

## Health, Wellbeing & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Chair Report- 04/03/19

### **Monkey Dust**

Sergeant McGrath provided an explanation to the committee of what Monkey Dust is, a Class B drug composed of chemically produced cathinone, usually sold as a white/off-white crystalline powder. It has been identified as cheap, addictive and of having strong effects in small doses. Its effects include delusions and hallucinations which have been known to lead to risk taking behaviour, agitation, elevated heart rates, paranoia, combative behaviour and a compulsion to redose.

The first seizure of the drug in Staffordshire occurred in August 2016. Incidence of drug related police call outs have decreased significantly since Christmas 2018 as the result of actions abroad to close down its supply and usage coupled with the work of local partners. There have been no formal reports of the use of Monkey Dust within schools, few related referrals of it to One Recovery (who deliver substance misuse support on behalf of the County Council) and no related referrals of it so far to Staffordshire's T3's young person service. Fergus Lees from One Recovery highlighted however that Monkey Dust was considered to be addictive and there has been high profile media reporting on users and the perceived availability of the drug.

The community led Time to Change Initiative has assisted in informing the community on how to report suspected involvement in drugs and disseminating information.

Members were supportive on the benefits to the whole community which came from partnership working in the borough.

The Police and Crime Commissioner have written to the Home Office to request for Monkey Dust to be reclassified as Class A, hoping that it will influence them to invest in the provision, and supply, of a testing kit for use by all police forces.

Based on all this information, the committee advised the Cabinet Member to write to the Home Office to request for Monkey Dust to be reclassified as Class A, and that a copy of the letter to be sent to the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

## **Consultation on Future of Local Health Services**

Representatives from the North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Stoke on Trent Clinical Commissioning Group presented to Committee on the changes they intended to make to local health and social care services provided.

Concern was expressed by the Committee on their decision to go for Option 6, how they would distribute some of the beds to provide for individuals under the 'Discharge to Assess' model.

In the report it was highlighted that, based on the slides and the presentation, Option 6 appeared to be the most cost effective since no investments and expenditure costs were highlighted. However, the CCG failed to pick up in the presentation the costs for Option 6 which amount to £4.3 million per year by 2022/2023 for care home costs. That being considered, the most cost effective approach appeared to be Option 5 based on the presentation and all the supporting documents provided by the CCG with investment costs of £1.5 million.

Another concern related to whether the CCG would be able to ensure that the NHS standard of care was met if option 6 was chosen since beds were allocated to care homes. Whilst the CCG Group could commission staff to check on the standards of care being provided it would be more difficult to ensure this standard was upheld on a day to day basis where the majority of staff responsible for the care of these patients was not trained by the NHS or under their continuous supervision. A comparison of the amount of training given to the individual providing most of the day to day care in care homes compared to a hospital is hugely more intensive for hospital staff and in line with the standards set by the NHS.

Members also highlighted the importance of adequate and well supported convenient access to the services via public transport.

## **Feedback from the Active Lives Survey**

The Executive Director- Operations outlined the results of the Active Lives Children's Survey undertaken by Sport England. The report demonstrated the success of the borough in engaging young people in physical activity in school in both indoor and outdoor sports, being either the same or better the national average. However, engagement in the Borough outside of school in both indoor and outdoor sports but especially outdoor sports is lower than the national average.

In addition, the early year's district profile identified specific obesity levels across the Borough. Councillor Holland considered that there may be a link to the deprivation index.

Members felt that the Walk to School initiative should be expanded with help and assistance from the resources used for the Walking Bus within the County Council.

Support has been offered from the County Sports Partnership (SASSOT) to help encourage and increase engagement. The work would involve various partner organisations with a shared responsibility.

It has been agreed that the Cabinet be requested to look at the link between obesity and deprivation by ward and, together with partner organisations, be recommended to coordinate the development of a Borough wide strategy to improve take up of out of school sport and physical activity opportunities by young people.

### **Work Programme**

A report on safeguarding and a review of the work programme were due to be considered by members at the June meeting.

Councillor Gardner asked that a representative from Keele University student support service be invited to attend this meeting to explore how to work together and join up mental health services within the Borough.

**I had the pleasure to be introduced to Johnny Dee Sparkes, a student from Keele University who is on placement with the Newcastle under Lyme Council until May.**

**Mr J.D.Sparkes had completed an analysis of the Active Lives Survey and produced the analysis on the CCG presentation 'The Future of Local Health Services in Northern Staffordshire'**

**Chair Cllr Ian Wilkes**