

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
31 JANUARY 2022
REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS

A.5 HEALTH INEQUALITIES

(Report prepared by J Fox)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update to Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee on key work undertaken by the Council in relation to health inequalities as identified in the Committee's work plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council undertakes wider work around health inequality for example in relation to provision of housing and maintaining housing standards, payment of benefits, provision of green space etc.

The North East Essex Health and Well-being Alliance (NEE HWB Alliance) which brings partners together to address health issues and includes amongst other organisations the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation Trust (ESNEFT), and the councils has a key focus on health inequality.

As part of the Alliance significant funding has been provided by the CCG and ESNEFT to the Council to undertake work around health inequality.

In 2021 the CCG provided £200,000 for addressing health inequalities and in addition to this ESNEFT provided a further £200,000.

A spending plan has been developed for the funding which has been agreed by the partners who provided the funding at an Alliance Committee meeting where they both sit.

The funding is proposed to be used to address health inequalities around housing and mental health by provision of extra staff but also providing some funding for some external agencies who may be best placed to deliver improvements in appropriate areas for example the Family Solutions team.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee determines whether it has any comments or recommendations it wishes to put forward the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The provision of the funding received by Tendring District Council will, together with partners, help to deliver Community Leadership through the Partnerships theme of the Corporate Plan and its objectives around health and wellbeing for effective services and improved public health.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

Work with North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance (NEE HWB Alliance) partners such as the CCG and ESNEFT is currently undertaken by council staff and delivered through the Council's existing resources.

The funding provided was accompanied with Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and these MOUs state that the funding will be held by the Council on behalf of the NEE HWB Alliance in a dedicated budget line and spending proposals require approval of the NEE HWB Alliance Committee which has now been obtained for the spending plans.

Risk

There may be a perceived risk that the NEE HWB Alliance Committee could influence how the Council delivers its services and undertakes some of its functions however, the proposals put forward which were developed by the Council increase and expand on existing service provision and so fall in line with the Council's objectives.

LEGAL

Each MOU states that the funding investment has been approved by the CCG Operational Executive Committee which works in tandem with the Alliance Committee under similar terms of reference as delegated by the CGG Board.

The spending proposals have been developed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and following further work to determine exact outcomes the proposals will be subject to a formal Officer Decision.

As part of this process partners have been made aware of the implications of the Council being the Accountable Body so that any decision to spend the funds must be made in accordance with the Council's internal governance arrangements, such as following the Procurement Procedure Rules and distinguishing between grant awards and contract for services.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

The CCG and ESNEFT as part of the NEE HWB Alliance are seeking to improve health and wellbeing in North East Essex. A key focus is on addressing health inequality.

The funding is to be used to improve public health with a particular focus on health inequality.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance

The NEE HWB Alliance is made up of a range of partners across North East Essex who are seeking to improve health and well-being. A key focus of the NEE HWB Alliance is addressing health inequality and the key area of this is around the wider determinants of health such as housing, employment, income and education.

Member organisations include the councils, representatives of the voluntary sector, ambulance service, hospitals, mental health trust and CCG.

The member organisations have a strong background of working together.

The Council is an active member of the NEE HWB Alliance with the Assistant Director of Partnerships attending the Alliance Board.

Funding

Funding has previously been provided from the CCG as part of the NEE HWB Alliance for projects around mental health in schools and supporting the Council as it deals with residents were experiencing mental health issues.

In 2021 further funding was provided to extend the support for council staff dealing with residents for mental health and in addition funding totalling £400,000 was provided for work around health inequalities from the CCG and ESNEFT.

CURRENT POSITION

Funding

In 2021 the CCG offered three separate amounts for delivering public health improvements within the area.

Healthy Housing Project

Following initial funding of £165,000 provided in 2019 for this project a further £165,000 was offered to extend the Health and Housing project for mental health support so that it can continue for a further year. In addition this project is being expanded to provide wider support for those experiencing poor mental health linked to the provision of housing.

Housing forms an essential part of how partners come together to deliver better, more sustainable, physical, mental and social health as one of the wider determinants of health. The demand on existing healthy homes initiatives has increased considerably against the backdrop of Covid-19, quicker discharge from hospital and the impacts of national lock-downs.

Key areas of focus for this money will include supporting Council teams to help residents remain in safe housing and living independently including those with long-term conditions. In addition the funding can be used around homelessness, supporting in relation to cold homes, complex issues linked to housing conditions and providing support to assist around hospital discharge and prevention of readmission due to housing factors.

Inequalities Funding

The CCG have provided £200,000 to be spent on inequalities work and this money was matched with another £200,000 provided by ESNEFT again to be spent on work around health inequality.

A MOU was provided in relation to this funding and highlights the importance of the ongoing delivery and response to address inequalities at place around the wider determinants of health.

Both the CCG and ESNEFT contributions allowed for the Council to set a broad delivery plan and then to liaise with the CCG and ESNET to deliver effective outcomes for the funding which can be used in an integrated way.

