

# ***Information/Discussion Paper***

## **Social and Community Overview & Scrutiny**

**5 September 2011**

### **Review of Healthy Lifestyles work and future plans following national changes to Public Health within NHS**

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

#### **1. Why has this come to scrutiny?**

- 1.1 In 2007/08, Cheltenham Borough Council created a post of Healthy Lifestyles Development Officer, part funded by NHS Gloucestershire. The focus of the post is to develop and support a wide range of targeted community initiatives which promote healthy lifestyles, in support of the NHS target to reduce health inequalities across the Borough.
- 1.2 The initial 3 year funding agreement ended in March 2011, although NHS Gloucestershire extended their financial contribution for a further 12 months through until March 2012. As a result of national changes within the NHS, and the movement of the public health function into top tier local authorities, funding beyond March 2012 cannot currently be confirmed. This paper aims to highlight the work carried out over the past four years, and to encourage members to support efforts to maintain the role.

#### **Summary of the Issue**

- 1.3 During 2007/08 discussions took place between Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cheltenham & Tewkesbury PCT (now incorporated into NHS Gloucestershire) with regards to building closer links between the work of the council and the public health team. This recognised the contribution that the work of a range of council services made to the wider determinants of health, and the environments within which people lived. This relationship formed the basis of the Choosing Health 2005 policy framework, which called for LAs and the NHS to adopt healthy communities and health inequalities as a shared priority.
- 1.4 Whilst the Choosing Health policy framework had implications across a range of LA services areas (including housing, transport, education, leisure and employment), the focus of the NHS match funding was to specifically support the creation of a full time Healthy Lifestyles Development Officer post, employed by CBC, which would have a focus on the following priority action areas;
  - Obesity – Physical Activity & Healthy Eating
  - Mental Health

- Sensible drinking
- Smoking Cessation & Substance Misuse
- Sexual Health

**1.5** The post works closely with a range of specialists responsible for each of the above areas of public health, and facilitates partnership working in relation to healthy lifestyles work across the Borough. The post also plays an active role in the Health & Wellbeing Partnership, providing support to instigate and embed a wide range of funded projects delivered by local voluntary community groups and partner agencies.

## **2. Selected Highlights and Achievements**

**2.1** Following the flooding damage at Leisure@ in summer 2007, it was decided that the initial focus for the post should be physical activity, and the creation of a community outreach programme incorporating a range of community exercise classes, health walks and running groups. Having successfully established the community programme, links were created with health professionals and GPs to encourage patient referral into the programme. This outreach work formed the basis of the Re-Active exercise referral programme that is now being managed through Leisure@ to great success, alongside the Active Lifestyles programme which offers group exercise classes and sports activity sessions within the centre.

**2.2** The Walk Well health walks programme continues to operate successfully, with 9 volunteer led walks now taking place each week throughout the year, with average of between 75 – 100 walkers taking part each week.

**2.3** A number of women's running groups have also been established from various locations, which provide a safe and supportive environment for women keen to get active to exercise together. Three groups continue to operate, with more than 250 women having joined running groups over the last 2 years. The HLDO post also organised the Sport Relief charity events in 2008 and 2010, with more than 900 runners of all ages and abilities taking part in the latest event.

**2.4** A healthy eating project has recently been established and delivered for targeted families in support of the Inspiring Families project. Through the initiative low income families were identified by 6 primary schools and were invited to attend a series of healthy cooking sessions led by an experienced cook. Fun healthy activities were provided for the children whilst the cooking sessions took place, and each family took home the healthy meals that they had prepared, as well as a free vegetable box and an easy to learn recipe book. A total of 21 families attended the sessions, and are now being invited to attend a celebratory event that is being hosted by the University.

**2.5** Other notable successes over the past 3 years include ;

- A series of chair based exercise classes in sheltered housing units to reduce the risk of falls by older people.
- Well attended one off events linked to Mental Health Awareness and National Older Peoples Week, that have involved a wide range of partner agencies
- A number of publicity campaigns raising awareness of underage drinking, and the

dangers of smoking (linked to Cheltenham Town Football Club)

- A 6 month healthy eating project for young people that operated from the Springbank Youth Centre
- The production of a video promoting emotional health & wellbeing, featuring a gardening project that catered for patients with mental health conditions

### 3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Following the announcement of proposed changes within the NHS and the funding for Public Health, the position in respect of match funding for the Healthy Lifestyles Development Officer post is unclear. Officers continue to work closely with the Public Health Team to explore funding opportunities and the opportunity for council services to be commissioned to deliver targeted programmes.
- 3.2 Through the Leisure & Culture review, officers and members are also looking at building on the synergy between Leisure@ and the development outreach Sport, Play & Healthy Lifestyles Team, and will offer recommendations later in the year.
- 3.3 In the meantime, committee are encouraged to consider the success of the Healthy Lifestyles work achieved to date, and to support the continuation of related work, which will enable officers to explore a range of options looking forward.

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<b>Background Papers</b>	Towards A Commissioning Strategy for Leisure & Culture Outcomes  (Social & Community O&S, July 11 <sup>th</sup> 2011 and Cabinet 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2011)
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<b>Scrutiny Function</b>	Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny