



Review of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

**Report by a Working Group of the
Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

November 2007

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Acknowledgements

The Working Group would like to express their thanks to the following people for their co-operation and time. All those who have participated in the review have been thanked for their contribution and provided with a copy of this report.

Councillor Dale Birch, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing

The following Officers from Bracknell Forest Borough Council:

Victor Nicholls, Assistant Chief Executive
Richard Beaumont, Chief Executive's Office

1. Foreword by the Lead Member

This report records the outcome of a Working Group of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, established to review the Council's proposed new Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The following Panel members were appointed to carry out this review:

Councillor Ian Leake, Chairman Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Lead Member)

Councillor Jan Angell

Councillor Clifton Thompson

Councillor Tony Virgo

This review demonstrates how Overview and Scrutiny can and does make a constructive input to the formulation of Council policies, and how we are influencing important issues in a timely way through proactive engagement with the Council's political and operational leadership.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 14 June 2007, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the Council's consultation draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which was presented by the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing¹. The Panel was advised that the strategy had originated as a way of mapping the work of all partners in the health sector. This initial mapping exercise had grown into the overarching Health and Wellbeing structure which aimed to consider the majority of public services provided such as planning future housing development or leisure facilities within the Borough from a health perspective. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was currently being consulted upon, and the Executive Member was keen to receive the comments of the Panel as part of this consultation.
- 2.2 The Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed that the Health Strategy Working Group which the Panel had formed prior to the local elections be re-established from the current Panel membership to consider and feedback on the strategy by 6 September 2007. The Strategy would be considered by the Working Group in the context of the PCT Commissioning Strategy and the Panel's responses to the consultation on this, with the assistance of the Assistant Chief Executive.
- 2.3 The scope of the review was to consider the draft health and Wellbeing Strategy in more detail, to advise the Executive on how best to develop the draft Strategy to ensure it met the needs of the borough's residents, and to report back to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and subsequently the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

¹ The minutes of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting can be found at [http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/Published/C00000147/M00001481/\\$\\$\\$Minutes.doc.pdf](http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/Published/C00000147/M00001481/$$$Minutes.doc.pdf)

3. Investigation and Information Gathering

- 3.1 The working group met on 17 and 24 August. The Working Group determined their terms of reference and methodology for this review, as set out in Appendix 1. The Working Group considered the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy with reference to the Berkshire East PCT Commissioning Strategy and an example of good practice from another local authority.
- 3.2 The Working Group reached preliminary conclusions on the draft strategy. These were set out in a letter to the Council's Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing, attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Working Group decided to seek a meeting with the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing and the Assistant Chief Executive, to discuss the preliminary conclusions and recommendations set out in the letter, such that this could be taken into account during the Executive's consultation period.
- 3.4 The Working Group met the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing and the Assistant Chief Executive on 19 September, to discuss the observations in our letter. The meeting was constructive, and we were given to understand that our suggestions would be acted upon in the next version of the draft strategy. The Working Group resolved to set out its understanding of the outcome of that meeting in writing, and wrote accordingly to the Executive member on 21 September (Appendix 2)
- 3.5 On 16th October, full Council approved the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which had been amended in the light of consultation². The covering paper to Council stated that all of this Working Group's suggestions had been incorporated into the final strategy document, save one minor suggestion concerning the use of appendices. The relevant extract from the Council paper is at Appendix 3.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The Working Group notes that the Health and Wellbeing strategy incorporated all the working Group's recommendations, save one minor suggestion concerning the use of appendices, which we do not regard to be essential.
- 4.2 The Working Group is pleased to note that, in a letter of 5th October 2007 concerning the *Review of Healthcare Funding – Report from a Working Group of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission*, the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing said he was pleased to report that a Health Overview and Scrutiny working group made a valued contribution to the creation of the final Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

² The minutes of the Council meeting can be found at [http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/Published/C00000141/M00001538/\\$\\$\\$Minutes.doc.pdf](http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/Published/C00000141/M00001538/$$$Minutes.doc.pdf)

5. Recommendations of the Working Group

To Bracknell Forest Borough Council's Executive and Chief Executive it is recommended that:

- 5.1 No further action is needed on the recommendations of the working group as these have been adequately actioned in the final version of the Health and Wellbeing strategy approved by full Council.

Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Chairman: Councillor Ian Leake
Vice Chairman: Councillor Alan Browne



Councillor Dale Birch
Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing
Bracknell Forest Borough Council

28 August 2007

Dear Dale,

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DRAFT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

You will recall, at the meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14th June, inviting the input of the Panel to the Council's draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Panel formed a working group, comprising myself as lead Councillor, and Councillors Angell, Thompson and Virgo. The group have now met twice and agreed the scope for the review. This is attached.

