

## **BRIEFING ON THE COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY GROUP**

### **Background**

1. There has been a long history of partnership working around promoting health and wellbeing. This has mainly been managed through Local Strategic Partnerships (including the development of community strategies), Southern Bucks Health For All and thematic partnerships that address specific areas of work (such as the Older People's Partnership Group, Bucks Alliance for Action on Smoking, Physical Activity Alliance). However there has never been a countywide strategy group to identify countywide priorities.
2. The lack of such a group had presented some challenges when working on for example the Buckinghamshire Community Strategy as there was no accountable body for agreeing the priorities for this plan and progressing this work relied on networking arrangements.
3. The gap in countywide multi-agency strategic planning around promoting health and tackling health inequalities became even more apparent with the development of the Local Area Agreement as unlike the other blocks in the LAA, there was no strategy group that could adopt the responsibility for overseeing the Healthier Communities targets in the Healthier Communities and Older People's Block. In response to this officers from the Local Authorities and the Primary Care Trust met and agreed that the development of the Countywide Public Health Strategy Group could make an important contribution in this area.

### **The Role of the Group**

4. The Group was set up with the following key objectives:
  - To enable collaboration across agencies around local priorities to improve the health of and tackle health inequalities in the local population
  - To agree priorities and develop a coherent set of targets within a public health agenda
  - To monitor the delivery of the health improvement components of the LAA and Bucks Community Strategy
  - To make recommendations to partner agencies on investment and deployment of resources in order to improve health
  - To work within own organisations to maximize improving health and wellbeing through mainstream services
5. In order to ensure that the group could deliver effectively the membership consists of:
  - An Officer and a Member from each of the Local Authorities
  - An Officer and Non-Executive Director from the Primary Care Trust, Bucks Hospitals Trust and the Oxfordshire Buckinghamshire Mental Health Trust
  - Thames Valley Police

- The Director of Public Health
- The Director of Social Services
- The Director of Children's Services

The group is Chaired by the Portfolio lead for Adult Social Care

### **Progress to Date and Future Action**

6. The group has met 4 times and has:

- Agreed its Terms of Reference
- Identified Countywide Priorities for public health in Buckinghamshire. These priorities will now form the basis for further work on the County Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement
- Begun the process of assessing key gaps in relation to the identified priority areas
- Monitored the Healthier Communities Targets in the Local Area Agreement

7. The next steps for the group are:

- To identify any key gaps in work around the priority areas and facilitate the development projects to address these gaps
- To participate in the refresh of the Local Area Agreement ensuring that the revised priorities reflect local need
- To review the outcomes of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment