

TITLE OF REPORT: BRIEFING NOTE ON HEALTH REFORM

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: CLLR TONY HUNTER

1 Introduction and context

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 was introduced to put clinicians at the centre of commissioning, responsible for buying the services which they need to treat their local community. Members will already be aware that this transition commenced approximately 18 months ago, with existing structures and new structures working in parallel to aid the transition. The new Health and Care system came into being on April 2013. Primary Care and Strategic Health Trusts have now ceased to exist.

2 Key Changes**2.1 Clinical Commissioning Groups**

North Herts is unusual in that it is now covered by two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) - the majority of the district is covered by the East and North Herts CCG, with GPs for Royston and surrounding villages opting to join the Cambridge and Peterborough CCG. The H&S Care Act makes CCGs directly responsible for commissioning services they consider 'appropriate to meet reasonable local needs'.

CCGs have additional duties, including securing continuous improvements in quality of care, reducing inequalities, enabling choice, promoting patient involvement and promoting innovation – areas which PCTs were not statutorily required to deliver.

CCGs will be required to obtain advice from people with a broad range of professional expertise. They must also work with the local Health and Wellbeing Boards, in assessing local needs, and developing commissioning plans to meet them.

2.2 Priority areas for Hertfordshire

Each Health and Wellbeing Board is responsible for developing, publishing and delivering its strategic plan, stemming from the collection of data i.e. 'Joint Strategic Needs Assessment'. The local authority are required to maintain a joint assessment of the Health, Care and Wellbeing needs of their population and are required to base their strategies and commissioning plans upon this. The Hertfordshire H&Wb Strategy identifies nine priorities for action, which are;

Healthy Living

- Reducing the harm caused by alcohol
- Reducing the harm from tobacco
- Promoting healthy weight and increasing physical activity

Promoting Independence

- Fulfilling lives for people with learning disabilities
- Living well with dementia
- Enhancing quality of life for people with long term conditions

Flourishing Communities

- Supporting carers to care
- Helping all families to thrive
- Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing Increasing physical activity and promoting healthy weight

Further needs analysis has been undertaken by the policy team to identify the degree to which these priorities are an issue in North Hertfordshire, and we have attached details of local demographics as Appendix A to this paper.

2.3 Funding

Each Herts District has previously been allocated a £10,000 annual grant toward schemes to address health inequalities. This fund is managed by the local Health and Wellbeing Partnership (a sub partnership to the LSP), with representatives from a very wide range of agencies receiving presentations by local groups. This year the fund was match funded by the LSP so increasing the fund to £20,000. For 2013, the following have already received funding,

- Groundwork Hertfordshire were awarded £4,290 for the project 'Mind over Matter'.
- Child UK working with Youth Connexions, NHDC Community Safety team and Hitchin Town Football Club were awarded £3,150 for the 'North Herts Your Friday
- Home-Start North Herts were awarded £4,592 for the project 'Choices for Health, Fitness and Fun'.
- LearnIT, a not-for-profit Social Enterprise specialising in the delivery of supplementary education support programmes for children, young people and adults in the North Hertfordshire community was awarded £3,944 for the project 'Film and Fitness'.
- North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum were awarded £2,625 for the project 'Health and Wellbeing for the BME people'.
- Sport North Herts were awarded £1,399 towards the cost of the Hertfordshire Youth Games 2013.

The future of this funding is yet to be determined, with one option being that the total £100k remain at a county level for devolution to appropriate projects via the Public Health Board, but this will not be confirmed until late in 2013.

2.4 Patient voice

In April 2013, Health Watch Hertfordshire (HwH) commenced work, taking on new powers and responsibilities from the former 'LiNks' organisation. The Chair, Sarah Wren MBE, will develop and lead HwH as a fully independent organisation, setting the strategic plan, delivering strong governance and sitting on Hertfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board.

2.5 North Herts Mental Health Forum

The Joint Commissioning Team from HCC are organising the North Herts Mental Health Forum to be held at NHDC council offices at the end of June. This event, by invitation only, will be attended by approx. 40 people from the district.

The JCT feel that with the Clinical Commissioning Groups now emerging a more local initiative to engage, inform and link up with localities is required. They are aiming for a Mental Health Forum for each locality/district council area in Hertfordshire which will identify any gaps in provision and identify priorities. They would like to engage as many local stakeholders as possible so that they can build an up to date local profile of mental health services in North Herts.

The JCT have produced a Mental Health Profile for the North Herts District in preparation for this event and this can be seen at Appendix B.

2.6 New focus for public health

At the local level, the Act gives local authorities the responsibility for improving the health of their local populations. The Act says that local authorities must employ a director of public health, and they will be supported by a new ring-fenced budget. The Act requires directors of public health to publish annual reports that can chart local progress. The Government believes that many of the wider determinants of health (for example, housing, economic development, transport) can be more easily impacted by local authorities, who have overall responsibility for improving the local area for their populations. Local authorities are well-placed to take a very broad view of what services will impact positively on the public's health, and combine traditional "public health" activities with other activity locally to maximise benefits.

A new Public Health Board has been created for Hertfordshire; this is an officer board which sits just below the Health and Well Being Board, and is intended to provide relevant demographic evidence, expertise and support to drive wider 'public health improvement' to contribute to residents' overall health. The officer representative for North Herts is Liz Green, Head of Policy and Community Services.

The first work undertaken by this board is to identify that range of services already provided by Herts Districts, an audit for which the NHDC contribution is appended as Appendix C to this paper.

2.7 Improving quality of care

The Health and Social Care Act placed greater duties on health organisations not only to deliver health care free at the point of access, in a timely manner but to ensure that its quality also improves wherever possible.

This need to ensure quality has also been recognised in terms of inpatient and residential health care, and the Queen's Speech recently included a commitment from government to introduce greater measures in terms of what patients can expect in terms of nursing and clinical care in the future.

2.8 Partnership activity and representation

The Hertfordshire HWB includes representatives from NHS Hertfordshire and clinical commissioning groups, Hertfordshire Healthwatch, County and District councils. Cllr. Lynda Needham is on the HWB as representative of district councils along with the leader of Watford Borough Council.

Officer involvement in local Health and Wellbeing is both through the North Herts Health and Wellbeing partnership, including voluntary and community representatives as well as health and CCG reps, and Hertfordshire Policy and Partnerships Network attending by representatives of all the districts including NHDC Head of Policy and Community Services or a nominated substitute. The Public Health Board, also an officer group, is resourced by the Head of P&CS.

Health scrutiny arrangements remain the responsibility of Herts County Council, with Cllr Alan Bardett representing North Herts. However, changed regulations will permit referral of health 'concerns' upward to the County Council's Executive rather than it necessarily remaining with, or being dealt with solely by the overview and scrutiny committee.