The group have reached some preliminary conclusions on the draft strategy, detailed below, which we would like to discuss with you and Victor Nicholls (lead officer) at your earliest convenience. This will enable us to make a formal report before your deadline, which we understand to be 20th September.

The group welcomed the concept of the strategy, and as the Health Scrutiny Panel have previously indicated, see this as a very necessary vehicle to draw together all the activities contributing to the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents. We are also of the view that the strategy will need refinement and improvement in the light of practical experience. That said, we do feel that there are some aspects of the draft which need immediate attention if the strategy is to be broadly fit for purpose at the outset. Our initial thoughts on these points are:

- 1) There needs to be a clearer definition of 'wellbeing'.
- 2) Having set that definition, we think the strategy needs to say more about the importance of housing and a good diet, to cite just two examples, together with a 'where we are now and where we want to be' statement. Timescales also need to be indicated. Generally, the group think the

balance of the strategy focuses more on health than critical wellbeing issues.

- 3) The strategy would benefit from a more comprehensive exposition of the health and wellbeing profile of the Borough's population, identifying significant geographical variations within the Borough. We believe that having this clearer 'starting point' would greatly help in understanding priorities and strategic direction.
- 4) In terms of the document's structure, we suggest it would help to put all the supporting material and first level analyses into appendices.
- 5) As this strategy is effectively an 'umbrella' document for other plans and strategies, such as the Sustainable Community Plan and the Local Area Agreement, it would be helpful to list all of them in a bibliography.
- 6) As the strategy is bound to evolve and it is rarely possible to get things entirely right first time around, we would welcome a commitment in the document for the strategy to be reviewed during its first year of use.
- 7) It is not clear who is to have overall responsibility for implementing, monitoring, and updating the strategy. We believe that this should be clearly stated and identified. We would have comments on this point.
- 8) The strategy seems to be, in the main, an amalgam and distillation of various plans and other documents already in circulation. It would help if there was a clearer exposition of exactly what added value is given by the strategy, and how this is to be measured in terms of outcomes.
- 9) The strategy would benefit from a much clearer statement of the changes to the borough's health and wellbeing profile which the Council and its partners aspire to achieve over a specified term.

We are keen to work with the Executive and officers to ensure a first class Health and Wellbeing strategy for the borough, and we look forward to a constructive dialogue on our provisional views. We would also like to explore with you at our meeting the best way forward for the review and completing the strategy.

If we are to meet the projected timescale, we will need to meet with you and Victor by 4 September at the very latest, so I would ask you to let me know a couple of dates which would be convenient for you both, as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Ian Leake
Chairman of the Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Copy: Councillors Thompson, Angell, Virgo.
Victor Nicholls

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
14 JUNE 2007

WORK PROGRAMME 2007 – 2008

Terms of Reference for:

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

Purpose of this Working Group / anticipated value of its work:

To advise the Executive on how best to develop the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure it meets the needs of the borough's residents

Key Objectives:

1. To comment on the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) and to make recommendations and comments on it
2. To identify any critical areas not covered in the document
3. To identify any areas where environment issues may affect health issues
4. To identify any areas where health need discrimination is to be avoided, to reach 'hard to reach' groups.
5. To make recommendations on how the strategy should be implemented and monitored.

Scope of the work:

1. Examination of the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS).
2. Reference to best practice.
3. Interviews with key members and officers

Not included in the scope:

Detailed personal health issues

Terms of Reference prepared by:

Terms of Reference agreed by:

Working Group structure: A group of members from the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, comprising Councillors Jan Angell, Ian Leake, Tony Virgo, and Cliff Thompson

Working Group Lead Member: Councillor Leake

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Dale Birch, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing

BACKGROUND:

The minutes of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel of 14 June 2007 record:

10. Health Strategy

The Panel considered the BFBC Draft Consultation Health and Wellbeing Strategy presented by the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing. The Panel was advised that the strategy had originated as a way of mapping the work of all partners in the health sector. This initial mapping exercise had grown into the overarching Health and Wellbeing structure which aimed to consider the majority of public services provided such as planning future housing development or leisure facilities within the Borough from a health perspective. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was currently being consulted upon, possibly to include the BF1500 panel and the PCT and the Executive Member was keen to receive the comments of the Panel as part of this consultation.

It was agreed that the Health Strategy Working Group which the Panel had formed prior to the local elections be re-established from current Panel membership to consider and feedback on the strategy by 6 September 2007. The Strategy would be considered by the Working Group in the context of the PCT Commissioning Strategy and the Panel's responses to the consultation on this, with the assistance of the Assistant Chief Executive.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL TO ADDRESS:

1. What added value will this strategy bring?
2. Who oversees the implementation of the strategy and 'right care right place'?
3. Are the health needs of the borough's residents and the provision of services fully reflected in the strategy?
4. Are the wellbeing needs of the borough's residents and the provision of services fully reflected in the strategy?

