

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

PRESENT: Councillor N Symonds (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam, E Buckmaster, J Jones
and P Moore

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors McManus, L Haysey, P Ruffles,
S Rutland-Barsby and J Wing

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services
Claire Pullen	- Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants)
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Brian Simmonds	- Head of Community Safety and Health Services
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Environmental

Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Jim McManus

- Hertfordshire County
Council

10 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor D Andrews. It was noted that Councillor J Jones was substituting for Councillor D Andrews.

11 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Mr McManus, Director of Public Health (Hertfordshire County Council), Members and Heads of Service to the meeting.

The Chairman referred to Royal Society for Public Health Improvement workshops to be held over the next several months, the first to be held on 16/20 October 2014 at the Nigel Copping Community Building. Further information including alternative dates and venues were available from the Environmental Health Promotion Officer.

The Chairman stated that a guest speaker, Professor Harry Rutter would be speaking on "Obesity: A Complex System in Public Health" on 4 December 2014. Councillor L Haysey said that she was delighted that Professor Rutter would be speaking and hoped that this would be the first meeting of many.

Councillor L Haysey referred to the “Weight Challenge” initiative in partnership with SLM Leisure. She explained how the Member initiative might be developed and how the aggregate total of weight loss would be published. It was anticipated that funds generated from Members’ sponsorships would be dedicated to the East Herts Community Chest Chairman’s Fund.

The Chairman drew Members’ attention to the Health Watch Report which was now available in a smaller, guidance format. The Chairman stated that she was saddened that East Herts had not received the recognition it deserved in terms of the work it had done already.

Finally, the Chairman stated that Officers had resubmitted an application to the Royal Society for Public Health in relation to a Health and Wellbeing Award. The Society was still deliberating on applications.

13 PRESENTATION - WHAT IS THE ROLE OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN PLANNING? PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE MARCH 2014

The Head of Planning and Building Control provided a presentation outlining the latest relationship between planning and public health. He highlighted the fact that the last century had played an important part in highlighting the connection between planning and health. More recently this had been progressed via the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which encapsulated health and wellbeing into planning policy, aided further by the Localism Act 2011 and later by the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) which provided the “bridge” between policy and practice.

The Head of Planning and Building Control explained that prior to the NPPF and the NPPG, the Council had developed a Local Plan (2007) which had focussed primarily on land use and “sustainable development”. More recently, the emerging District Plan 2014 ensured a stronger relationship between the planning process and aspirations around public health. This was now articulated in planning policy in the form of a

new requirement CLFR8 (a condition which focussed primarily on health and wellbeing). By way of example, the Head of Planning and Building Control referred to the Bishop's Stortford North Development and the (community and wellbeing focussed) requirements of the Section 106 agreement in relation to the provision of open spaces, affordable homes, community buildings, schools, cycle tracks and bus links.

The Head of Planning and Building Control referred to his department's role in terms of building control from a health and wellbeing perspective and also a health and safety perspective to ensure that buildings were environmentally safe and sound.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Planning and Building Control and reminded Members that the next item on the agenda would consider the integration of public health and service provision further.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

14 INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENDA INTO THE COUNCIL'S CORE SERVICES - ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The Chairman posed the first question to Officers asking for their interpretation of public health and its integration. She first sought clarification from the Head of Community Safety and Health Services and referred to the increase in liver disease and alcohol dependency.

The Head of Community Safety and Health Services explained how health was a core and integral issue from a licensing perspective. He referred to the five licensing objectives adopted in Scotland and the four objectives in England (which included health). The Head of Community Safety and Health Services referred to the potential for influence in licensing decisions and the impact this could have on a range of health related matters. A number of core environmental health services were mentioned including the

work of environmental health promotion, community safety and the schemes and grants which were available to promote health and wellbeing, such as housing insulation.

The Head of Community Safety and Health Services explained that 10% of service enquiries were around private sector housing and of these, 50% were about damp and mould. The fears about reporting unhealthy living conditions in properties owned by private sector landlords were discussed.

The Head of Environmental Services explained his department's role in terms of environmental health and the promotion of health and wellbeing. He referred to the co-ordination with the planning team to make sure that all community based needs in terms of open spaces and leisure were met, including those relating to fitness, play and recreation.

Councillor E Buckmaster stated how privileged residents were that East Herts had the facilities it had and referred to the problems of urban areas and food outlets and how this impacted on health. He queried whether it was possible for the cumulative effects of issues to be taken into account when decisions needed to be taken by Members. The Head of Community Safety and Health explained that licensing could only make decisions within a legislative and policy framework and that any cumulative factors needed to be evidence based.

