

REGIONAL HEALTH PROTOCOL AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Report of the Chief Executive

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP2: Healthy City

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with a regional health protocol and terms of reference.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Centre for Public Scrutiny Expert Advisory Team has been helping to develop health scrutiny since 2004. Support from the Team is highly regarded and placements have been very highly rated. In 2009/10, Overview and Scrutiny Committees were offered help from the CfPS Expert Advisory Team around:

- keeping track of changes in health and social care
- selecting topics for your work programme
- scoping scrutiny reviews
- finding out what's working and what needs to change
- making informed and influential recommendations
- working with others to get results

- 2.2 10 free days were offered to scrutiny committees in each Strategic Health Authority area. Placements supported scrutiny committees working together on common issues across whole regions, or in sub regions. These placements were co-ordinated by regional health scrutiny network leads. A joint project was agreed between the 12 local authorities in the North East to develop a protocol for joint working between health scrutiny functions.

- 2.3 The 12 local authorities in the region have a vast level of experience and expertise in the planning and delivery of overview and scrutiny including "health scrutiny". The advisor, it was agreed, would compliment this experience and expertise by supporting and contributing to:

- Examples of best practice that would inform and strengthen our approach;
- Facilitation of meetings in order to secure effective health scrutiny to respond to the health challenges in our region;
- Advise the 12 Local Authorities by working with the Health Scrutiny lead officers; opportunities to secure effective health scrutiny in a regional context; how to scrutinise for example "specialist commissioning";

- 2.4 This project was delivered between December 2009 and March 2010. The bid was coordinated through Durham County Council on behalf of all local authorities.

3. Terms of Reference and Protocols

- 3.1 In creating and developing a regional health protocol the 12 local authorities making up the regional health scrutiny group conducted a light touch review around alcohol. The main purpose of the light touch review was to produce a protocol and terms of reference to move forward the regional group and provide a process by which regional health scrutiny issues can be undertaken at a regional level.
- 3.2 Some of the key points to note from the protocol are as follows:
- (a) The Joint Committee shall be made up of 12 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee members comprising 1 member from each of the constituent authorities. The appointment of such representatives shall be solely at the discretion of each of the constituent authorities.
 - (b) A constituent authority may appoint a substitute to attend in the place of the named member on the Joint Committee. The substitute shall have voting rights in place of the absent member.
 - (c) The Chair of the Joint Committee will be drawn from the membership of the Joint Committee, and serve for a period of 12 months, from a starting date to be agreed. The Joint Committee may choose up to two Vice-Chairs from among any of its members, as far as possible providing a geographic spread across the region.
 - (d) The local authority from which the Chair of the Joint Committee is drawn shall be the Host Authority for the purposes of this protocol. The relevant officer in the Host Authority will give notice of meetings to all Joint Committee members, in line with access to information rules of at least five clear working days before a meeting. The relevant officer will send an agenda to every member specifying the date, time and place of each meeting and the business to be transacted, and this will be accompanied by such reports as are available.
 - (e) The Joint Committee will hold two full committee meetings per year, and at other times when the Chair and Vice-Chairs wish to convene a meeting. Any three members of the joint committee may require a special meeting to be held by making a request in writing to the Chair.
- 3.3 The full protocol and terms of reference are attached as at **Appendix 1** of this report.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That Members agree that the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Terms of Reference be adopted for use in undertaking regional health scrutiny arrangements.

Contact Officer: Nigel Cummings (0191 561 1006)
nigel.cummings@sunderland.gov.uk