

## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **30 JUNE 2016**

## **PUBLIC HEALTH RING-FENCED GRANT – UPDATE**

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### **Summary**

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is to receive an update on services funded by the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant (PHRFG), following central government's reduction of the grant to local authorities in June 2015. Public Health has been a responsibility of the County Council since 2013.
2. The item will include an update on funding reductions, impact of funding and how the Council is trying to mitigate any impact on services and service users.
3. The Interim Director of Public Health and the new Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being have been invited to the meeting.

### **Background**

4. The PHRFG was created under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to support unitary and upper tier local authorities' new duties for improving the health and well-being of the local population. In Worcestershire, the initial PHRFG allocation in 2015/16 was £26.5 million. Additionally, in 2015 a further £3.3million was transferred from NHS England to fund 0-5 Years public health services for the remaining six months of the financial year.
5. In June 2015 central government announced in-year reductions to the Grant – of £1.9million for Worcestershire, equating to 6.2% of the total grant. This was unexpected and in-year reductions are particularly difficult to manage. Since then, further reductions have been announced over the longer term. A national consultation on removing the ring-fence from 2018/19 is expected in Autumn of 2016.
6. Acknowledging the difficulty of the situation and the inevitable impact to some current services, the Council's response was to review the whole of PHRFG spend, and to consider where savings could be achieved. An early decision was to continue with all services which have to be provided and to consider carefully which areas of discretionary services could be reduced. The agreed approach was to manage savings in a planned and measured way.
7. Cabinet approved initial proposals for savings in July 2015, on the basis that before any final decisions were taken, there would be a detailed review of spend on prevention services, to enable future spend to be targeted on service areas where effectiveness was best evidenced. It was also agreed that discussions with partners and providers of services would also take place.

8. On 25 November 2015, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing approved specific proposals for savings to the PHRFG, as delegated to do so by Cabinet. The report and summary of proposals is included at Appendix 1 and is available on the Council's website [here](#)

### **Role of Scrutiny - Services Affected**

9. In considering the role of Scrutiny in the Council's approach to managing the PHRFG reductions, the over-arching Scrutiny Board (Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board) agreed that the relevant Scrutiny Chairs should monitor the impact of PHRFG funding on services – lead Scrutiny Members for Health, Children and Families, Adult Social Care and Crime and Disorder subsequently met in November 2015 with the Director and Cabinet Member responsible for Public Health.
10. In relation to health services, at that time the Chair (Cllr Roberts), reported back to HOSC Members that he was reassured by Cabinet's proposal that none of the in-year funding reductions would be passed on to providers during the course of that year. He suggested that HOSC continue to monitor the situation, and an update be provided to the Committee within the year – which forms the basis for this agenda discussion.
11. The service areas which fall under the remit of health scrutiny, affected by savings proposals include a range of services, such as smoking cessation, sexual health and mental health reablement and employment support. HOSC Members will be aware of recent updates from commissioners and providers about changes proposed for mental health reablement support, on 9 December 2015 and 10 March 2016. The outcome from these discussions was broad support for the overall direction of the proposed changes, although some members had concerns about the increased role for the voluntary and community sector, and further updates have been arranged as plans develop.
12. It should be noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board recently determined that matters relating to children's health should also now be considered by HOSC in the first instance (rather than the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel), because of HOSC's statutory powers. Services affected include Prevention services for children and these have been discussed at the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

### **Purpose of Meeting**

13. Members are invited to consider and comment on the impact of the reduction to the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant on services to date, and the Council's progress, with partners, to mitigate the impact. In doing so, HOSC members may want to reflect on:
  - What has been the feedback from discussions with partners and service providers and how this has influenced savings proposals?
  - How are changes to services being monitored, including feedback from the public?
  - How have funding changes affected services so far?

- What are the main challenges going forward?

14. Following the discussion, HOSC Members are asked to consider whether any further information is required and identify any specific elements for potential future scrutiny.

### **Supporting Information**

- Appendix 1 – Cabinet Member Decision Report 20 November 2015

### **Contact Points**

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#### Specific Contact Points for this Report

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### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the Proper Officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and Minutes of:

- Cabinet Member Decision on 20 November 2015, available on the website [here](#)
- Cabinet on 16 July 2015, available on the website [here](#)
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2016 and 9 December 2015, available on the website [here](#)
- Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 28 January 2016 and 23 September 2015, available on the website [here](#)