The Head of Planning and Building Control confirmed the need to have an evidence base behind the policy if the Council was seeking to avoid an over-concentration of use.

The Chairman referred to "Choice-based Lettings" and the fears people on the housing register had if they refused an offer because they might not be offered another property. The Chairman referred to health problems which might occur as a result. The Housing Manager explained how the process worked and confirmed that there were no repercussions if a property was not accepted. She confirmed that there was a lack of housing stock, particularly in Bishop's Stortford.

In response to a question by Councillor P Moore about the direction of travel in integrating the public health agenda into service areas, especially when for example, in relation to planning if there was no infrastructure in place. The Head of Planning and Building Control commented on the importance of sustainable development which was integral to the District Plan.

Councillor P Ballam referred to the difficulties caused when Members refused a planning application which later might be approved by a Planning Inspector. The Head of Planning and Building Services stated that it was about different aspirations and interpretations of what was sustainable development in its broadest sense.

The Head of Environmental Services stated that in terms of the service's direction of travel, his aspiration was to go further working with health partners and customers with a more "joined up" approach to delivering a targeted health programme.

Mr McManus, Director of Public Health (Hertfordshire County Council) praised the Council's efforts around mainstreaming public health and its clear framework for promoting it. He stated that the Council was a national leader in this regard. In response to a query from the Chairman, he explained how the voucher (for weight loss schemes) worked. The Director of Public Health explained that the aim was to get people out of GP Surgeries and into exercise and supported the aspiration of the Head of Environmental Services. The Director of Public Health provided a summary of what he considered a direction of travel for public health promotion.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Public Health for his endorsement of the Council's public health activities and policies agenda.

In response to a query from Councillor E Buckmaster regarding calling providers to account for their impact on public health (such as fast food outlets / fizzy drink providers),

the Director of Public Health explained what approaches might be available to voice concerns.

The Head of Community Safety and Health Services explained in detail, how his service impacted on all other areas of the Council. He stated that he was proud to be assisting the Director of Public Health in ensuring that health and wellbeing was integral to the services provided by the Council.

The Head of Planning and Building Control stated that the direction-of-travel was to make sure the Council had a strong District Plan that was well evidenced to deliver sustainable development in the area. He commented that from a planning perspective, there was a need to be more proactive around the shape of development so that the Council could reflect community aspirations.

The Housing Manager commented on the importance of good quality housing to promote health and wellbeing and in improving life chances. She explained that the Council worked with a number of partners to provide a holistic approach to housing provision. The Housing Manager referred to an educational project aimed at young people which emphasised the importance of staying within the family environment to improve their life chances.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services stated that the Council's role was as a community leader. He praised the work of Members and Officers for the promotion of the health and wellbeing initiative and that in his view, health and wellbeing was about how the Council worked with its partners and how he hoped the Council would go from strength to strength.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided an update about the District Offer and its progress to date. This involved working up a number of proposals including working with the Clinical Commissioning Group on physical activity and he also referred to development of a further proposal working with Broxbourne and East Herts CVS. The

Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred to work on the Young and Smoke Free Project phase II. It was hoped that Officers would have further information for presentation in January 2015.

The Chairman thanked Officers and the Director of Public Health for their valuable contribution to the promotion of health and wellbeing.

RESOLVED – that (A) Officers continue to integrate the public health agenda into core services, looking for effective ways to improve health and wellbeing of East Herts residents; and

(B) the starting points identified be used by Officers as a baseline for mapping future progress on mainstreaming the public health agenda into housing, planning, community safety and environmental services and that this be tracked alongside the Health and Wellbeing workplan.

15 HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman stated that she had very little to report back but that she would be attending a meeting at Watford next week.

16 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Panel submitted a report setting out the proposed future work programme of the Panel. The Chairman stated that the Health Watch report on access to GP surgeries in Bishop's Stortford (the Hadhams and Sawbridgeworth) would be reported to the next Panel meeting on 9 December 2014. She also noted that the Head of Revenues and Benefits and East Herts Citizens' Advice Service would be attending on 24 February 2015.

The Panel approved the report, as now amended.

RESOLVED – that the report, as now amended, be

approved.

17 FOR INFORMATION: A) DEMENTIA TRAINING AND B)
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING
PARTNERSHIP

The Scrutiny Officer provided an update in relation to Dementia Training in July, 2014 when between 30 – 40 Staff and 12 Members had attended the meeting. It was noted that a further meeting would be held on 23 October 2014 at 7pm.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided an update following the meeting of the health and Wellbeing Partnership on of 18 July 2014. The Chairman requested that the Minutes be emailed to Members following the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Chairman
Date