March 2017 and she would report later on the outcome.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

613 MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Councillor P Moore provided an update on Mental Health Day. She read out a number of letters from people who had enjoyed the day and provided contrasting views on how the day had been perceived.

The Committee noted the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

614 PROPOSED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2017/18

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The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee submitted a report reviewing the Committee's programme in the context of proposed changes to the scrutiny committee system.

The Scrutiny Officer reminded Members that Council had approved a new arrangement with regard to the scrutiny process and explained how items on the work programme would be incorporated within the work programmes for the new scrutiny committees.

The Scrutiny Officer drew Members' attention to the annual report which was being prepared and asked them to let her have any comments on issues which they had been particularly proud of by the deadline of 30 March 2017.



The Chairman asked that a report on Air Quality be included within the new committee work programme. This was supported.

Councillor S Cousins referred to the fact that this was the last meeting of Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and thanked the Chairman for her work on health and wellbeing issues. The Chairman thanked Members for their contribution to the scrutiny process and hoped that the good work would continue.

Members received the report, as amended.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and  
(B) items from the Health and Wellbeing Committee work programme including a further report on Air Quality, be included within the proposed new scrutiny system.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm

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