A similar amount of funding was provided to Colchester Borough Council and as part of the NEE HWB Alliance there is a focus on integrated working and therefore the councils have worked together in relation to the funding and allocated some of the money for joint working with the larger part of the funding for projects specific to each council.

Proposed Spending Plans

Both Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council are proposing to undertake collaborative working to help reduce inequality and increase integration. On that basis money is being allocated on joint and also separate posts that can work together but also focus on local issues.

Both councils have identified the importance of investing in other organisations in relation to undertaking some of the interventions, for example the voluntary sector.

In terms of the joint funded posts it is proposed to employ an Inequalities Coordinator which will be employed by Tendring to lead work over both organisations to ensure reporting, governance, system communication and coordination occurs and to deliver effective project budgeting.

In addition the existing Senior Researcher who was already in post in Colchester will have their post extended and cover the Tendring area as well. The post holder already has in-depth experience across the whole NEE HWB Alliance patch and will be able to lead on data and insight which can drive development.

In terms of specific posts for the Tendring area the following posts are proposed;

Fuel poverty/cold homes officer -this officer would be able to assess homes and support people to access ways of keeping their homes warm. The focus for this officer will be across the deprived areas of the district with a particular reference to the Jaywick Sands and West Clacton area and also Harwich.

The lower standard of accommodation in deprived areas means that they suffer much more from the effects of cold. In addition to this as residents in these areas have a lower level of income they find it more difficult to heat their homes. This is been particularly exacerbated by recent fuel price increases.

Environmental Health Officer -the focus for this post would be around improving housing standards within Jaywick Sands where there is a very substantial amount of substandard accommodation.

As housing is critical to the health of residents it is planned to utilise an Environmental Health Officer to provide advice and undertake enforcement action where necessary, to help improve housing which is substandard.

Community Enabling Officer -this position will work with communities across Tendring who are suffering inequalities to help deliver support and assistance to those communities. The post will also help deliver specific projects. An example of such a project could be the Well-being Hub project in primary schools which has recently been delivered with the help of external support. This post would allow such a project to be delivered internally and help with integration.

Family solutions officer -an effective Family Solutions project is already delivered within Clacton which has delivered significant outcomes for disadvantaged families. This officer would work in Harwich to extend the reach and coverage of the Family Solutions program for young people in Harwich.

The remainder of the funding is to be used for other initiatives and not specific posts.

Careline Technology - the Careline Team worked with many residents who are vulnerable and are in the greatest need. This money would be used to provide new or improved technological solutions to support these people in their homes more effectively so they do not end up in a crisis situation which would put further pressure on the health services.

Voluntary sector funding - as the Council and its partners start to deliver this work and the wider work around health inequalities it is envisaged that support may be required from voluntary sector partners to help deliver or to make work more effective. Funding has therefore been put aside to support these initiatives when they arise.

Admin and training -as the officers and projects will need support in terms of administration and training money been put aside to ensure this can be delivered.

Communications and marketing - similarly money has been put aside to ensure that any work undertaken is clearly visible to our residents who are in the greatest need to allow them to access these services.

Management fee - a management fee is also included in the funding to make sure the Council can deliver the services.

Timeline and future funding

The timeline for spending this money is currently that it must be spent by the end of March 2023. As this work involves recruiting to posts and the employment market currently is difficult to recruit from both Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council are in discussions with the CCG about potentially extending the end date.

The CCG have recently indicated that there may be an extra £200,000 they would like to allocate to Tendring District Council for health inequalities work. This is still subject to

governance procedures within the CCG and an announcement is expected soon. Further funding would be useful to potentially extend the projects or the identified and deliver new work around inequality as well.

The current proposed expenditure around the posts and projects identified above is as follows;

Project Co-ordinator	£42.5K salary plus on costs (joint post with Colchester Borough Council (CBC) who will also contribute £42.5K) hosted by TDC
Senior Researcher role	£20K salary plus on costs (joint post with CBC he will also contribute £20K) hosted by CBC
Housing Environmental Health Officer	£70K salary plus on cost
Cold Homes/Fuel Poverty Officer	£70 K salary plus on cost
Community Enabling Officer	£60 K salary plus on cost
Family Solutions Harwich	£60 K
Careline Technology and Officer Support	£60 K
Voluntary Sector Funding	£50 K
Administration and Training	£20 K
Communications and Marketing	£20K
Management Fee	£45K

Conclusion

A key focus of the NEE HWB Alliance is around health inequality and both the CCG and ESNEFT have provided with £200 000 each for the Council to undertake work in this area. There is also the potential for an extra £200 000 to be provided by the CCG which would take the total to £600 000.

Key areas of focus for the Council are around housing and mental health and so it is proposed to utilise the funding to help improve housing standards, provide some mental health support and community enabling.

The focus of spending will be in the deprived areas where health inequalities are most stark and so will include Jaywick Sands, West Clacton and Harwich.

The proposed spend has already been agreed at an Alliance Committee level so both the CCG and ESNEFT have approved the work that is proposed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

None