

Cabinet Member for Adults and Health

Response to Dr James Walsh's Notice of Motion about Public Health to County Council on 15 February 2019

25 March 2019

Director of Law and Assurance

Ref No. AH17 18/19
Key Decision: No
Part I
Electoral Divisions: All

1. The Chairman of the County Council referred the Notice of Motion on Public Health (see Appendix) submitted to the County Council on 15 February 2019, to Mrs Amanda Jupp the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, for consideration. Mrs Jupp met Dr Walsh on 1 March 2019 to discuss the motion.
2. The aim of the motion was to highlight the financial challenges faced by Public Health in West Sussex in carrying out vital work to improve the health of the local population and reduce health inequalities, and calls upon Cabinet to request that central government supports the 'prevention first' approach by providing fair and equitable funding for West Sussex.
3. The Cabinet Member acknowledges the vital work of the Public Health Team and supports the motion as it was intended as a supportive, cross party motion, calling for wider understanding and support to the council's public health function.
4. The Director for Public Health (DPH) was invited to comment on the Notice of Motion and responded as follows:
 - The transition of public health to local government has been hugely positive, enabling public health teams to reach the heart of their communities using their unique position in local government to achieve this.
 - The public health whole systems approach for West Sussex has been praised by the Chief Executive of Public Health England, Duncan Selbie, following his visit to West Sussex on 21 January 2019. He said "It is frankly inspiring to hear of the positioning of the public's health and community engagement at the heart of everything you do, the Council, Boroughs and NHS together, with public health expertise embedded across the whole of the Council."
 - In West Sussex, emphasis has been placed on developing a whole system approach to public health building upon existing partnerships across the wider health and social care system, finding innovative ways to support our communities. For example, the West Sussex Wellbeing Programme is a partnership approach with the seven district and borough councils across West Sussex delivering our adult prevention public health agenda, focused on modifiable lifestyle risk factors and supporting wellbeing. Furthermore, by making the most of their position in the council and applying a

cross-directorate approach, the public health team is ensuring that sexual health services reach a range of settings including schools, and by working with the county's catering services and primary school meal provider Chartwells, a 73% reduction in sugar in primary school meals over the last four years has been achieved at no extra cost to the County Council, with 30,000 pupils a day benefiting from this. In addition, a pioneering new programme aimed at reducing pressures on the NHS has been developed by the public health team in partnership with key systems leaders across the wider health and social care system in West Sussex. This includes the highly successful 'Slipper Swap' events across the county.

- The NHS Long term Plan is welcomed, particularly due to the strong alignment with the approach we have been developing locally. For example, a renewed focus on prevention including children and young people and ageing well, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal conditions, mental health and a much-needed shift towards primary care, community services and more joined up working across the NHS and local government.
 - As reported by the recently published Shared Intelligence report ['Learning the lessons from the transfer of public health to councils: An independent review of the impact of the transfer in county areas,'](#) members are powerful advocates for public health, working across the authority and reaching out into the heart of their communities. As part of the public health whole systems approach in West Sussex, this is a key area which we wish to develop and build upon as a health promoting council. Examples to date include cross-portfolio meetings with Cabinet Members where there are key public health links with their portfolios, and a Cabinet Member programme of visits to Public Health Services.
5. Dr Walsh recognised and was supportive of the large amount of work being undertaken by Public Health in West Sussex.
6. In light of the information above, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health intends to propose an amendment to the motion at the County Council meeting on 5 April 2019.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

Contact: Erica Keegan 033 022 26050

Background papers

None

Appendix

County Council

15 February 2019

Notice of Motion from Dr Walsh on Government Cuts to the Public Health Budget

The Council notes the vital role played by Public Health, including our hugely successful vaccination and immunisation programmes, support for those wanting to stop smoking, and otherwise helping West Sussex residents to lead healthier lives by avoiding diseases and unplanned pregnancies; and notes with grave concern the announcement of a further £85 million cut to the Public Health Budget, as one of 12 ministerial statements published by the Government on the last day of the 2018 parliamentary term before Christmas, only weeks after the Secretary of State for Health described 'prevention' as his priority.

The Council further notes the comments of the Health Foundation, who described these cuts as a false economy and who have calculated that an additional £3 billion a year is required to reverse the impact of the Government's cuts to the Public Health Grant to date and have called for this increased budget to be allocated according to need; and the warnings from the King's Fund that such cuts could put pressure on councils to cut non-statutory sexual health prevention services, which could lead to more sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies.

This Council believes that our Public Health team perform vital work to help keep the residents of West Sussex healthy and to avoid more costly admissions to hospitals and other interventions by our NHS, and that this should be properly funded by central government.

The Council resolves to:

- (1) Thank our Director of Public Health and her team for the great work they do across West Sussex despite continued financial challenges;
- (2) Condemn the timing just before the Christmas break to "sneak out" announcements such as this;
- (3) Call on the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health to consider carefully how best to implement the required cuts to services which will result from continued government cuts to the budget; and
- (4) Ask the Leader and Cabinet Member to write to the Secretary of State for Health, calling on the Government to deliver increased investment in Public Health and to support a sustainable health and social care system by taking a 'prevention first' approach, and fair and equitable funding for West Sussex.