INFORMATION GATHERING:

Witnesses to be invited

| Name | Organisation/Position | Reason for Inviting |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Councillor Dale Birch | BFBC Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing | To raise questions on the draft strategy |
| Victor Nicholls | BFBC Assistant Chief Executive (lead officer) | To raise questions on the draft strategy |
| TBC | Berkshire East PCT | To enquire about the PCT's views on the strategy |
| | | |
| | | |

Site Visits

| Location | Purpose of visit |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| None | |

Key Documents / Background Data / Research

1. Draft Health and Wellbeing strategy
2. Examples of other Councils' strategies
3. PCT Commissioning Strategy
4. Overview and Scrutiny Report into healthcare funding, July 2007

TIMESCALE

Starting: 17 August 2007

Ending: 13 September 2007

OUTPUTS TO BE PRODUCED

1. Report to Executive (for clearance with Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and Overview and Scrutiny Commission)

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

| Body | Date |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel | 13 September 2007 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Commission | 17 September 2007 |

MONITORING / FEEDBACK ARRANGEMENTS

| Body | Details | Date |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel | Oral reports at each meeting | |
| Overview and Scrutiny Commission | Oral reports at each meeting | |
| | | |

Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Chairman : Councillor Ian Leake
Vice Chairman : Councillor Alan Browne



Councillor Dale Birch
Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing
Bracknell Forest Borough Council

21 September 2007

Dear Dale,

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DRAFT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Working Group dealing with the draft strategy wish to thank you and Victor Nicholls for making yourselves available last Wednesday to respond to our letter of 28th August 2007.

Following our discussions, the Working Group feel that the following points emerged and were agreed:

1. All the points and issues raised in our letter were valid and would be addressed in the completed document.
2. The revised document would be shorter, more focussed, be more readable and have 'punch'.
3. A bibliography would be attached making reference to other BFBC plans, documents and supporting evidence contained in appendices.
4. The Working Group would supply a definition of 'well-being' which would be used and/or taken into account in incorporating a definition in the document. While accepting the view that the definition of well-being should not be prescriptive, it was thought the definition should be capable of assessment against criteria.
5. Apart from incorporating the matters specifically identified in our previous letter, the Group were of the clear view that specific health criteria related to Bracknell Forest should be contained in an appendix in such a way that improvement in outcomes could be measurable and monitored.

The group were aware of the short self-imposed time-scale that was imposed on the completion of this non-statutory strategy. Ideally, we felt more time should be given to allowing a fuller input. However, the assurance given that the points made would be incorporated in the final document submitted to the Executive, together with the provisions of section 16 of part 4.5 of the Constitution, satisfied the group that they were content to let matters proceed on the agreed basis.

The Group wish the Council well in the JAR and CPA reviews.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Ian Leake

Chairman of the Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Copy: Councillors Thompson, Angell, Virgo.
Victor Nicholls

Extract From Council Agenda papers, 18 October 2007**Annexe 2: Summary of consultation comments received and suggested response to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.**

| Consultee | Consultee Comments | Response |
|---|---|---|
| Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel | A clearer definition of wellbeing | Definition added |
| | More detail on housing and diet for example, along with more on where we are now and where we want to be. More detail on timescales and greater focus on wellbeing. | New section added on Implementation, Monitoring and Review. Additional references to diet added and additional emphasis on well-being. |
| | Greater detail on geographical variations within the Borough to help understand priorities and strategic direction. | The need for geographical variations to be taken into account has been added as action JSNA2. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will also consider in more detail the health status of different communities in the Borough. |
| | Suggest putting supporting material and first level analyses into appendices. | No change proposed. |
| | List linking strategies in a bibliography. | Bibliography added. |
| | Would welcome commitment to review the Strategy in the first year. | Commitment added. |
| | Greater clarity on responsibility for implementing, monitoring and updating. | New section on Implementation and Monitoring added. |
| | Greater explanation of the 'added value' of this Strategy, and how to be measured. | As above plus additional paragraph added at 2.9 of the Strategy regarding the 'added value' of this strategy. |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>Suggest there should be a clearer statement of the changes to the borough's health and well-being profile which the Council and its partners aspire to achieve over a specified term.</p> | <p>The Strategy identifies that the first review will establish baseline data and with partners identify the need for additional targets and timescales. Many of the actions identified are already set out in other plans and strategies.</p> |
|--|--|--|