

To: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14th December 2011

Item No:

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: Select Committee – Public Health

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide background and context to the Select Committee on the topic of Public Health

Lead Members: Councillor Graham Jones, Councillor Dee Sinclair

Policy Framework: Strong and Active Communities

Introduction

1. Oxford has areas of significant and stubborn inequality where poor prospects and poor health combine to produce a cycle of deprivation that passes from generation to generation. Oxfordshire Public Services have prioritised the breaking of this cycle through the delivery of targeted services and partnership programmes through the Regeneration Framework.
2. Public Health issues are significant within this cycle and health interventions through advice, education, self help, training and support play a part in efforts to improve outcomes. The task is significant and engaging the right people in the right place in a sustainable way is always a challenge. Local access to community based programmes either formal or informal can provide for better outreach opportunities by providing convenient places for people to engage in activities and be supported.
3. With this in mind, the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee established a small group tasked with setting up a Select Committee to explore some aspect of public health. The Lead Members on this select committee, Councillors Jones and Sinclair, decided to focus on the means by which City Council owned Community Centres are, or can be, used as part of that “local offer”

through programmes and activities aimed at well being and health improvement. This necessitated research and face to face meetings with both health professionals and relevant officers from within the City Council.

Select Committee Guiding Question

4 What are the means by which City Council owned Community Centres are, or can be, used as part of a “local offer” through programmes and activities aimed at well being and health improvement?

5 Our eventual aim is to try to answer the question and make recommendations through a Select Committee report to the City Executive Board and the various partnership bodies involved. To support this Lead Members have decided to concentrate in the following areas:

- Health Professionals
- Sports and exercise in particular for young people and the elderly
- Ways to complement the work of Sure Start Centres

6 More information is given on each of these below and witnesses have been invited to speak and answers questions.

Community Centres

7. The City Council has 19 Community Centres mostly in the centres of the various communities in the City. They are run and managed by Community Associations made up of local people and as such are significant community assets. They come together in a representative group called the Oxford Federation of Community Associations.

8 All community centres are managed by community associations within a lease agreement with the City Council.

9 The City Council and its partners use community centres to deliver programmes and activities so there are already useful activities in centres that address health and well being issues in communities

10 Further information on community centres is attached at **Appendix 1**.

11 The following people have been invited to attend the meeting:-

Angela Cristofoli – Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager.

Locality Officer (to be confirmed)

Health professionals

12 The following people have been invited to attend the meeting.

Dr Joe McManners, - local GP, The Manor Surgery, Headington.

Dr Peter Von Eichstorff – local GP, Bartlemas Surgery, East Oxford Health Centre

13. Suggested starting point for questioning

- Are GPs in the City well located?
- Do GPs refer people to local health improvement initiatives (stop smoking clinics, exercise classes, diet groups)?
- If so, are they able to find them locally?
- If they cannot find the local services that they need, would they be interested in using a community centre to help deliver those services?
- If they would, what services do they realistically expect could be delivered from community centres?

Related issues:-

- Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) – how can the Council feed into the HWB priorities?
- Where we could best focus efforts? - stressing the interest from the Council would be city-wide only.

Sport and exercise in particular for young people and the elderly

14 The following people have been invited to attend the meeting:

Lucy Cherry – Leisure Manager, Oxford City Council

Neil Holman – Active Communities Partnership Manager

15 Information on suggested ways by which we could increase the Health & Well being offer in City Community Centres is attached as **Appendix 2**.

16 Suggested starting point for questioning

- What can the City Council do to increase participation in sport and exercise via our community centres?
- Are community centres able to accommodate new initiatives?
- If not, what barriers are there? Size, access to buildings, location?
- Does the City Council have the staff capacity to deliver new initiatives?
- Does the City Council have the budget to deliver new initiatives?

- Can we go beyond just Community Centres into “community facilities”, that is, places where the City Council works in partnership with others or has sufficient influence?
- If yes, can we have an example of a suitable location?

Related issue:

- FUSION – how do they deliver outreach work? Are community centres involved?
- Can we have an example of outreach work by FUSION?

Ways to complement the work of Sure Start Centres

- 17 There are 10 Sure Start/Children’s Centres within Oxford. These deliver a large number of services, mainly focussed on parental support and related issues, but also in some cases educational services.
- 18 Oxfordshire County Council is currently carrying out a review of Sure Start Centres. This is the 2nd part of the Early Intervention Review. It was rather too early to say what the outcome of this review would be. It was understood that the review was not an exercise to make savings, but that Children’s Centres were a pilot scheme for “payment by results.” The County was looking for efficiencies and service improvements.
- 19 The Early Intervention Hubs are apparently keen to do outreach work in the Community Centres, and for the City Council to place some of its services in the Hubs. Close links between Hubs and Community Centres existed or were being built in some areas.
- 20 There are many different centres for children in Oxford run by a variety of providers. The aim is to try to develop a more uniform service across the City, but with some local flexibility. However, it is intended that all services would be contracted out and the contract is currently being drawn up
- 21 Although the Lead Members identified a number of issues arising from the above, it was subsequently decided that, as the Sure Start system is in a state of flux, it would be best to have the conversation about their role and how it might complement that of Community Centres, on another occasion.
- 22 The Committee is asked to simply note the current position, with a view to exploring it further at a later date once the arrangements for Sure Start Centres and Early Intervention Hubs is know.
- 23 **However**, should the Committee wish to explore this further, the following starting points for questioning are suggested:-
- What do Sure Start Centres deliver in Oxford? What gaps exist?

- Are there capacity issues? Anything the Centres would like to do but are unable to?
- Could community centres play a role here?
- Would new initiatives from a Sure Start Centre fit at a community centre?

Related issues:

- Councillors interested to know what impact any funding changes would have on a Sure Start centre.

24 The following people have been invited to attend the meeting and will be able to provide some limited information on the above

Val Johnson – Partnership Development Officer, Oxford City Council

Jackie Wilderspin – Oxfordshire PCT

Rounding up and answering the question

25 The intention is not to necessarily make recommendations at this meeting. Councillor Jones will support the committee to decide:

- What conclusions can we draw from what we have heard?
- Do we need any further information?
- Do we need to take any further evidence?
- How should we progress to recommendations?

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Background papers: None

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