

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY
18 FEBRUARY 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor N Symonds (Chairman)
Councillors S Bull, P Moore and A Warman

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, P Ruffles and
S Rutland-Barsby

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Claire Pullen	- Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants)
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Environmental Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Tony Bradford	- Countryside Management Service Manager
Val Male	- Safe and Sustainable Journeys in Schools (HCC)
Sian Price	- Countryside Management Service

21 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors P Ballam, R Beeching and E Buckmaster.

22 MINUTES

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided an update on public health initiatives adopted by St Albans Council, (Minute 18 Public Health Strategy and Action Plan 2013/14; Review of Proposals for 2014/15 Action Plan). He stated that other websites cited at that meeting had also been reviewed and where appropriate, initiatives would be integrated within East Herts Council's own strategies.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Tony Bradford, Manager and Sian Price of Countryside Management Services and Val Male, Team Leader of Safe and Sustainable Journeys in Schools (Hertfordshire County Council) to the meeting.

The Chairman suggested, with Members consent, that the order of the agenda be changed so that guest speakers could leave as soon as their item had been considered. This was agreed.

24 EAST HERTS HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY WORK PLAN FOR 2014/15

Councillor A Warman asked Members to note that he had recently been appointed Chairman of the PPG for St Mary's Church Surgery in Ware.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support submitted a report updating Members on the Council's public health work, the content of East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy Work Plan for 2014/15, the detail of which was set out in the report now submitted and supporting Essential Reference Papers.

By way of an introduction to the report, the Environmental Health Manager summarised which core projects had been significantly amended, the detail of which was set out in Essential Reference Paper "B". He reminded Members about the new format of the Work Plan which now showed how projects were linked to other strategies and that the intranet would be updated to provide more detailed information.

Tony Bradford, Manager of the Countryside Management Service provided an introduction to one of the projects in terms of the aim and focus of the Hertfordshire Health Walks and who the service was partnered with. He explained the key activities of the service including the promotion of health, wellbeing, social inclusion and an appreciation of the environment. Mr Bradford explained that there were 40-50 walks a week organised in the County, led by 200 volunteers and that these walks were graded according to individual levels of fitness. So far, there had been 30,000 participations countywide. It was noted that local GPs were starting to refer people to the service given the health benefits in helping tackle, obesity, inactivity, stress, smoking and alcohol issues.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding working with GPs and Slimming Clubs, Mr Bradford referred to the recent interest shown by GPs and that the Director of Public Health was working closely with Officers to extend the health walks service. Mr Bradford undertook to leave some brochures for circulation.

In response to a query from Councillor P Moore regarding inclusion and extending the walks to young mothers with pushchairs, Sian Price said that all were welcome. Mr Bradford reiterated that the walks were graded according to ability. The oldest health walk leader in the group was 93.

Val Male provided Members with a presentation on her role as Team leader in relation to Safe and Sustainable Journeys in Schools in terms of School Travel Planning, Road Safety Education Bicycle Training, Scooter Training, Walking and Cycling Promotions. She explained that whilst schools were not obliged to prepare Travel Plans, they had a positive role in creating road safety awareness to both parents and children.

Ms Male provided a summary in terms of road safety education, scooting, cycle training / promotion and walking and the various projects such as Walk to School (Living Streets), which rewarded schools and children for their participation.

In response to a query from Councillor S Bull, Ms Male confirmed that volunteers were Police DBS checked.

In response to a comment from the Chairman, regarding the rural nature of East Herts, Ms Male acknowledged that it was not always possible to walk or cycle to school and as such, children did not have as much opportunity to develop the road safety awareness skills needed.

In response to a comment from Councillor S Bull, Ms Male acknowledged the dangers to young people, who were using phones and listening to music as they crossed busy roads. She stressed the need to make them continually aware.

Ms Male referred to the problems of parents' parking in Bishop's Stortford. The Chairman acknowledged this, adding that PCSOs regularly ticketed cars violating zig zag lines.

In terms of an update, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred to the London Sustainability Exchange air quality project at Richard Hale School which Officers have started working on recently.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked Mr Bradford and Ms Male for their informative presentations.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer drew Members' attention to the report and Essential Reference Papers now submitted and provided a summary of the projects proposed in the Work Plan for 2014/15.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support advised that:

- Hertfordshire County Council had a budget available to

support cycling projects;

- there would be an older persons Crucial Crew in Ware on 4 April 2014;
- Hertfordshire County Council had issued its own Smoking Policy and Strategy; and
- East Herts had been volunteered to take part in the evaluation of “E” Cigarettes.

The Chairman stated that she hoped, with the help of the Police, that there would be a Crucial Crew established for people with disabilities. It was noted that the current Crucial Crew format included Year 6 children with a range of disabilities from local schools.

In response to a query from Councillor S Bull regarding the Green-aiders Garden scheme co-ordinated by Groundwork Hertfordshire for people over 70 and partnership arrangements, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer undertook to email the Member with the referral criteria information.

The Chairman referred to schemes to support the elderly and the use of school children from the Boys’ High and Herts and Essex Schools to work on neglected gardens which the Police stated could identify households as potential targets for burglaries. It was agreed that the “neglected gardens” information be circulated to all Members for information.

The Panel received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the content of the East Herts Public Health Strategy Work Plan for 2014/15 be noted; and

(B) the East Herts Public Health Strategy Work Plan for 2014/15, as now submitted, be approved.

The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Panel submitted a report setting out the proposed future work programme of the Panel.

The Scrutiny Officer advised the Panel that updates could also be provided regarding the Local Strategic Partnership Health and Wellbeing Group and the Council's Dementia Awareness Project.

The Panel approved the work programme as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as now submitted, be approved.

26 HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRMAN

Councillor N Symonds provided an oral report on the ongoing work of Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee. She explained that she had been busy working on the "Conversation Café" in view of the publication of the Francis Report and reminded Members that the report had been forwarded via the Members' Information Bulletin last week.

Councillor Symonds advised that there was a new short stay, mental health facility moving to completion near Kingsley Green called Kingfisher Court. She outlined which groups of people would benefit from the facility and that although the project was nearing completion, users' views were being sought and where appropriate, incorporated into the facility. Transportation for family carers to Kingfisher Court was also planned. Councillor Symonds commented that she was not happy that the mental health unit at the Lister Hospital would be closing in view of the impact this could have on Bishop's Stortford. She hoped that the suggestion that 305 Ware Road might be re-opened would come about and Councillor Symonds stated that she would update Members as and when she had further information.

Councillor S Bull referred to GP surgeries in Buntingford, Standon and Puckeridge amalgamating and queried whether

a new centre was being built. The Chairman offered to investigate the issue and let Councillor Bull know.

Councillor A Warman referred to concerns about data sharing regarding patient information. Councillor Symonds said she had just heard the project start date might be delayed by six months and that the issue could be discussed when this was clearer.

The Panel received the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Chairman
Date