

By: Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services and
Performance Management
Director of Finance

To: Governance and Audit Committee – 1 December 2009

Subject: **Audit Commission: Health Inequalities**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The Audit Commission's 2008/09 audit plan included work to identify the nature and causes of health inequalities in Kent. The attached report sets out the conclusions of this work.

FOR INFORMATION

Introduction and background

1. The Audit Commission's Audit Plan for 2008/09 identified that there was evidence of health inequalities across the county area. In response to this issue the Audit Commission undertook a county-wide overview to identify the nature and causes of health inequalities. The review focussed on the work of the Local Strategic Partnership sub-groups, and aimed to answer the question: *"How effective are local partners in identifying local targets on health inequalities and delivering effective outcomes?"*
2. The work consisted of two stages:
 - an assessment of the current arrangements, and;
 - feedback of findings to each of the Local Strategic Partnership sub-groups across Kent to agree local action plans to reduce or remove the barriers to achieving fewer health inequalities.

Report conclusions

3. The report acknowledges that there is much good work ongoing across the county to tackle the issue of Health Inequalities. In relation to the specific assessment of current arrangements, the picture is variable, with many aspects of good practice, but also areas where it is recognised that more work is required to deliver effective outcomes. The review found no significant failures in the governance arrangements at the local level.
4. The work was intended to be a fact finding exercise, so no formal recommendations have been made for KCC to consider. The overview of the survey has been shared with the Kent Public Health Board, and the findings used to inform value for money conclusions at audited bodies across Kent. The findings will also be used to inform the CAA for KCC in 2009/10.
5. The work and the action planning of each of the Local Strategic Partnership sub-groups will be revisited by the Audit Commission in the future.

Recommendations

6. The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to:
 - **note** the output of the Audit Commission's analysis.

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