

To: Communities Policy Overview Committee

From: Mike Hill, Portfolio Holder, Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Communities

Subject: Public Health

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report notes the launch of the public health strategy for Kent and gives examples of the contribution that services within Communities make towards its goals. It also notes health and well being objectives in other frameworks to which the Directorate contributes.

FOR INFORMATION

1.0 Introduction

The Kent Department of Public Health was created as a new joint venture between KCC and the former Kent and Medway Strategic Health Authority (SHA) in 2005. The draft Strategy for Public Health in Kent was launched for consultation by the Department in May 2007 and aims to provide an overview of the areas where local authorities and Primary Care Trusts in Kent can work to improve the health of the people of Kent.

The strategy recognises in its preface that more information is required in order to provide an informative overview of the role of culture and the arts in improving public health, and invites responses to the draft strategy in order to ensure that input from partners and from KCC are well-represented.

A complete copy of the draft strategy can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/CE45FA7a-CC04-41CB-BF60-B96C0EDF0AF9/10239/strategyforpublichealthkent.pdf

2.0 The contribution of the Communities Directorate to the Draft Strategy for Public Health

Priorities and activity surrounding health and wellbeing issues for the coming year are identified in the Unit Business Plans approved by Cabinet on 16 April 2007. Many of the directorate's services play a role and their contribution to public health can be examined under five strategic themes:

2.1 Broad Reach

One of the hallmarks of the directorate's activity is that it has a big impact on the public health agenda: the broad reach of our services means that our staff come into contact with diverse groups of people with particular needs.

2.2 Health Promotion

A number of our services are concerned with health promotion. Libraries promote good health through healthy living fairs and family learning events, and Trading Standards work with providers of school meals and provide advice on healthy eating.

2.3 Health Protection and the Promotion of Safety

Our services have an important role to play in health protection through the work of Emergency Planning in recommending and implementing measures to be taken across the county in the instance of the outbreak of contagious disease, for example. Kent Scientific Services and Trading Standards also take measures through food testing and advice to ensure that school food is safe to eat.

2.4 Prevention

Services such as the Youth Offending Service, and the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT) promote an emphasis on the prevention of ill-health by providing advice around the impact of drug and alcohol misuse. Trading Standards encourage prevention of ill-health through work on targeting under-age sales of alcohol and tobacco.

2.5 Wellbeing

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the directorate is the ability of our services to raise aspirations for better health and wellbeing by promoting social interaction, providing improved opportunities for employment any by providing an opportunity to become involved in the wellbeing of the local community by volunteering and through cultural activities, for example.

The following outcomes are listed in the Public Health Strategy:

- Outcome 1 – A significant reduction in health inequalities
- Outcome 2 – Improved mental health and wellbeing for children
- Outcome 3 – Fewer people in Kent suffering heart disease
- Outcome 4 – Improved sexual health and fewer teenage pregnancies
- Outcome 5 – Reduced levels of substance misuse and alcohol above recommended levels.

Examples of the activity which the directorate already provides to support these outcomes can be found in Appendix One and this will be forwarded to the Kent Department of Public Health.

3.0 Performance Frameworks

Communities also contributes to the KCC's public health accountabilities in Towards 2010 and the Children and Young People's Plan as listed below:

3.1 Towards 2010

- Target 47: Create and launch initiatives that facilitate more competitive sport in schools, support after-school sports clubs and sponsor more inter-school competitions and holiday sports programmes
- Target 48: Increase opportunities for everyone to take regular physical exercise
- Target 49: Enter into practical partnerships with the NHS, sharing resources to combat obesity and to encourage people of all ages to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing.
- Target 50: Introduce a hard-hitting public health campaign targeted at young people to increase their awareness and so reduce the damaging effects of smoking, alcohol, drugs and early or unprotected sex.
- Target 51: Encourage healthy eating by providing nutritious lunches through the "Healthy Schools programme and launch a range of community-based healthy eating pilots.

3.2 Children and Young People's Plan

- P5: With partners, ensure that services continue to be developed to improve and promote healthy lifestyle outcomes for children.
- P6: Identify children and young people (aged 0-15) with emotional and/or psychological difficulties at the earliest possible stage and respond with the most effective support.
- P10: Promote the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of young children so they flourish at home and at school.
- P20: Take action to ensure that vulnerable children and young people have decent housing.

The fact that Communities supports the delivery of these targets is illustrative of its broad reach across a spectrum of activities which seek to promote improved health and wellbeing for the people of Kent.

4.0 Future Activities

Over the course of the next six months Communities will establish a directorate health network in order to consolidate the expertise within the directorate. We will also aim to contribute to work taking place within the authority on smoking cessation, and to further develop our approach to food and healthy eating.

5.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to NOTE the contribution that Communities is making towards the achievement of Public Health priorities in the county.

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