

## HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Councillors G Clements, C Giel; G Blackwell, H Branney  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Julie Betteridge, Cath Coombs  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Keith Parker – Acting Corporate Director Quality of Life

### Summary and Recommendation:

This report seeks Executive's endorsement of the West Cumbria Health Improvement Plan 2009/10 and to the creation of a health improvement officers position to help take forward the actions in the Plan especially as part of the Council's locality working arrangements and corporate responsibilities towards the health agenda.

It is recommended that:

- a) The West Cumbria Health Improvement Plan is endorsed and action taken, where appropriate to deliver on its key objectives, and
- b) Executive agree to the appointment of a Health Improvement Officer, initially for a 2 year fixed term period, to help drive the Council's health improvement activities as part of locality working and within the Council's own workforce.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In late February the West Cumbria Health Improvement Action Plan 2009/10 was distributed to partners. The Action Plan has been developed as part of the West Cumbria Partnerships' Healthy Communities group which includes representation from this Council. The 2009/10 Action Plan is set within the context of the West Cumbria Health improvement Plan 2008-10 and Health Improvement Plan Baseline assessment 2008-10 copies of which have been deposited in the Members room and which set out the health challenges facing West Cumbria and Copeland more specifically.
- 1.2 As has been pointed out in the recent Audit Commission report "Tackling Health Inequalities in Cumbria" local authorities are major employers in their own right and are thus able to influence the health agenda by promoting better health in their workforce and with those whom we interact. This is particularly relevant in Copeland where employees sickness

records are not good, reflecting perhaps the community as a whole. We can and should lead by example. Of course there are many things the Council already does to improve the health of the borough for example through the promotion of physical activity, health eating activities, pathways to arts incapacity benefit project and smoking cessation events. However the Health Improvement Action Plan provides a new focus for the Council by being able to act as a partner in more 'joined up' health promotion activities working with the PCT and others towards a common objective.

- 1.3 In parallel with the production of the Action Plan the Council has been approached with a view to it hosting a Health Improvement post with the PCT providing a significant financial contribution towards costs for a two year period. Should this offer be accepted the individual will increase our capacity to support health initiatives within our own employees and act as a link between the health care community and our locality working arrangements ensuring that our services meet the health needs of priority communities.

## **2. CONCLUSIONS**

- 2.1 Formally endorsing the Health Improvement Action Plan and accepting the funding offer for the Health Improvement post will send a positive message the Council is prepared to address health agenda. Notwithstanding the fact that we have been active in this area for a considerable length of time these opportunities provide a platform on which to take the health of our community even more seriously and in a stronger partnership with other providers.

## **4. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)**

- 4.1 Using the job evaluation scheme the cost of the Health Improvement Officer's post plus oncosts is circa £40,000. Of this the PCT has offered £26,000 with the remainder to come from the Council's working neighbourhoods budget.

## **5. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 As above there are no specific project management issues. If we do not endorse the Action Plan or accept the funding for the joint health improvement post there is a risk the Council's reputation and standing with the Audit Commission will be damaged.

## 6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 6.1 This report and its implications supports the Corporate Plan particularly its health and workforce objectives.

### List of Appendices:

**List of Background Documents:** West Cumbria Health Improvement Plan – Action Plan 2009-2010, West Cumbria Health Improvement Plan and Baseline Assessment 2008-2010. Tackling Health Inequalities in Cumbria – Audit Commission Report October 2008

**List of Consultees:** Corporate Team, Councillors G Clements, C Giel, G Blackwell & H Branney

### CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	No direct impacts.
Impact on Sustainability	No direct impacts
Impact on Rural Proofing	Supports rural proofing in tailoring services to meet specific community needs
Health and Safety Implications	Supports health improvement
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	No direct impacts
Children and Young Persons Implications	No direct impacts
Human Rights Act Implications	No direct impacts
Monitoring Officer Comments	None
S151 Officer Comments	None

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision NO