

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2014

REFERENCE FROM CABINET - 10 APRIL 2014

825. Response to NHS Health Checks Scrutiny Review

Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health, which set out the response of Public Health to the winter 2013 Scrutiny review of the NHS Health Checks programme in Harrow and Barnet.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group to the meeting to address Cabinet and present the findings of the Review Group.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group reported that, in April 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny launched an NHS Health Checks programme. Between September and December 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny was commissioned by Barnet and Harrow Councils to undertake a review of the NHS health checks services, as it was felt that the take up of health checks in Harrow and Barnet was poor. Due to their joint public health function, a number of areas which could benefit were identified. It was suggested that the process of health checks needed to be streamlined in order to make the experience more attractive. It was essential that various ailments were picked up earlier and health checks were an essential part of this process. As a result, it was felt that health checks should be offered to people in the 40-70 years age range. The Chairman of the Scrutiny review Group concluded that the findings and recommendations were integral and it was essential that the service received optimal resources.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing thanked the Scrutiny review Group for their report. He acknowledged that there were different ways of providing services and recognised the importance of health checks. He suggested that local football clubs could be one avenue where the profile of health checks could be raised. It was important to review the manner in which the Councils provided health checks. He was confident that the Improvement Plan would address the various issues. He encouraged all to take up a health check, particularly men.

In response to questions from various Cabinet Members about the drop in the number of people eligible to receive health checks, whether or not the budget was sustainable and how hard to reach group would be targeted, the Portfolio Holder explained that people were going to different places for their health checks, there was an underspend on the money available for health checks and early health checks could also save money spent by the hospitals. There

was also a gender issue. Many obstacles prevented people from going for health checks and streamlining was therefore essential. Express health checks were required.

The Leader of the Council thanked Members for their contributions on this important issue.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Public Health response to the Scrutiny Review recommendations be noted;
- (2) the progress on recommendations at appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (3) Cabinet supports the Scrutiny Review in its recommendations to Public Health England;
- (4) Cabinet agrees to receive updates from the Centre for Public Scrutiny on progress against the recommendations to Public Health England.

Reason for Decision: To enable Public Health to progress action against the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review, as set out in the Director of Public Health's response in appendix 1.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: As set out in the report.

Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted: None.

FOR INFORMATION

Background Documents:

Minutes of Cabinet – 10 April 2014

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