

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL  
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE HEALTH  
ENGAGEMENT PANEL) HELD IN THE  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,  
HERTFORD ON MONDAY 4 FEBRUARY  
2013, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor N Symonds (Chairman)  
Councillors R Beeching, E Buckmaster,  
S Bull and K Crofton

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors Mrs R Cheswright, L Haysey and  
G McAndrew

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mark Jordan	- Hertfordshire County Council (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Manager)
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18 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor P

Moore.

19 MINUTES - 11 DECEMBER 2012

It was noted that both Councillor G McAndrew and the Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support had been in attendance at the meeting on 11 December 2012.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2012 as amended, be approved as a correct record.

20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Mark Jordan, Hertfordshire County Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Manager. She invited the Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support to provide the following updates.

The Executive Member advised that she and the Panel Chairman had been invited to attend a meeting at the Princess Alexandra Hospital on 20 February at 9.30am. Issues for discussion would be provided in advance of the meeting. Councillors E Buckmaster and P Moore would be joining them.

Furthermore, the Executive Member stated that, following debate at the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel, Officers were now co-ordinating on matters within the District Plan which could have a health and wellbeing impact on the community. Relevant officers were now seen as consultees on larger-scale planning applications as a matter or course to comment on any public health impact or issues.

21 JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT - WHAT IT IS AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR EAST HERTS?

Mark Jordan, Hertfordshire County Council (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) Manager gave a presentation on the JSNA process, its important role in Hertfordshire and how the District could benefit from a strategic approach to health and

wellbeing. He provided a statistical health profile of the District including areas of social deprivation. He explained that the profile helped local government and health services understand their community's needs so that resources could be better targeted and in order to reduce health inequalities. It was noted that generally, the health of people in East Hertfordshire was better than the England average but that 2,500 children in East Herts (East Hertfordshire Health Profile 2012) lived in poverty. Life expectancy for both men and women was slightly lower in the most deprived areas but mortality rates had dropped over the last 10 years. Priorities for East Hertfordshire included dealing with obesity, reducing smoking levels and helping the older population maintain their health.

Mr Jordan explained that the aim of the presentation was to help Members think about how the Council could become involved in the assessment process. The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support and the Panel Chairman explained why the areas of Much Hadham and Bishop's Stortford Central had been included as areas of social deprivation. Mr Jordan reminded Members that Hertfordshire was one of the least deprived areas. He referred to the value of local knowledge in understanding local needs, especially when contributing to the assessment process. It was hoped that the assessment process could capture a lot of "soft intelligence" from the community, professionals and local Members. The issue of how schools might help in the process in terms of information gathering, was discussed. He explained that everyone had a contribution to make to the process.

Councillor K Crofton commented on the areas of relative prosperity and those which were socially deprived and queried how the gap could be closed. Mr Jordan explained that in comparison to the English average, East Hertfordshire did quite well, but that there were some areas of public health where it was important to narrow the percentile gap.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching regarding areas in rural East Herts which were deprived, Mr Jordan reiterated that Members could contribute to the process by investigating why this might be the case and then doing

something about it. Councillor E Buckmaster stated that it was a question of engaging with the wider area. Mr Jordan explained that there was a lot of information which was widely available, including surveys which had been undertaken and in schools, which helped provide a view of health and wellbeing of young people. He explained that there were opportunities to open up dialogue to probe further into the health of young people. The voluntary sector was also a good source of valuable information.

In response to a query from Councillor G McAndrew regarding the number of infant deaths, Mr Jordan explained that perhaps what needed to be asked was whether a pattern was emerging which would require further investigation. The issue of suicides was discussed and the important work by the Samaritans.

Mr Jordan referred to the increase in diabetes and its relationship with obesity and alcohol misuse. He referred to the lead-in times it took to tackle such issues, sometimes 20 years or more. It was a question of Members' priorities and what they wanted to do given limited resources. He expressed the need to co-ordinate on projects and to work out a plan of what health issues to tackle. Councillor R Beeching explained the active role taken at County Council level by Jim McManus, Director of Public Health.

