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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 main areas of work under my Health and Partnerships Portfolio were as follows.

**Public Health**

**Teenage Pregnancy**

2. A regional Public Health England Teenage Pregnancy workshop took place in October 2014. Key risk factors for pregnancy before eighteen years were identified as:
  - (a) free school meals eligibility;
  - (b) persistent school absence by Year 9; and
  - (c) slower than expected progress between Years 4 to 9.
3. Additionally, in tackling some of our key public health issues in Darlington such as smoking in pregnancy and breastfeeding uptake, it is important that support is accessible to this vulnerable group and this will need to be a feature of the new 0-19 years' service pathways, which are currently under development.
4. The Quarter 3 2013 conceptions rate for Darlington was 16.5 (eight conceptions) which is the lowest since March 1998.

**Fuel Poverty**

5. The Age UK Fuel Poverty project now has an appointments system in place at the King's Church food bank. Outreach has expanded to include home visits to housebound and vulnerable clients. Enquiries were made across all tenures, predominantly owner occupiers (65 per cent). Twenty-eight households (68 per cent) had a client with a disability or long term limiting health condition. Key issues that clients request support with include complaints against utility companies, billing errors and fuel arrears.

**Workforce**

6. The health of our own workforce is important and the Employee Survey provides a valuable insight into how, as an employer, the Council can contribute to improving

the health and wellbeing of our population. A focus group is currently reviewing the results of the Employee Survey and will make recommendations for addressing any issues raised by staff.

7. The opportunity to work more closely with the Department for Education on addressing workforce health has also recently been explored and a programme of joint work is being considered by our Public Health team.

### **Public Health Messages**

8. Darlington Borough Council was awarded best local authority for the 2014 Dry January 'Driday' night out. This was publicised in Darlington Together and at Darlington Partnership. The Council has also supported this year's Stoptober campaign, which focussed on the one in two smokers that will die from a smoking-related illness. Stop smoking information was provided at a local 'Eye Health' network event due to the link between smoking and sight loss. The Communications Team has also been briefed on social media messages for the 'blood in pee' campaign (kidney and bladder cancer) and this year's flu campaign.

### **Public Health Procurements**

9. In line with Council procedures, major procurements are now underway for specialist substance misuse services and sexual health services.

### **Workplace Mental Health**

10. The Darlington Partnership priority for mental health in the workplace is progressing well, with commitment from Darlington Cares Board members. A facilitated peer support scheme is being developed which will enable employers (supported by specialist advice) to exchange skills, knowledge and resources that support staff wellbeing. A website is under development to house approved resources with a 'brokerage' page where employers will be able to offer and request specific support. Specialist support for the project has been offered from Tees Esk and Wear Valleys Mental Health Trust, MIND and Mental Health Matters. A formal launch is proposed for this month.

### **The Future for Health and Wellbeing in the North East**

11. The Association of North East Councils (ANEC) hosted a health and wellbeing summit in October 2014, where Darlington Borough Council was well represented. Delegates had the opportunity to discuss public health, policy into practice, health and social care integration and systems for tackling health inequalities.

### **Darlington Partnership**

12. An Assembly was held which attracted an audience of 170 delegates. The focus was to explore how we ensure all children in Darlington get the best start in life. In

particular it looked at issues raised by the academies about how we can all work together to help reduce the attainment gap and address bullying, homophobia and racism.

13. A Conference was held in the Dolphin Centre on 28 November titled 'Prosperity for All'. The Conference explored and identified the areas for action which needed to be taken to ensure that all sections of the community benefited from the economic developments that have been secured for Darlington. The event was held as a panel debate. Panellists included Rt. Honourable Alan Milburn, Chair - Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, The Right Reverend Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, Margaret Whitehead, Chair, Inquiry on Health Equity for the North and Mike Matthews, Managing Director of Nifco UK Limited and European Operations Officer.
14. The date for the next Best of Darlington awards ceremony has been set for 22 May 2015.
15. The Partnership focuses on a limited number of 'Action Priorities', in order to instigate action which visibly addressed issues facing Darlington. The process for identifying Action Priorities occurs annually and starts with an analysis of Darlington's Single Needs Assessment. The Partnership Board draws from this a long list of issues which either give rise to particular concern or present opportunities for Darlington. The action priority for this year is helping local employers support mental wellbeing in the workplace.
16. The criteria used are:
  - (a) is the issue significant;
  - (b) would addressing it rely on the contributions of each sector, private, public, voluntary and community; and
  - (c) could a measurable impact be made in the short term (twelve months).

## **Healthwatch**

17. Healthwatch Darlington has been very busy over the past year and a brief overview of this can be found in the annual report at the link below:  
  
[http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/sites/default/files/healthwatch\\_darlington\\_annual\\_report\\_2013-14.pdf](http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/sites/default/files/healthwatch_darlington_annual_report_2013-14.pdf)
18. Healthwatch continues to engage with the residents of Darlington in a variety of ways and has over 1000 followers on social media. It is also engaging through four monthly access points at The Boathouse Café at St Andrews Church, Hollies Café, Darlington Memorial Hospital and the Hub based within the Dolphin Centre. Information and signposting takes place at various community events as well as attending joint PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings.

## **Welfare Rights**

19. During September £29,955 was secured, in additional benefit, for clients. The total raised to date from April 2014 is £120,298.
20. At the end of September the total caseload for the team was 55 cases.

## **Health and Well Being Board**

21. The Board considered a report of the FRESH-Smoke Free North East and the Director of Public Health relating to the vision from the 'Making Smoking History in the North East Partnership'. The vision aimed to reduce tobacco related harm and reduce tobacco smoking to a suggested regional level of below five per cent by 2025. It was hoped to achieve this by making tobacco less accessible, less affordable and less attractive by motivating and supporting smokers to stop, reducing uptake of smoking and protecting individuals and communities from tobacco related harm.
22. The Board considered a report of the North Durham CCG on the pertinent points within the national Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat which included the approach for developing and agreeing a local declaration and joint action plan in response to the Concordat.
23. Consideration was given to a joint report of the Darlington CCG and the Council which identified issues relating to clinical quality and personal care for Darlington residents for the period 1 April to 31 July 2014. We also noted the comments on the actions being taken to improve performance.
24. The Board also considered the work on co-production developed by elected representatives of voluntary and community sector organisations in partnership with the Council and in doing so accepted the principles and proposals made by the Group.

**Councillor A Scott**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Partnerships**