

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20
SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT BY SCRUTINY OFFICER ON BEHALF OF CHAIRMAN OF
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

PLANNING AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To give Members the opportunity to gain evidence on this topic at a strategic level and to be assured that the service, in the short term, is appropriately integrating the wider public health agenda, prior to the adoption of the District Plan in 2017.

RECOMMENDATION FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY:

That:

(A)	Officers be requested to further explore the service's contribution to the wider public health agenda, taking into account issues raised on the night (as per para 2.5).
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1.0 Background

1.1 The role of the council in the protection and promotion of public health has always been important but it has been further enhanced due to the introduction of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which came into force April 2013.

1.2 The council adopted a new East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013-2018) in October 2013. This was endorsed by Jim McManus, Director of Public Health for Hertfordshire, who circulated it nationwide as an example of good practice. A list of the council's core services that contribute to the public's health can be found on pages 5 and 6
<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/wellbeing>

1.3 Following on from this, the council recently adopted a new Corporate Strategic Plan (2016/17 – 2019/20) that identifies health and wellbeing as a priority, specifically "residents living active and healthy lives."

- 1.4 In terms of the proposed East Herts District Plan, Members will be aware that this will integrate the health and wellbeing agenda according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The NPPF sets out that the planning system has an important role to play in creating healthy, inclusive communities. The NPPG sets out further guidance in relation to how planning authorities can take health and wellbeing issues into account in the plan making and decision processes.
- 1.5 The District Plan Executive Panel considered the emerging Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation chapter of the District Plan at its meeting of 21 July 2016. The relevant District Plan policy, policy CFLR9 was endorsed at that meeting.
- 1.6 The proposed section on health and wellbeing included in the District Plan, plus policy CFLR9, is shown in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.
- 1.7 The timescale for the final adoption of the District Plan is such that it should be in place toward the end of 2017. In the meantime, decisions are made in the light of national policy in the NPPF, guidance in the NPPG and the policies in the current Local Plan (East Herts Local Plan 2007). Whilst those existing policies sought to ensure the provision of facilities and their retention where they are already in place, this has not been expressly based on a health and wellbeing objective.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 The purpose of this agenda item is to look at how health and wellbeing is currently integrated into the decision making process of the Development Management Committee in the interim period prior to the adoption of the new District Plan. Questioning will be undertaken via a round table discussion.
- 2.2 Members are asked to note that public health is one of a range of issues that must be taken into account when considering planning applications. It will often be the case that the range of considerations will be in conflict and the decision maker has to determine the weight that should be applied to competing objectives taking the policy basis into account.

- 2.3 The Head of Planning and Building Control, the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support and the Chairman of Development Management Committee have been invited, on this occasion, to specifically discuss this topic from their different perspectives.
- 2.4 The HWS Chairman invites Committee Members to discuss the following themes to ensure that what is being delivered is linked to the new corporate priority and the East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy and that the priorities of this strategy are being given due consideration. The questions are as follows:
- a) How does health and wellbeing currently fit into the decision making process of development management? For example, is input sought from Hertfordshire Public Health in terms of either comment or evidence?
 - b) If health and wellbeing is everyone's business, what is the council's direction-of-travel in terms of further integrating the public health agenda into the service?
 - c) Do we have any local public health evidence to enable us to make fully informed decisions with regards to the impact of the availability of fast food outlets?
 - d) What barriers to ideas have been identified and how might these be addressed in the short term?
 - e) How proactive can the service be in identifying opportunities for residents to live an active and healthy life, as part of new housing developments?
 - f) What, if any, is the council's response to the national initiative of healthy cities and towns?
- 2.5 Following the discussion, Members are asked to consider the responses and make recommendations whether there are any public health recommendations they would like officers to explore in the future, linked to the development management service that would ensure residents are able to more easily adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. This could be around Members' training, policy shift or benchmarking from other authorities or exploring closer links with public health on the planning and place agenda.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

District Planning Bulletins

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/16102/District-Planning-Bulletin>

“Building the foundations:Tackling Obesity through planning and development” Local Government Association and Town and County Planning

Association March 2016

http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/7632544/L16-6+building+the+foundations+--+tackling+obesity_v05.pdf/a5cc1a11-57b2-46e3-bb30-2b2a01635d1a

“Briefing: Planning, health and wellbeing: new LGiU Essential Guide”
Local

Government Information Unit, March 2015

<http://www.lgiu.org.uk/briefing/planning-health-and-wellbeing-new-lgiu-essential-guide/>

East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/wellbeing>

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