
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the main areas of work under my Health and Partnerships Portfolio were as follows:-

Third Sector Strategic Grants 2012-15

2. We have considered proposals for the allocation of Strategic Grants to third sector organisations that will support delivery of the strategic objectives of the Council have been considered.
3. The funding allocation is proposed for a three year programme and be reviewed annually to ensure delivery against the outcomes. All applications were scored by the advisory panel against set criteria and consideration was given to the strategic fit of the organisation and also the governance arrangements and sustainability and at the amount of benefit to resident of Darlington.
4. We agreed the grant allocations as detailed in the report to Cabinet including the agreement to ring fence the amount for eVOLution of £45,989.
5. This funding has been allocated following a fair and open process and has been set against criteria that were available to organisations prior to submission.
6. This will enable the third sector to participate fully in the delivery of strategic outcomes and the Council to make the most effective use of resources for third sector support.

Darlington Investors in Health Award

7. Darlington Borough Council continues to make progress with the Darlington Investors in Health Award.
8. Through the work that has been undertaken across the whole organisation, we have emerged as beacon of achievement within the community of local employers with the following awards since the inception of Darlington Investors in Health programme:-
 - (a) Foundation level Award in 2010
 - (b) Bronze level Award in 2010
 - (c) Silver level Award in 2011
 - (d) Gold level Award in 2011

9. This achievement and recognition of the holistic approach the Council is taking to employee health is being celebrated along with other successful Darlington employers at an event on Thursday 23rd February 2012 in Darlington College.

Heart Town initiative

10. Darlington has signed up as a British Heart Foundation (BHF) Heart Town.
11. Darlington has become the second Heart Town in the North East and one of the first fifty towns in the UK - to wear its heart on its sleeve and sign up as a BHF Heart Town.
12. Darlington Borough Council has teamed up with the BHF to help put the heart into Darlington as part of the charity's 'Mending Broken Hearts' Appeal, which launched last year to mark the charity's 50th anniversary.
13. 'Heart Towns' is a scheme that helps to raise awareness of heart disease and will offer residents in Darlington a raft of support services including; schools initiatives, workplace health and health and lifestyle information resources. It will also help to bring the community together through local fundraising and volunteering to help beat heart disease.
14. This was launched with a photo call in front of the Town Hall on the 6th February 2012 which included amongst others the Director of Public Health, Jerry Murphy, Cardiologist, Darlington Memorial Hospital, the Mayor of Darlington, the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and myself.

Cigarette Plain Packaging Lobbying

15. The Darlington Tobacco Control Alliance along with FRESH (North East Tobacco Control Office) are committed to working together on the impending campaign about plain packaging of cigarettes and tobacco.
16. There is to be a Government consultation investigating 'whether the plain packaging of tobacco products could be effective in reducing the number of young people who take up smoking and in supporting adult smokers who want to quit'. This consultation is expected to last for three months and there will be action on a local, regional and national level once this consultation is launched.

Darlington Health Profiles

17. Darlington Health Profiles have been published by the Association of Public Health Observatories.
18. This profile provides a picture of health in the locality and it was designed to help Local Authorities and health services understand the needs of the community to enable work to improve people's health and reduce health inequalities.
19. The profile is grouped into five domains, as follows; our communities; children's and young people's health; adults' health and lifestyle; disease and poor health and life expectancy and causes of death.

20. The summary enables a comparison between regional average and national average and is based on a statistical analysis for specific detail and for that reason it was important to look behind the figures.
21. The profiles are useful as they provide a consistent comparison and trend analysis over a period of time. The information from these profiles informs the production of the Single Needs Assessment in Darlington.

Local HealthWatch

22. The current LINK contract has been extended to ensure continuity of service until the end of March 2013 in line with the revised national timetable for the development of HealthWatch.
23. Discussions are ongoing with other Tees Valley authorities and the NHS to look at the tender options for the advocacy element of HealthWatch. This would need to continue to provide a local service but would enable economies of scale for this specialist element of the agenda to be captured.
24. Funding for HealthWatch will not be confirmed until the autumn and for this reason a three level specification is being developed. The level of service will reflect different levels of funding that may be available. This will enable the deadlines for tendering to be met that allow for implementation from April 2013. Darlington will however receive £25,000 for start-up costs from government in addition to the ongoing allocation.

Darlington Partnership

25. In line with the implementation plan agreed by the Partnership Board in November, arrangements are being implemented for the new Darlington Partnership arrangements. Public sector agencies have now agreed how they will come together and take forward work within the Partnership. Along with what commitment they can give to the Partnership's Action Priorities, an important early focus for them is how they align their strategies.
26. A task and finish group established by the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee is supporting me in developing arrangements for the community to engage with the Partnership. The group has met twice and is currently considering a proposal which was presented at its last meeting which would give greater opportunity for elected members to be involved.
27. As I have previously reported, the Partnership is focusing much of its attention on how it can progress a limited number of Action Priorities. For this year these are:-
 - (a) Alcohol
 - (b) Vocational Opportunities for Young People
 - (c) Ageing
28. With the support of The Northern Echo, the Partnership is making significant progress in increasing vocational opportunities for young people. The 'Darlington Foundation for Jobs' was launched on the 26th January by the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend Justin Welby, who has agreed to be its patron. Since then The Northern Echo has the Foundation for Jobs as a regular feature, publicising opportunities offered by employers and also

'showcasing' young people looking for work. The initiative has set targets for apprenticeships, internships, number of young people engaged with business and numbers learning about self employment. It has already generated additional numbers of apprenticeship places and internships offered by employers in Darlington.

Equalities and Engagement

29. Talking Together activity has concentrated on the Council's budget and over 6,100 responses have been received through a range of activity including events, questionnaires, comment boxes, telephone, e-mail, twitter and Facebook.
30. Equalities activity has included work on all of the budget proposals and has involved engaging with people from a range of protected characteristics including the BME Network, Gay Advice Darlington and DAD. In addition, Darlington Borough Council has published its equalities analysis on the website which is a legal requirement. This sets out information about the population of Darlington and the ways that impact assessments have influenced service delivery to ensure that it meets the needs of this population.

Welfare Rights

31. At the end of January the caseload for the team was 184 cases and the waiting time for support has dropped to 3-4 weeks. In urgent cases, an emergency appointment can be made and in all instances a case allocation date is fixed with clients and referrers at time of enquiry.
32. Three clients have been represented at appeal hearings in January and two cases were won and one adjourned. During December, £81,604 in additional benefits was secured for clients and for the wider economy of Darlington.

Health and Well Being Board development

33. Development sessions are ongoing in relation to the formation of Darlington's Shadow Health and Well Being Board. It is proposed to commence Darlington's Shadow Health & Well Being Board in April 2012. The work programme for the Board will be finalised in time for the next Council update.
34. In March 2012 the Local Authority and Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group held a joint focus group to engage with local people who have either type 2 diabetes or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and find out what works well for them in managing their disease. The session also looked at finding out what does not work so well and how the support available can be improved in the future. Feedback from the session will be available through the Town Crier.

Councillor A Scott
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Partnerships