

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Cabinet

Date of Committee 06 October 2005

Report Title Final Report of the Drugs, Substance and Alcohol Misuse in Rugby Panel

Summary The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered the final report of the Drugs, Substance and Alcohol Misuse in Rugby Panel. This was a joint review carried out in conjunction with Rugby Borough Council. The Committee approved the report and adopted the recommendations of the Panel.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) -
- Other Elected Members Councillor Anne Forwood and Marion Haywood
- Cabinet Member Councillor Bob Stevens
- Chief Executive
- Legal Victoria Gould /David Carter
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority

Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

Cabinet - 06 October 2005.

**Final Report of the Drugs, Substance and Alcohol Misuse
in Rugby Panel**

**Report of the Chair of Health Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Recommendation

That the Cabinet consider and make a response to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations arising from its consideration of the final report of the Drugs, Substance and Alcohol Misuse in Rugby.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On the 12th January 2005 the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a joint review with Rugby Borough Council on drugs, substance and alcohol misuse in Rugby.
- 1.2 The Committee considered the Panel's final report on the 27th July. Copies of that report have been deposited in the Group Rooms and at the main reception to the Shire Hall offices off the Market Place. The report can also be found on the Warwickshire Web (www.warwickshire.gov.uk/committee-papers) with the papers for today's Cabinet meeting and those for the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 27th July 2005.

2. Key Findings

- 2.1 It was difficult to establish a clear and accurate overall picture of drug, substance and alcohol misuse in the Borough of Rugby because of inconsistency and inadequacy of data collection. However, the following key patterns of misuse may be surmised:-
 - (i) In terms of drugs misuse, Rugby's problems were greater than the south of the county but less than the north. The problems experienced by Rugby were also distinct from the rest of the County and may, in part, be due to its geographical location within the County and the UK.

- (ii) In terms of alcohol misuse, Rugby had the greatest number of problem drinkers per 1000 than any part of the County.
 - (iii) Within the Borough of Rugby, a distinction must be made between problems experienced in the town of Rugby from the problems experienced in the rural areas.
- 2.2 Whilst establishing the current provision of services was easier than establishing patterns of misuse, identifying how those services were resourced was not, raising issues of accountability and transparency.
- 2.3 There was evidence of existing effective linkages and of others being developed between Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts, Youth Service, Youth Offending Team, Probation Service, Drug Action Team, Social Services Department and Education within the Borough. Unfortunately, it was not always clear to the public what those linkages were nor how pathways to care could be accessed and maintained. Many of the linkages were based on individuals rather than the organisations themselves. In seeking to meet future challenges, improvements would be required in partnership working with particular emphasis around long term issues such as housing, allocations and short term issues such as the location of sharps bin.
- 2.4 The Panel found the review an extremely useful exercise but it felt that if the review were to be extended to other parts of the County, consideration would need to be given to broadening the scope to make it more cross cutting, increasing the timescales and improving the strategic direction of the review to make it more holistic and countywide.

3. Recommendations of the Panel

3.1 Recommendation A: Information, Services and Resources

- (i) That the Warwickshire Drugs Action Team be asked to investigate the feasibility of a research study which, using national and local information, was able to establish baselines on the nature and scale of drugs, alcohol and substance misuse in Rugby and provide a sustainable information system that allows for the effective and efficient provision of services and resources.
- (ii) That the three Warwickshire Primary Care Trusts be asked to investigate issues regarding clarification of resource allocation and spend in order to ensure transparency and accountability.
- (iii) That the three Warwickshire Primary Care Trusts be asked to review the suitability and effectiveness of accommodation arrangements for the Community Drugs Teams in operation within the County.
- (iv) That in seeking to address the problems identified in 3.1(ii) and (iii) above, the Primary Care Trusts consider the appointment of an independent mediator in order to assist and ensure that the issues are resolved in an impartial and transparent manner.

