

Subject: Public Health
Date of Meeting: 17 September 2008
Report of: The Director of Strategy and Governance
Contact Officer: Name: Giles Rossington Tel: 29-1038
E-mail: Giles.rossington@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 At its 11 June 2008 meeting the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) agreed to form a working group to develop ideas for a 2008-2009 HOSC Work Programme. The working group produced a draft Work Programme which was subsequently adopted by the Committee at its 23 July 2008 meeting.
- 1.2 A key issue identified by the HOSC working group was Public Health. It was decided that the Director of Public Health should be invited to attend a Committee meeting to outline some of the major Public Health challenges facing the city in order to help HOSC members determine which aspects of the Public Health agenda might most valuably be explored in greater depth by the Committee (potentially via an ad hoc Panel).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members:

(1) note the report and the additional information provided by the Director of Public Health (reprinted in **Appendix 1** to this report);

(2) determine which aspect(s) of the Public Health agenda they might most usefully explore in greater depth (via an ad hoc Panel of the HOSC);

(3) determine the membership of any ad hoc Panel formed to investigate aspects of the Public Health agenda.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Effective Public Health is widely recognised as a key factor in improving the health of the population and in tackling local and national health inequalities.
- 3.2 Locally, Public Health is also strongly linked with corporate and city-wide priorities, particularly in terms of the city's economic development.
- 3.3 Local responsibility for Public Health is shared by Brighton & Hove City Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the City Council. The Director of Public Health is a joint PCT and Council appointment.
- 3.4 The Director of Public Health publishes an Annual Report highlighting aspects of the Public Health agenda which he regards as particular priorities. In the normal course of events, it might be deemed appropriate for HOSC to base its work in the Public Health arena on this Annual Report.
- 3.5 However, the 2008 Annual Report focuses on the health requirements of children and young people; that is, on an area of the Public Health agenda which lies within the remit of the Children & Young People's Overview & Scrutiny Committee (CYPOSC) rather than of the HOSC.
- 3.6 It has therefore been necessary to seek to identify other aspects of the Public Health agenda which may benefit from the HOSC's examination.
- 3.7 In determining which aspect(s) of Public Health to focus on, members should bear in mind:

(a) the restricted scope of ad hoc Panels - Panels are limited to a maximum of three meetings in public. Some elements of the Public Health agenda might, in consequence, be deemed too broad to be usefully scrutinised via an ad hoc Panel. (If a Panel is established to examine such a broad issue, members may wish to circumscribe its remit so as to ensure that an appropriate focus is maintained.)

(b) the need to "add value" to the issue being scrutinised; that is, a successful ad hoc Panel investigation should generally be one which makes a positive practical contribution to the issue being examined. Some elements of Public Health may be of considerable interest without necessarily being open to a great deal of influence at a local level; other

subjects might offer a better opportunity to make truly effective recommendations.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken in preparing this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report, other than in terms of allocating the resources of the Scrutiny team.

Legal Implications:

5.2 “The relevant constitutional restrictions in relation to Overview and Scrutiny work are referred to at paragraph 3.7 of this report. There are no further legal implications to draw to Members’ attention.”

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culpert; Date: 03.09.08

Equalities Implications:

5.3 There are wide variations in the health of city residents, some of which may meaningfully correlate with gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. Members should therefore be mindful of Equalities issues when determining which aspects of the Public Health agenda to explore and should ensure that Equalities considerations are central to planning the work of any ad hoc Panel.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 There are no direct sustainability implications to this report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 Some aspects of the Public Health agenda (e.g. issues relating to alcohol and/or substance misuse) may have implications for Crime & Disorder.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 Public Health issues are typically not discrete, but rather correlate strongly with issues such as employment (i.e. people who live healthier lifestyles are more likely to find and retain employment). In consequence, improvements in aspects of Public Health may have a positive impact over and above their direct affect upon the health of city residents and members should be aware of such opportunities.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Improving Public Health is a key factor in “reducing inequality by increasing opportunity”, one of the Council’s corporate priorities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Additional information supplied by the Director of Public Health.

Documents in Members’ Rooms:

1. None

Background Documents:

1. None