

Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care 26 March 2009

Report of the Director of Public Health/Director of the Urban Environment

Update on Dudley's Healthy Town Programme

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care of the status of the Let's Go Outside programme, Dudley's Healthy Town Initiative

Background

2. The Healthy Towns Programme was funded from the Community Challenge Fund, which is jointly funded by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department for Children and Family Services (DCFS). The total fund was £30 million.
3. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Local Authorities (LA) were invited in mid June 2008 to submit an expression of interest to apply to run a three year programme that could show an impact and an approach to preventing childhood obesity.
4. Over 160 applications from PCT/LAs were received at first stage deadline on the 11th July 2008.
5. Dudley was one of 22 successful applicants and a full second stage bid was required by the 30th September 2008, and Dudley was again successful being 1 of the 12 areas invited to present it's case to a Cross Government panel at the offices of the DoH.
6. A delegation of four staff, the Director of Public Health plus one from the PCT and two from the LA (from Directorate of the Urban Environment and Children's Services) presented Dudley's Project to the panel.
7. The successful towns were announced on 10th November in Westminster, and received national press and media coverage with Dudley being one of 9 towns working towards the aspirational target of being a 'Healthy Town'.

8. Dudley's programme focuses on three main areas.

- The development of family healthy hubs, based in parks and open spaces.
- The development of active green corridors.
- Service reform.

The programme items to be funded from these external sources are but one part of Dudley's strategic approach to tackling the high levels of obesity in the borough. The bid was commended for its 'strategic fit'.

9. There will be at least one hub in each of the five Area Committee areas. They will include physical facilities such as toilets, buildings, outdoor gym equipment, as well as activity programmes, staff and community events.
10. The active corridors will provide improved access and increased walking and cycling opportunities. This will be delivered via the development and implementation of cycle paths, foot paths, signage and cycle storage.
11. In the context of service reform the aspiration is that the influence of the healthy towns programme will impact and register with all public sector agencies not just those with a health remit. Examples could be anything from support from managers for workplace health initiatives, performance indicators and targets within policies and strategies promoting physical activity and healthy eating, through to impact on policing methods and how schools deliver physical education.
12. There will be an extensive promotion of health messages to assist people in taking action to improve their own health (in line with the forthcoming national Change 4 Life programme). Dudley's programme is designed to have an impact on child and family health, reduce inequalities, reduce air pollution, impact on anti-social behaviour, and increase social and community cohesion.
13. The programme will contribute to targets within the New Generation Local Area Agreement (NGLAA) particularly NI8 'adult participation in physical activity' and, NI56 'halt the year on year rise of childhood obesity'. It will also help with the 5 hour physical activity in schools offer, the Community Plan and the Children's plan.

Finance

14. The funding for the programme is £4.5 million over 3 years which will come into the PCT and be transferred to the LA via a series of section 256 agreements.

Law

15. Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the Council to take action to implement measures it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Borough.

Equality Impact

16. The programme is borough wide, inclusive and accessible to all in line with the principles of Dudley's inequalities strategy.

Recommendation

17. The Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care notes the award of Health Towns funding to Dudley Borough, supports the outline programme as detailed in the report and comments accordingly.

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