

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 12th September 2017. 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 2017-8 is work to address the harms caused by tobacco.

The review will help the Committee to consider how tobacco use in Gateshead impacts negatively upon physical and mental wellbeing, its impact upon the local health and social care economy, and its role in perpetuating poverty and inequalities within and between generations.

The Committee will also consider the range and extent of current activity to address those harms, with a view to agreeing a set of recommendations.

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 secondhand 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 first evidence gathering session will hear two presentations of ten minutes from:

- Andy Graham, Consultant in Public Health, Gateshead Council
- Peter Wright, Environmental Health, Community Safety and Trading Standards Manager, Gateshead Council

The presenters will provide an overview of current work to reduce harms caused by tobacco, and introduce the proposed outline for future evidence gathering sessions.

Issues to Consider

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

- Gateshead has higher than average levels of smoking
- Smoking remains the single cause of most preventable illness and death in Gateshead
- There are significant inequalities in the prevalence of smoking between different groups and areas
- 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
- There is pressure on Public Health budgets now and in the future
- 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%.
- Innovative solutions developed in Gateshead in the past have helped to transform smoking rates in particular communities

Recommendation

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to agree:

- The approach and content as set out in this report and presentations.

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