Councillor K Crofton was of the view that greater physical activity needed to be promoted and Councillor G McAndrew suggested that there was a role to be played by the GP in providing the impetus to people diagnosed with diabetes to join a gym or activity programme. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer hoped that ongoing communication with health professionals and resulting projects would help people benefit from preventative measures more effectively in the future.

On behalf of Members, the Chairman thanked Mark Jordan for his informative presentation.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

## 22 DRAFT 2013/14 PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support submitted a report on the East Herts Public Health Strategy 2013/14 Transitional Action Plan. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained the background to the strategy which had helped steer and co-ordinate the Council's services and facilitate joint working both internally and externally.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided Members with a presentation which outlined the current strategy; Health and Wellbeing priorities and a summary of successes. The 2013/14 Transitional Action Plan reflected the nature of change in the new health landscape due to commence from 1 April 2013. Of the 45 projects (within key topic areas), 6 were new projects / initiatives which had been included following consultation with Health and Wellbeing Panel Members and other health partner consultees. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stressed the need for strong connections with key Public Health colleagues and the role to be played by East Herts in leading with confidence and providing a reduction in local health inequalities.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching regarding the "no-smoking" initiative at Herts and Essex School, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained that he would be returning to Herts and Essex School to do a follow up of questioning to see if there had been a sustained reduction in smoking. In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching concerning the blood pressure initiative, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained the role of the Council's Leisure Contractors (SLM) and of others including the Rotary Club in associated blood pressure measurement initiatives.

An update was provided by the Environmental Health Promotion Officer in relation to the success of cooking initiatives which had been provided to young mothers.

In response to a query from Councillor K Crofton, the Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community

Support explained the background to a decision taken by the Council not to engage a Sports Development Officer and of the Council's close links with its contractor (SLM). She referred to links which needed to be developed with schools.

Councillor G McAndrew suggested that consideration should be given to installing tracks around fields to encourage people to go jogging.

Members supported the East Herts Public Health Strategy Transitional Action Plan.

RESOLVED – that the East Herts Public Health Strategy Transitional Action Plan as submitted, be approved.

## 23 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman provided an update in relation to Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee. It was noted that the December meeting had been cancelled and that the next one was due on 7 February 2013.

The Chairman asked the Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support to provide an update on hospital transportation issues which had been discussed at the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel. The Executive Member explained that a meeting had been arranged to map transport to and from hospitals serving East Herts residents and also to consider transport to GPs and community transport generally.

The Executive Member stated that what had been established was that there was a patchwork of different providers throughout the District. It was noted that the existing co-ordinating and facilitating service for hospital appointments was Travellink and that one telephone number existed to assess patients' mobility and eligibility for 'free' non-emergency transport. Those who were not eligible were referred to a community or voluntary car scheme and charged per mile.

The Executive Member explained what specialist services existed including the Lister Shuttle and Car Services. There was ongoing research to develop a Hertford and Ware based voluntary driver scheme (funded by the NHS and HCC) and that Hospital Travel Costs Schemes enabled residents in receipt of certain benefits, to reclaim costs of journeys. Dial-a-Ride provided door to door transport for people unable to use regular public transport including to GP surgeries but did not provide access to hospital appointments.

The Executive Member summarised the main findings of the group which would be presented and developed through the East Herts Local Strategic Partnership.

Councillor E Buckmaster stated that the Sawbridgeworth Bus No.2 Service would shortly be launched and would link with the CVS. Councillor S Bull expressed concern at the eligibility criteria for 'free' transport and the different mileage charging arrangements.

Members received the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

## 24 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL (HWP) WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the Health and Wellbeing Panel's future work programme for 2012/13, the detail of which was set out in Essential Reference Paper "B" of the report now submitted.

In response to a query from the Scrutiny Officer regarding the meeting on 18 June 2013 and whether Members' wished to focus on a specific theme for the group discussion. Members agreed that the theme should be left to the visitors invited to the meeting. Members also agreed that only the Chairman of the County Health and Wellbeing Board be invited to join the Panel at its meeting on 15 October 2013.

No other speakers or organisations were identified as yet, to future meetings of the Panel.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as amended be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Chairman .....

Date .....