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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2019**

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### **HWSP.20/19 DRAFT JOINT CUMBRIA PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY**

The Carlisle Partnership Manager presented the Draft Joint Cumbria Public Health Strategy which described wide ranging aims to tackle the wider determinates of health and wellbeing, in line with the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-29 (CS.08/19). She noted it was the first time that the Strategy had been developed using a multi-disciplinary partnership approach where several organisations and District Council Officers had contributed to the Strategy. Furthermore, the method employed in generating the Strategy built on the work facilitated to date via Carlisle City Council's participation in the Healthy Cities programme, building on work addressing the wider determinants of health across the organisation and with partners.

The Panel welcomed Mr Cox, Director of Public Health (Cumbria County Council) to the meeting.

Mr Cox introduced himself to the Panel and gave a brief overview of his role, he thanked the Partnership Manager and the Council L for their contributions in the development of the Strategy to date. He delivered a presentation which covered: the five key themes of the strategy – Planet, People, Participation, Place, and Prosperity and the key aims aligned with each; the wider determinants of health; the process for approving the strategy and, governance arrangements.

Mr Cox emphasised the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach in the effective implementation of the Strategy, which comprised health organisations and democratic bodies such as District Councils. The Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Board was responsible for setting the overall Strategy across the county and formally recommending it to partner organisations. The overall purpose of the Strategy was to improve the health of people across the county.

The Partnership Manager noted the strong thematic links between the draft Strategy and the Carlisle Plan and the Healthy Cities programme which the Council participated in. Were the Council to approve the Strategy, Officers would work with partner organisations to develop an approach for implementation, that aligned with the Council's existing health work.

The Panel were asked to consider the draft Strategy and provide any comments to the Executive prior to its recommendation for adoption.

In considering the draft Strategy Members raised the following comments and questions:

- Were existing wildlife trusts in the county involved in the Strategy?

Mr Cox responded that wildlife trusts had participated in the development of the Strategy and it was hoped that their engagement would continue in the future.

Responding to a further question from a Member on the use of eco-friendly vans by parcel delivery companies, Mr Cox stated that the relevant companies would do well to consider the issue.

The Partnership Manager added that the adoption of the draft Strategy by a number of public sector bodies added voice to its message.

- What action could be taken locally to reduce carbon emissions?

Mr Cox stated that the purpose of the draft Strategy was to co-ordinate actions to improve health across the county, it was a high-level strategic document which set out overarching aims, it did not prescribe specific actions for individuals. A county-wide carbon audit would enable an effective assessment of areas where measures were able to be taken to address carbon emissions, Mr Cox cautioned that such an exercise would be a complex undertaking and outlined examples of activity across the county and emphasised a range of solutions would be needed to address the issue.

- A Member commented that the provision of public transport was important, especially in rural communities where access to vehicles was lower. He further noted that the city of London was to apply a heavier congestion charge to diesel fuelled vehicles, he asked how a reduction in air pollution was to be achieved in Cumbria?

Mr Cox considered that the most likely way to improve air quality across the county was to encourage and increase the use of electric vehicles, and increasing the network of charging points be increased as a means to facilitate uptake. Electric vehicles were an emerging technology whose development needed support.

The Partnership Manager noted that some public sector partners, for example, the University of Cumbria who had begun to provide electric charging points at its sites.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder added that car manufacturers needed to do more work to improve vehicle emissions.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the Council's promotion of electric vehicles, the Deputy Chief Executive stated that the Council had applied for government funding to provide charging points for electric vehicles. He added that the use of electric cycles was another effective way of reducing car use.

In terms of a congestion charge, Mr Cox was of the view that such a policy was unlikely to be welcomed in Cumbria and that it would be more difficult to justify due to lower number of vehicles and the need of residents in rural communities to use their own vehicles.

- Which organisations and bodies would be responsible for the actual implementation of the Strategy?

Mr Cox stated that public health happened at all levels including that of communities, he hoped that all strands of the Strategy would be developed equally and that organised social action would help in that regard.

Responding to a question from a Member about what support was available for children who were long-term absent from education due to ill health, Mr Cox undertook to circulate a written response containing details to the Panel.

- A Member commented that she was pleased to see isolation identified as a health determinant in the draft Strategy.

Mr Cox advised that the issue of loneliness was difficult to resolve with external interventions, different parts of the Strategy overlapped with others so it was likely that an issue may benefit from a number of approaches.

The Panel discussed the issue of adaptations required to properties which enabled residents to continue living in their homes following either a change to their mobility or a stay in hospital.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that for new properties the National Planning Policy Framework and the Carlisle and District Local Plan 2015 – 30 (Local Plan), requires new dwellings to be “Homes for Life”, which required the properties be constructed to enable adaptations, such as widened staircases, in the future. Residents in older properties were able to apply for funding to have adaptation works carried out, however, that process could be time consuming.

He suggested that were the Panel minded to make a recommendation on the matter that Members consider recommending to the Executive that an examination on the availability of homes be carried out to make them better prepared.

The Chairman commented that, in the context of the St. Cuthbert’s Garden Village project, planning policy requirements were very interesting, he felt that the project presented an opportunity to promote health and wellbeing.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cox for his presentation.

RESOLVED – That observations and comments as set out above be referred to the Executive as part of the consideration of the Draft Joint Cumbria Public Health Strategy (CS.08/19).

2) That Mr Cox circulate details of the support provided to children who were not in education due to ill health.