

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
ALL-MEMBER MEETING**

Date: 7 February 2012

Subject: Public Health: local government's role in improving community health outcomes:

- a) The new health landscape for South East local authorities: Dr Ruth Hussey, Director of Public Health, Public Health England.
- b) Cross-tier partnership working and the Kent Health Commission: Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health, Kent.

Report by: Nick Woolfenden, SEEC Head of Policy Co-ordination

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- i. Note the background briefings on key changes underway for health service delivery and implications for local government,
- ii. Discuss the role and implications for local government in providing vision and leadership to deliver better health for communities, and
- iii. Discuss with Public Health England the relationship it expects to have with local government and how this will influence service delivery.

1. Introduction

1.1 Major changes are underway in the way health services are planned and delivered, with significant implications and opportunities for local government. The Health and Social Care Bill, introduced to Parliament in January 2011, and the White Paper 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People' set out the Government's vision for a reformed public health system in England. To help tackle the significant challenges around public health and wellbeing, key elements of the reforms include:

- Local authorities are to lead local efforts to improve the public's health and wellbeing, ensuring health services are well integrated with other local policy and services. Ring fenced budgets will be given from April 2013, likely to be a share of around £5.2bn nationally.
- Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) are to be established as formal committees of County and Unitary authorities to maximise integration between local government, NHS, public health and social care. The Government currently plans to leave decisions about how District Councils and other partners are engaged in HWBs to be determined locally.
- HWBs will develop Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and joint health and wellbeing strategies, which will set the local framework for commissioning health care, social care and public health services.
- Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) will be abolished, although Regional Directors of Public Health are responsible for transition to future arrangements in their areas and PCTs remain responsible for public health until April 2013.

- Clinical Commissioning Groups of GP practices are to be established to organise services for their local populations, supported by a national NHS Commissioning Board.
- A new national agency, Public Health England, will oversee delivery of improved health and wellbeing, deliver some services and support the development of the public health workforce - more information is in section 2 of this report.
- County and Unitary authorities will employ Directors of Public Health to help deliver their new role, as joint appointments with Public Health England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health.
- There will be a stronger focus on outcomes; a Public Health Outcomes Framework was published by the Department of Health in January 2012¹ setting out key indicators of public health, that will demonstrate progress towards increasing healthy life expectancy and reducing health inequalities.
- The NHS will continue to play a key role in providing care and tackling inequalities; within Government, the Department of Health will set the legal and policy framework, secure resources and make sure public health is central to the Government's priorities.

1.2 Subject to the passage of the Health and Social Care Bill, transfer of public health responsibilities to local authorities and the establishment of Public Health England will be complete by April 2013. Shadow and joint arrangements are already helping make progress.

1.3 To help members consider the impact for their local area, two speakers will explain different aspects of the changes, and members are encouraged to discuss key issues with them.

2. The new health landscape for South East local authorities: Dr Ruth Hussey, Director of Public Health, Public Health England (Please note, Anita Marsland, PHE Transition Managing Director, also hopes to be able to attend the meeting).

2.1 Public Health England (PHE) is being created as a new integrated public health service. It will bring together the national health protection service and nationwide expertise across all aspects of public health. It becomes fully operational in April 2013, but is already set up to work towards this transition date.

2.2 PHE will have three key functions:

- Deliver services to protect public health through a nationwide integrated health protection service, provide information and intelligence to support local public health services, and support the public in making healthier choices.
- Provide leadership to the public health delivery system, promoting transparency and accountability, building the evidence base, managing relationships with key partners, and supporting national and international policy and scientific development.

¹ <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/01/public-health-outcomes/>

iii. Support the development of the public health workforce, jointly appointing local authority Directors of Public Health, supporting excellence in public health practice and providing a national voice for the profession.

2.3 PHE will bring together the wide range of public health specialists and bodies into one integrated service. It will have a national office and centres of expertise, plus units that support of local authorities in their area. PHE will be an executive agency of the Department of Health and is currently recruiting a Chief Executive.

2.4 Members may wish to discuss progress towards PHE's formal establishment, and the relationship it expects to have with local government and how this will inform policy and service delivery. For more information, the Department of Health has recently published a series of fact sheets on the changes, available at <http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/public-health-system/>.

3. Cross-tier partnership working and the Kent Health Commission: Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health, Kent.

3.1 To help develop the vision and strategy for the Kent Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (one of 132 local authority 'early implementers' nationally), a Kent Health Commission has been set up. The Commission is chaired jointly by Cllr Paul Carter (Kent County Council), Cllr Paul Watkins (Dover District Council) and Charlie Elphicke MP. It brings together local authority representatives, local GPs and other health- and social-care professionals to examine how partners can work together to:

- Redesign Kent's health and social care services according to local need.
- Implement reforms to health and social care to improve service quality and health outcomes.
- Harness local expertise to improve services to meet needs.
- Join up services in the interests of patients, enabling easy access.
- Empower local health professionals, including GPs, to develop better services that are more accountable to local people.
- Forge links between different local health and social care providers, to ensure effective working relationships in the interests of patients.
- Ensure that new commissioning organisations such as the GPs' Clinical Commissioning Groups have the right support to implement change.
- Identify and spread examples of good local practice.

3.2 Joining up the various health-related functions of District and County councils can help simplify and streamline provision and address some of the underlying causes of poor health. The Commission will produce a vision for health and social care in Kent and will engage with the public and health professionals during 2012 on how this can be implemented.

3.3 Members may wish to discuss lessons learnt so far from Kent's approach to progressing the health reforms through cross-tier and partnership working, as well as sharing information on actions under way in their own areas. For more information see http://www.kent.gov.uk/health_and_wellbeing/kent_health_commission.aspx