

TITLE OF REPORT: Work to address the harms caused by tobacco

REPORT OF: Director of Public Health

SUMMARY

This report gives details of the evidence gathering session that will take place on 23rd January 2018. The views of the Committee are being sought on the evidence presented and the future plans outlined.

Background

Care, Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the focus of its review in 2017-18 is work to address the harms caused by tobacco.

Previous evidence gathering sessions have provided an overview of:

- The impact of harms arising from tobacco in Gateshead
- Current work to reduce those harms
- The importance of providing support to smokers to stop
- Current provision of stop smoking support in Gateshead, as well as new and emerging models of support
- Current priority areas in comprehensive Tobacco Control
- Challenges associated of dealing with these priorities
- The importance of linking local, regional and national efforts to reduce the harms caused by tobacco

Purpose of this session

The scoping report agreed by OSC on 20th June 2017 described the range of activities that reduce harm caused by tobacco. Broadly, these are:

- Stopping people starting smoking
- Helping people stopping smoking
- Reducing exposure to second hand smoke
- Tobacco control (ie. Enforcement of legislation round the sale of tobacco)

At a population level, making tobacco use the exception rather than the norm (the “denormalisation” of tobacco use) is central to all of the above.

This fourth evidence gathering session will hear a presentation from Hazel Cheeseman, Director of Policy, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH). The presenter will provide an overview of how national planning on preventing harms from tobacco links with tobacco control work across the north-east region and then down into local area action.

Issues to Consider

When considering the evidence outlined above the Committee may wish to consider the following:

- Smoking remains the single cause of most preventable illness and death in Gateshead and will kill half of all long term users.
- Gateshead has higher than average levels of smoking with more than 29,000 smokers and significant inequalities in the prevalence of smoking between different groups and areas.
- The Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board has an ambition to reduce smoking prevalence in Gateshead to 5% or less by 2025 from its current prevalence of 17.9%.
- There is pressure on Public Health budgets now and in the future
- Demand for stop smoking services is reducing locally, regionally, and nationally
- There are particularly low levels of take up of stop smoking services amongst some groups ie. People from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups
- Innovative solutions developed in Gateshead in the past have helped to transform smoking rates in particular communities

Recommendation

OSC agree

- i) To note the approach and content as set out in this report and presentations.
- ii) To give its views on the information presented.

