

### **Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee Drugs Study Review Group**

Notes from meeting held on 28 September with representatives from the following drug prevention agencies – Gloucestershire DAAT Project, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury PCT, Youth Service (Gloucestershire), Gloucestershire LEA, Gloucestershire Drugs and Alcohol Service (GDAS), Cheltenham Regeneration Partnership, and Cheltenham Community Projects (CCP)

---

#### **Gloucestershire DAAT Project – Colin Hassell**

(See copy of presentation provided to the group – as attached)

- Colin expressed major concerns with regards the factual contents of CBCs drugs study which was commissioned by the council from the University of Gloucestershire. He believed the report is factually incorrect and also failed to consult with the wide range of organisations involved in tackling drug issues in Cheltenham, which makes the report of limited value only. *This concern was also voiced by the other agencies present.*
- Colin also stated that young people were poorly represented in the report
- Colin confirmed that DAAT are targeting prevention at young people and are currently working on a project with GOSW
- Healthcare Commission is reviewing substance abuse/misuse services – these were rated as 4 out of a 1 to 4 rating with 4 representing excellent services
- Colin confirmed that alcohol prevention only receives a small amount of funding support via the PCT and the NHS
- An Emergency Department Programme was launched in Cheltenham in 2006 as part of a countywide LAA bid
- Colin informed the group that the majority of support services are concentrated in Gloucester, rather than in Cheltenham, although the level of users in Cheltenham and Gloucester are similar

#### **Cheltenham and Tewkesbury PCT – Steve Hams**

(See copy of presentation provided to the group – as attached)

- Steve confirmed that he believed that alcohol related problems needed to be considered more widely than they are currently.
- Alcohol related problems with young people were discussed and it was agreed that alcohol problems with young people was a major problem in Cheltenham, especially if this involves getting parents actively involved in treatment programmes. GDAS confirmed that they are looking at the needs of children when they are supporting their parents with their own alcohol addictions and problems. It was agreed that there needs to be more done to *safe guard the needs of children*
- Steve stated that there is little information available regarding drug concerns with parents rather than alcohol concerns

#### **Youth Service (Gloucestershire) – Mags Goodall**

(See copy of presentation provide to the group – as attached)

- Mags stated that alcohol problems with young people are the biggest problem seen by the Youth Service
- Naunton Park was highlighted as having a particular concern with cocaine usage.
- Tony and Bernice suggested that the council should consider undertaking an audit of the rubbish found in the council's green spaces in order to help identify the parks with the biggest problems for alcohol and drugs usage (i.e. record numbers of bottles, cans, needles, wraps, etc.. found in the parks over an agreed timeframe). This audit could also involve the Keep Cheltenham Tidy Group and the Community Rangers. Drug problems on the Welch Road playing fields were also highlighted

## Appendix B

- Mags confirmed that the Youth Service were providing a mentoring service in four schools in Cheltenham, and that the GAP Project was working in three secondary schools. (The police support these projects)
- Steve and Tony both stated that they believe there are major issues with the self esteem of young people and there needed to be much more proactive work undertaken with 11 to 13 year olds.
- It was agreed that projects with young people need to focus on intervention not just on prevention and also that drug education/prevention work with young people needed to start early both at school and with the Youth Service (Issues about who should set the agenda for these projects was discussed and it was agreed that young people should be involved in helping set the agenda)
- A major concern about the wide availability and advertising of alco-pops was raised, especially as it was agreed that alco-pops are a major starting point for many children getting into alcohol and then drugs related problems. It was suggested that more targeted work needs to be done with Year 8 pupils to raise awareness about this subject /problem

### **Gloucestershire LEA – Tony France**

(see copy of presentation provided to the group – as attached)

- Tony provided an informative presentation in relation to the LEAs recent drugs survey project
- 16,500 responses were received in relation to a countywide survey (Gloucestershire pupils aged 11 to 15 years of age) Tony stated that he believed that 70% of children had been picked up by this survey
- Gloucestershire LEA has 5 No Integration units and 3 No. Project Service units
- Tony stated that it was proving extremely difficult to work with young people who are not in main stream education

### **Gloucestershire Drugs and Alcohol Service (GDAS) – Beverly Polson**

- GDAS are funded principally by DAAT and offer a range of alternative treatments, training and referral schemes for people with drugs and alcohol problems, as well as providing support to people in their own homes
- The majority of GDAS's clients are self-referred
- GDAS offer an outreach service which covers BME communities as well as other hard to reach communities and they are continuing to look at how they engage with local communities. GDAS now plan to push this service more widely, as well as undertaking more needs assessments
- GDAS provide services to people aged 16 years and over

### **Cheltenham Substance Action Group (SAG)**

- Bernice raised concerns with regards the role and work of the SAG group, as she felt that they were not doing enough in Cheltenham, and suggested that the SAG approach needed to refocused and given more priority.
- Concerns were raised with regards the administration of the SAG group as the SAG group did not currently have an dedicated support role. DAAT agreed that they would consider supporting this function. It was also suggested that the membership of the SAG group should be readdressed in order to ensure that all relevant agencies and partners were actively involved in progressing the work of the SAG group
- Steve suggested that the role of regeneration in tackling drugs and alcohol issues should be considered more widely, and suggested that the Cheltenham Regeneration Partnership and the CSP should consider taking more of a lead on addressing these issues.
- Trevor agreed to raise concerns about the long term future of the SAG group wit the CDRPs partners
- In essence the group agreed that the SAG group needed to be given a new brief and more focus

### Key issues raised during the discussion:

Partners and potential funders need to look at opportunities to:

- establish more local drug prevention programmes aimed specifically at young people
- expand the level of drug and alcohol support services provided from Cheltenham (since majority of services currently have a Gloucester focus)
- raise the profile of, as well as peoples awareness of alcohol related problems
- expand the availability of information about drugs and alcohol issues – including information specifically targeted at young people
- expand the role of and involvement of parents with young people with drug treatment and support programmes
- tackle the illegal sale and growing consumption of alco-pops by young people
- expand current level of self esteem programmes aimed at young people (11 to 13 year olds)
- establish more/expand drugs intervention projects
- work more actively with young people to develop drug programmes for use in schools and by the Youth Service, and other agencies

### Specific CBC opportunities

- undertake an audit of the council's green spaces to determine the true extent of drugs and alcohol abuse problems in the council's parks. Possible joint project with the Community Rangers and Keep Cheltenham Tidy Group
- Extend the numbers of alcohol free zones in Cheltenham and ensure that all of the council's green spaces are covered + enforce

### Cheltenham Substance Action Group (SAG)

- existing SAG partners to work with other key agencies to refocus the SAG group and ensure that the group and its work has a higher profile + review resourcing needs for the SAG group
- ensure that the membership of the SAG group is extended to include all agencies and organisations which are actively involved in drugs prevention and support work
- SAG group to establish a deliverable work plan / action plan which has achievable outcomes