

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH ENGAGEMENT PANEL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER
2010, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs D Hone (Chairman).
Councillors S A Bull, K Darby and R I Taylor.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors R L Parker.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Assistant
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

15 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of
Councillor R Gilbert.

16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Members that, "purdah" rules
applied until the Sawbridgeworth by-election was held on
23 December 2010. Purdah rules existed to ensure that
there was no risk of public funds being used and/or
actions undertaken to support one particular political party
or individual.

17 MINUTES

In respect of Minute 10 – Minutes, Simon Barfoot advised that he had received some excellent feedback in respect of the Lunch Box Detectives cookbook.

In respect of Minute 14 - Work Programme, Marian Langley advised that she would be inviting the Primary Care Trust responsible for health services in Bishop's Stortford to a future meeting.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Health Engagement Panel meeting held on 22 June 2010, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18 REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE ON THE EAST HERTS PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY: 2010/11 ACTION PLAN AND PROPOSALS FOR 2011/12

The Executive Member for Housing and Health submitted a report updating Members on the Council's progress in implementing the action plan for 2010/11 that was associated with the Council's Public Health Strategy.

The Panel was advised that of the 41 actions detailed in the action plan, 26 of these actions had been completed. Paragraph 2.2 of the report now submitted was incorrect in that 12,000 adults and children had been involved with interaction in these projects. Paragraph 2.1 should also have referred to the 2010/11 action plan and not the 2011/12 action plan.

Members were referred to Essential Reference Paper 'B' which detailed the actions that had been completed. Essential Reference Paper 'C' outlined possible areas of work for the forthcoming action plan for 2011/12. The Environmental Health Manager stated that the report sought Members' input into projects that should be included in the 2011/12 action plan.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer gave a presentation in respect of the East Herts Public Health Strategy 2008 - 2013 and the guiding principles of the action plan.

The Panel was advised that the recent strategy development focussed on increased sustainability and family focussed public health. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stated that everyone could be a champion of public health. He referred to the importance of expanding the range of partners for public health, as well as increases in project diversity.

Members were advised that the public health white paper focussed on prevention, promotion and protection. The method of delivery was via local authorities, GP consortia and the new public health services arrangements.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stated that the White Paper proposed a radical new approach which was shaped by the needs of communities. He stressed the crucial role of the NHS in continuing to support this work. He advised that local government was best placed to influence many of the wider factors that affect health and wellbeing.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stated that charities, voluntary organisations and community groups had already made a vital contribution. He commented that employers from all sectors should look to support the health and wellbeing of staff. Central Government would continue to play an important role.

The Panel was advised of the 5 domains that enabled the measurement of health outcomes. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer stressed the importance of Members' input, as a link to the communities. He referred to new partnerships with GP Consortia and increased opportunities for partnership working between Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer advised that the Government's approach to improving health and wellbeing was relevant to both national and local actions. He referred to a ladder on intervention as a change of approach in promoting self esteem, confidence and personal responsibility. Members were advised that this approach would positively promote healthier behaviours and lifestyles as well as encouraging people to make healthier lifestyle choices.

The Panel was provided with a snapshot of how the new public health system would integrate and operate. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer advised how the various projects detailed in his presentation would be assessed. He summarised each of the projects and updated the Panel on what these projects had achieved to date.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer sought Members' feedback into the 2011/12 action plan. He categorised the sections of the action and requested that Members provide feedback on colour coded post it notes. He summarised the Members' feedback and detailed how this would feed into the 2011/12 action. He thanked Members for their feedback.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred to the public health strategy and action plan and stated that there had been 41 projects and 12,173 separate interactions. The projects set up in 2008 were being expanded and developed and there had been solid support from the Panel Members, East Herts Councillors and consultees.

He advised that the Health Engagement Panel was a key means of influencing the way forward. He concluded that all Councillors, Senior Leadership and Officers should be aware of massive changes and the massive opportunities with public health from now on.

Councillor R L Parker warmly supported the hard work and progress that had been made on the Public Health Action Plan and thanked the Environmental Health Promotion Officer for the work involved on behalf of East Herts Council. The Panel Chairman, on behalf of other Panel Members endorsed this support.

RESOLVED - that (A) the progress made to date with implementing the Public Health Strategy's Action Plan for 2010/11 be noted;

(B) the projects outlined in the report now submitted for the Public Health Strategy's Action Plan for 2011/12 be supported; and

(C) any other projects supported by the Panel be included in the Public Health Strategy's Action Plan for 2011/12.

19 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Panel Chairman stated that the consultation period had closed in respect of the Public Health White Paper. She commented that a Local Government Briefing on the white paper had been published on the 30 November 2010. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer circulated copies of the briefing to the Panel Members.

The Panel was advised that GP Consortia was an item for discussion with NHS Hertfordshire at the January meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee. The Panel Chairman stated that she would report back on this at the next Panel meeting.

Councillor R I Taylor expressed concerns that GP Consortia would replace one tier of democracy with two tiers. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred Councillors to the proposed structure slide in the presentation explaining the way in which the new Public Health approach was expected to work. The Panel

Chairman advised that at the October Health Scrutiny meeting, concerns had once again been expressed in relation to the lack of an urgent care centre for Bishop's Stortford.

The Panel Chairman stated that the current position was that an urgent care centre was unaffordable in the current financial climate. The Herts and Essex Community Hospital was open on some evenings for appointments.

She advised that the Princess Alexandra Hospital now incorporated an urgent care centre. Patients would be triaged on arrival and either referred to Accident and Emergency, care in the community or to the urgent care centre.

Councillor R L Parker stated that most developments linked to NHS Hertfordshire did not relate to the western half of East Herts. He referred to the importance of bringing together all of the care providers in East Herts. The Panel was advised that what was needed was a single document stating what care was available, where and how patients could access that care.

Councillor Parker commented that the Chief Executive had sent letters to the Princess Alexandra Hospital and to NHS Hertfordshire on this issue, as well as a number of reminders and to date, there had been no response.

Councillor R I Taylor commented on whether a letter should be sent to the Secretary of State. The Director of Customer and Community Services stated that there did not seem to be any ministerial accountability for NHS Hertfordshire. He undertook to talk to Peter Wright, Public Health Partnership Manager, about this after the next meeting of the LSP Board on 13 December 2010.

Councillor S A Bull commented on whether Hospitals and GP Surgeries had a funding pot for patient transport. Councillor Parker stressed that this may well be the case. Councillor Hone referred to the possibility of some subtle

investigation yielding some answers on this issue.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

20 WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11

The Panel considered its work programme and the Panel Chairman drew the Panel’s attention to the two skills development sessions in January and February 2011. The Director of Customer and Community Services advised that these sessions were aimed at more experienced Scrutiny Members.

The Scrutiny Officer stated that existing Members could refine their skills and become good role models for new Members. She advised that she would circulate information to Members after Christmas. An article had appeared in the Members’ Bulletin and had also been sent to all Scrutiny Committee Members.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the Executive Member for Housing and Health would update Members in respect of local developments at the next meeting of the Panel on 14 February 2011.

The Panel approved the work programme as now submitted.

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

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm

Chairman
Date