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## OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO

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### Purpose of the Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Health and Partnerships Portfolio.

### Public Health

2. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is in the process of reviewing existing services to support victims of domestic violence and developing a commissioning plan for service provision from 2015 onwards. It is intended to commission a holistic service, which provides support for victims and children and which aims to work with perpetrators to end their violent or controlling behaviour. In developing the plan, the commissioning group has had regard to the recommendations in the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance published in February 2014 relating to the commissioning and provision of domestic abuse services.
3. Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive, Public Health England (PHE), has recently announced that ground-breaking work in the North East to tackle smoking and tobacco harm has been recognised internationally with a prestigious award from the World Health Organisation (WHO). Now funded by all twelve local authorities in the North East, *Fresh* was the UK's first dedicated regional tobacco programme, set up in 2005 to tackle the worst rates of smoking related illness and death in England. *Fresh* is also acting as the tobacco lead for our North East PHE Centre. In the first five years of its existence smoking rates in the North East fell at twice the national average and in recognition of this, *Fresh* Director Ailsa Rutter has been awarded a WHO World No Tobacco Day medal. Mr Selbie bestowed his congratulations to her for this personal and professional achievement.
4. The movement supporting changes in legislation around Plain Packaging of cigarettes is gathering momentum and appears to have increasing political backing in the United Kingdom.
5. Increased use and promotion of E-cigarettes has sparked national and international debate around the safety of the products and regulatory options. This comes alongside NICE's release of Clinical Guidance on recommended use of Harm Reduction in smoking cessation.
6. Over 2013, the delivery model for Stop Smoking Services underwent a major restructure, moving away from a central, specialist service model, to enhanced delivery across numerous community providers including GPs, Pharmacies and

Dentists. Public Health is working with these providers to ensure quality service provision and improved access across the Borough. County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust have carried out a Smoke Free Families Project, targeted in the Firthmoor area of the Borough. This is one of the agreed work streams supporting the local Tobacco Control Plan.

7. On 16 May I represented the Council at the regional Make Smoking History Group.
8. Men's Health has been identified as a priority for the coming year. Starting with Men's Health week (9-15 June) staff were alerted to available support, tools and self-help through the weekly staff briefing with the support of Councillor Regan. Communicating through sport can be an effective way of getting men to think about their health and with a range of high profile sporting events happening locally and internationally over the Summer we will be looking to develop a 'film reel' of sports people giving their own tips on managing good health.
9. Mental Health has been identified as a Darlington Partnership priority for the next twelve months with a specific focus on addressing mental health and wellbeing through the workplace. We have engaged with the Darlington Cares Board to gather the views and priorities of local employers and have secured the support of the Board members in delivering a local project. The health and economic case for addressing mental health through the workplace is clear; a mentally healthy workforce is a productive one and good work is good for our mental health so a virtuous circle of individuals benefitting from work and employers benefitting from productivity and employee satisfaction can be the result of a healthy workplace. Additionally, recent estimates suggest that the costs of mental health problems in England may now be close to £105 billion, of which around £30 billion is work related with sickness absence due to mental health problems costing the United Kingdom economy £8.4 billion a year.
10. The public health team are on track with the major commissioning activity for 2014/15. Specifications have been reviewed for sexual health service and drug and alcohol services and procurement exercises will be launched in September to enable new contracts to be in place for 1 April 2015. Work is also under way to prepare 5-19 services for re-procurement and preparation for the Council to take on responsibility for 0-5 services in 2015. A specification harmonisation event took place in June with a range of local experts to refine the specifications, identify opportunities for joint working and spreading public health practice across the Council.
11. Following the implementation of the adult integrated drug and alcohol Connected Recovery treatment service in 2012, the DAAT (Drug and Alcohol Action Team) successfully launched a Recovery Centre in 2013. The Centre offers peer support, training and reintegration opportunities for service users who achieve abstinence, and is managed by Recovery Staff from the treatment service and service users in recovery. Service users are highly complementary of the service.
12. Balance, the North East Alcohol Office, is urging for time to be called on alcohol sports sponsorship. This coincides with the start of the FIFA World Cup. Balance launched the 'alcohol sponsorship: let's kick it out' campaign to highlight the

influence that alcohol marketing, and in particular sports sponsorship, has on children and young people. Balance has sponsored a team kit for Darlington Spraire Lads and Lasses Football Club. The under 9's team at the grassroots football club will be kitted out in a new strip for the upcoming season thanks to the deal. On 10 June 2014, I attended a photo call at Darlington Spraire Lads and Lasses training ground, Darlington South Park, to show my support to this campaign.

