

## **BRIEFING NOTE FOR SCRUTINY FEB 2013**

### **ALCOHOL STRATEGY UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

#### **ALCOHOL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

##### **Background**

Tackling the harms caused by alcohol misuse has been a strategic priority for partners and partnerships within Staffordshire for several years. In December 2011 a funded alcohol change management programme was commenced, led by Pat Merrick, under the governance of the Alcohol and Drugs Executive Board now jointly chaired by the Chief Constable and the Director for Public Health. Initial work carried out alongside Public Health colleagues saw research undertaken and a conceptual framework developed recommending partners employ Prevention, Early Intervention, Treatment and Recovery approaches focusing on the following groups:-

1. Children and Young People
2. Adult safe or non-drinkers
3. Adult binge drinkers
4. Adult hazardous and harmful drinkers
5. Dependent drinkers

Prevention work in relation to Children and Young People has focused on bringing together evidence-based solutions to ensure, as far as possible, universal provision across the county area through a schools-based approach as this has been recognised as a significant gap.

The programme outlined below has been strongly supported, including financially, by a number of key partners. Regular updates on progress have been provided at a strategic level through the Alcohol and Drugs Executive Board, as well as to local partnerships to varying degrees. Strong corporate support exists amongst a number of partners in relation to both the implementation of the project and also the move towards a more local form of governance and ownership, to ensure that as far as possible local needs can be understood and met. This corporate stance is particularly true in relation to senior officer support within Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, Staffordshire County Council and also Newcastle Borough Council.

##### **Overview of the Schools Based Programme**

The programme will initially focus on all educational establishments working at Key Stage 3 and 4 – e.g. High and Middle schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). It contains 3 main elements:-

- Supporting schools to deliver consistent, good quality PSHE within a curriculum supported by the broader partnership to address priority needs where appropriate
- Parental Rule Setting Agreements across year groups that are facilitated through the school community, in relation to alcohol consumption by young people
- Social Norming approaches, which will be based upon the findings obtained from free on-line surveys and analysis reports for schools regarding the behaviours and perceptions of pupils across a number of PSHE areas, including alcohol

Education Transformation (ET) has been named as the provider of schools support in relation to this programme until October 2014. A service level agreement detailing this work has been produced,

along with an implementation plan. All 56 Middle & High Schools (and Pupil Referral Units) across the county were e-mailed regarding the project and over half have expressed interest in becoming early implementers, a level that ET say is unprecedented. Within Newcastle the following schools have expressed early interest - Wolstanton, Clayton and St. John Fisher High Schools and the Cedars PRU.

### **Current Situation**

A half-day workshop with early implementer schools took place in early January. Unfortunately the Newcastle based Schools were unable to attend and gave their apologies. However it was decided in the Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) that District Commissioning Lead Mark Hewitt and Chief Inspector Neil Hulme would liaise directly with these Schools and ask them to meet with Gill Venables and local partners to discuss the way forward. CI Hulme and Mark will also make contact with other Schools who would benefit from this programme of change such as Clough Hall.

District meetings will then be arranged which will provide the foundation for local PSHE forums which will continue to be supported by Education Transformation for the duration of the funded programme. The workshops will help shape early school approaches towards parental agreements and social norming work which will commence when schools feel ready during the spring term. Educational Transformation will also be engaging with individual schools to support their specific needs including policy as well as curriculum advice. Findings and experiences from early implementers will be rapidly shared across schools by Educational Transformation in order that a flexible approach can be taken towards development and implementation. A roll-out to other schools should be possible from Easter time 2013 depending on circumstances.

In terms of District Partnership Engagement the involvement of District partners in shaping and supporting local implementation, as well as providing local governance for the continuing work is felt important in the following ways:-

- It will enable the local partnership to engage with schools in their area through a framework of supported (and supportive) meetings influenced by the partnership, but facilitated by Educational Transformation. This will allow key messages and information around problems or opportunities to flow in either direction and enable Educational Transformation to respond to local partnership priorities through seeking to shape their support and approach within local schools;
- It will enable the local partnership to receive regular updates on progress and hold Educational Transformation accountable for the work that they deliver in relation to this programme within their area;
- It will enable Educational Transformation to report blockages into the partnership, for instance where key schools decline involvement, so local partners can consider whether to respond to this or not;
- It will provide the partnership with access to the results of the social norming surveys assisting the identification and prioritisation of need, the use of local resources, and support the tracking of performance over time;

Other Districts around the county have seen this as an opportunity to further shape this programme in a positive way for the benefit of their communities in both the short and medium to longer-term. A range of different partnerships have been identified to link with the programme, depending on local views and circumstances. These include the following broad groups: - Preventing Adverse Risk-taking Behaviour, Building Resilient Families, Alcohol Priority Task Group, and District Safer Schools Partnership meetings.

## **STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAMME**

### **Background**

This project covers ages from 10 to 14 and looks to prevent and deter a number of issues such as anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, alcohol fuelled violence and domestic abuse. It is a prelude to the Troubled Families agenda which focuses on intervention after the event has occurred. Although this project has been driven by Staffs County Council the Alcohol Change Lead has asked each District to take some local governance over this project.

Learning Support Teams have already been engaged, training has been delivered, extra funding is being sought, and a course approach with looked after children and parents with drug issues is being formulated.

### **Current Developments**

After an update from Trevor Smith at the Strategic Partnership Board on 24 January it was decided by the group that due to the cross over with the Troubled Families agenda District Commissioning Lead Mark Hewitt will take the project forward. Mark will be liaising with the Local Support Teams (LST's) in particular Barbara Hine. Mark is also the lead for Troubled Families. The main obstacle is securing funding for more front line professionals from a range of work areas such as social care, children's services, health and housing support. Currently around 40 staff have been trained up and although this is a good start more staff will need to undergo training.

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