3.2 Recommendation B: Prevention, Education and Signposting

- (i) All agencies should work more effectively together on providing education and information for the sign posting of services. Information relating to drugs education, prevention and treatment should be available in the reception areas of all public buildings in Warwickshire and a poster campaign should be run highlighting the services that are available. Where capacity building was required in the furtherance of those objectives, they should be undertaken in consultation with all agencies.
- (ii) Notwithstanding recommendation 3.2(i) above, a high profile campaign on alcohol misuse in Rugby was required urgently in order to acknowledge and address the scale of the problem within the Borough.
- (iii) Greater involvement and co-operation was required from GPs and pharmacies to ensure identification and referrals were made where possible.

3.3 Recommendation C: Treatment

- (i) That the Primary Care Trusts be asked to promote and increase the involvement of GPs in the treatment of drugs, alcohol and substance misuse.
- (ii) That action be taken by the Warwickshire Probation Service to address the compliance problems experienced by DTTO clients in Rugby as a result of the location of treatment facilities.

3.4 Recommendation D: Council Partnerships

- (i) That the Borough Council work more pro-actively in locating sharp bins at strategic locations within Rugby (including the upper floor of the John Barford Car Park) to promote harm minimisation and public safety.
- (ii) That the Housing Department of the Borough Council and the Supporting People Team of the County Council improve the quality of housing support services to people with drugs and alcohol misuse in order to ensure successful and sustained rehabilitation.
- (iii) That the Borough Council be asked to refer to issues regarding drugs, substance and alcohol misuse within the Community Plan.
- (iv) That the licensing policies of the Borough Council recognise and reflect the scale of alcohol misuse highlighted in this report.

3.5 Recommendation E: Ensuring Improvement

- (i) That the Warwickshire Drugs Action Team, through liaison with relevant agencies, produce an action plan which clarifies the extent

to which the recommendations in this report will be implemented, the lead agencies responsible for the implementation of each recommendation, the resources required and the timescales for implementation.

- (ii) That the Rugby Area Committee be asked to monitor the implementation of the above Action Plan and the Local Strategic Partnership be asked to promote linkages in tackling drugs, alcohol and substance misuse.

4. Comments arising from the meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4.1 The following comments were made at the meeting on the 27th July:-

- (i) The joint review had proved to be an extremely exciting and challenging working experience.
- (ii) Rural Rugby had a different set of problems.
- (iii) Although it was recognised that there was a need for sharp bins in Rugby, there was some concern about using the upper floor of the John Barford Car Park as one of the locations as the Borough Council was attempting to make the car park more customer friendly for females at night so that they could feel safe parking there. That site had been chosen because needles had been left there. However, the issue was open for discussion.
- (iv) It was vitally important to have a long-term strategy for dealing with drugs and alcohol.
- (v) There had to be a balance between prosecuting and counselling offenders.
- (vi) Consultations were continuing in Warwick with supermarkets and shops with a view to a voluntary ban on selling alcohol to people under the age of 21 to ensure that alcohol was not sold inadvertently to underage young people.
- (vii) It was essential to educate young people at an early age about responsible use of alcohol.
- (viii) It was recognised that Rugby was not the only area in the County that had a problem and the issue of rolling out the work to the rest of the County would be referred to the Co-ordinating Group. One possibility would be to work on PCT areas with the information broken down into Districts.

4.2 The Committee agreed the following:-

- (i) That the final report be approved and all those responsible for its production thanked.
- (ii) That recommendations A to E be adopted.

- (iii) That the report be referred to the Co-ordinating Group with a recommendation that a rolling program be established to consider drugs, substance and alcohol misuse in the PCT areas in the North and South of the County.
- (iv) That the report and the Committee's recommendations be sent to the PCTs and the Education Department and that they be asked to make a written response within 28 days.
- (v) That the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the progress made against the recommendations in January 2006.
- (vi) That the report and the Committees recommendation to Cabinet for consideration.

JERRY ROODHOUSE
Chair of Health Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

Shire Hall
Warwick

09 August 2005