## **Darlington Partnership**

13. An overview of the initiatives instigated through the Darlington Partnership is as follows:

### **(a) Help Hubs**

- (i) Following the recommendation of the report the Partnership Board received in November 2013, a project development group has been meeting to develop outreach provision in communities for advice and help, now branded 'Help Hubs'.
- (ii) Help Hubs have now been established at St Mary's Community Centre in Cockerton on Thursday afternoons and at the King's Centre on Monday afternoons involving Darlington Food Store, Darlington Credit Union, Darlington Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Council's Contact Centre staff.
- (iii) Both locations are busy and reports from the agencies involved indicate that useful support has been provided helping people with debt and housing issues. Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) report that they are fully booked at Cockerton whilst the Credit Union report that it opened 19 new accounts at its last session at the Kings Centre.
- (iv) The development group is now drawing up a list of areas where there is identified need and compiling a list of likely venues.
- (v) Work is also underway to secure charitable funding.

### **(b) Printable guide to help and support**

- (i) Following an Assembly in January 2013, which focused on the emerging Welfare Reforms, an Action Group was formed, chaired by Karen Grundy, to monitor the reforms in Darlington and to instigate action to mitigate their impact. As the majority of the reforms are in place the Group now acts as an information network and will meet only when a specific issue needs to be addressed.
- (ii) One of the actions agreed by the Group has been to publish a printable guide of help and support. This now incorporates information about the Help Hubs. The guide will be circulated electronically so can quickly be revised and has been designed so that it can be easily printed and used

as a reference in, for instance, GP surgeries. The guide is available on the Council's intranet.

### **(c) Foundation for Jobs**

- (i) The Foundation for Jobs achieved the following for last year which exceeded each of the targets set.

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Apprentices	2	17	20	23	99	102	108	113	115	118	121	151	156
Interns	12	25	37	51	60	63	76	84	91	96	103	122 (tbc)	tbc
School links	15	349	408	469	499	549	634	934	974	1019	1019	1,269	1,419

- (ii) The totals since the start of the project in April 2012 are as follows:

- a) Apprenticeships: 279
- b) Internships/ work experience: 256
- c) School Links: 2531

- (iii) The current funding is due to come to an end at the end of March 2015. Work is currently underway to secure funding from stakeholders. In addition discussions are underway with Tees Valley Unlimited to see what resources it could secure for the initiative.

### **(d) Good Friends**

- (i) Good Friends has made exceptionally good progress in recruiting Good Friends with over 600 recruited. The rate of referrals made has also increased dramatically with 200 registered and many more being progressed. A meeting of the steering group has been called with a specific focus on assessing the project against the evaluation criteria that were set at the start of the programme.

### **(e) Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace**

- (i) At its last meeting in March 2014 the Board agreed that its Action Priority for 2014–15 should be mental health. In particular the focus of its action is to encourage Darlington employers to support their employees' mental wellbeing. Councillor Bill Dixon chairs the steering group that will develop the initiative.
- (ii) Work is underway to gain a view from employers of what their experience of mental health issues within their workforce have been and to identify what support would be useful to them.

## **Healthwatch**

14. Healthwatch organisations have to be in place in all local authorities as part of the Health and Social Care Act 2010. Tees Valley Authorities agreed that they would jointly commission an evaluation covering the whole of Tees Valley. The aim of the evaluation was to look at learning that could be shared and also to look at other issues that we may have in common that we needed to address jointly.
15. The Tees Valley report highlighted that there was disappointment at the support local Healthwatch had received from Healthwatch England and in particular the publicity campaigns had been less high profile than hoped. This meant that the profile of Healthwatch organisations is not as visible as it needs to be.
16. The Local Government Association had provided support at a national and regional level. This route was helpful in getting messages into the national policy arena. It also helped to develop a Local Outcomes and Development Tool to help with performance monitoring.
17. Locally an evaluation took place between February and May 2014 and as part of this 132 people from the Citizen's Panel responded to an awareness survey. 43 other people were invited to complete a 360 degree survey. Overall the response is very positive and it was viewed as performing well and engaging with the general public effectively.
18. As with all local organisations the challenge is to continue to increase membership and translate this into more activity from volunteers. Work to involve children and young people still needs to be developed and to find ways for them to have a say in health and social care issues that affect them. Social Media is well used by Healthwatch at a local level and may over time help with this but this is an area for further development.

## **Welfare Rights**

19. New claims for Personal Independence Payment are currently taking approximately 26 weeks to be processed compared with the twelve weeks for Disability Living Allowance which will result in enquiries being open longer than previously.
20. As a direct result of Welfare Rights input, £58,888 has been secured in additional benefits for individuals since April 2014.

## **Proposal to Support Credit Union Low Cost Loans**

21. Cabinet approved one-off funding of £50,000, from the 2013/14 underspend on Social Fund, to support the provision by the Credit Union of a low cost loan scheme for individuals to help fund the purchase of household white goods and/or electrical items.
22. The loan scheme with the Credit Union (in association with The Co-Operative Electrical) provides a credible and low cost alternative to individuals purchasing household white goods and electrical items through other forms of high cost

lending.

23. The Credit Union enables individuals to receive advice and support about saving and appropriate lending as well as helping them to avoid reaching crisis through high cost lending it also helps them to meet other commitments including payment of council tax and housing rent.

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**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Partnerships**