

EXTERNAL SERVICE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: ALCOHOL RELATED A&E ADMISSIONS AMONGST UNDER 18S

Cabinet Members	Councillor Philip Corthorne Councillor David Simmonds CBE
Cabinet Portfolios	Social Services, Health and Housing Education and Children's Services
Officer Contact	Nikki O'Halloran, Administration Directorate
Papers with report	External Services Scrutiny Committee's review into 'Alcohol Related Admissions Amongst Under 18s'.

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To consider the External Services Scrutiny Committee's review into alcohol related admissions amongst those aged under 18 and the recommendations contained therein.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objective of: <i>Our People</i>
Financial Cost	The recommendations set out in this report do not have any direct financial implications.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	External Services Scrutiny Committee
Ward(s) affected	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Welcomes the report from the External Services Scrutiny Committee on the review into alcohol related A&E admissions amongst under 18s.
2. Endorses the recommendations of the External Services Scrutiny Committee as set out overleaf:

External Services Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

Information Gathering

- 1. That Cabinet asks the Public Health team to work with The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and ARCH to gather more detailed information about those young people who attend the hospital as a result of substance misuse so that gaps in service provision can be identified and resources can be targeted to those most in need.**

Education

- 2. That Cabinet asks the Regulatory Services team to encourage the adoption of a Challenge 25 policy by all licensed premises in the Borough.**
- 3. That Cabinet asks officers working on the Hillingdon Healthy Schools Programme to work with Safer Schools Officers to deliver alcohol risk messages to young people across the Borough.**

Monitoring

- 4. That Cabinet asks the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children's Board to monitor the number of under 18s being admitted to hospital as part of its monthly performance regime and include the results in its Annual Report.**

Reasons for recommendations

The recommendations set out in this report have been proposed with a view to support agencies that provide health services in the Borough by preventing alcohol related admissions whilst also improving outcomes for young people. The recommendations will enhance partnership working to improve existing support services for residents.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject or amend some or all of the Committee's recommendations.

Background to the review

- 1. The External Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 17 June 2015 gave consideration to possible topics for the Committee's major scrutiny reviews for 2015/2016. As it had been raised as an issue at the Cabinet meeting on 12 February 2015, Members agreed that a Working Group be set up to review alcohol related A&E admissions for those aged under 18. The first Working Group meeting took place on 15 September 2015 and Councillor Dominic Gilham was appointed its Chairman.**
- 2. Information on the agreed terms of reference for this review and a list of the witnesses that provided evidence can be found in Appendix B of the report itself.**

3. The Working Group's review was endorsed by the External Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 17 November 2015. The Committee congratulated the Working Group on tackling this difficult subject matter and for producing such a comprehensive report.

Overview of findings

4. Although the number of children and young people who are admitted to Hillingdon Hospital's A&E department is actually quite low (and is reducing), the rates per 100,000 in Hillingdon are slightly higher than the national average and higher than the London average. However, when looking at neighbouring boroughs, Hillingdon's ethnic mix is more reflective of the national profile. The recommendations reflect the need to monitor the rates in Hillingdon whilst also looking to take preventative action.
5. The scope of this review led to some specific recommendations for the Council and our partner organisations. In considering their implementation, the following comments have been provided by officers for Cabinet to consider:

Recommendation 1:

To enable more detailed information to be gathered in relation to those young people who attend Hillingdon Hospital as a result of substance misuse, officers are looking to establish a task and finish group to include key stakeholders. This would enable the partner organisations to agree a robust approach to gathering data and identify gaps in service provision and target resources to those most in need.

Recommendation 2:

Regulatory Services recognises that the Mandatory Conditions attached to premises licences where alcohol is sold/supplied must have an age verification scheme. The Licensing Authority would normally expect this scheme to include a challenge for photographic identification to all persons who appear to be under the age of 25 years, i.e., 'Challenge 25'. To support this, a Policy has been agreed by Cabinet on 17 December 2015 and was considered for adoption by Council on 14 January 2016. Subject to Council agreement, the Policy guidance notes and application advice will be amended to reflect the new standard.

Recommendation 3:

It is noted that there are synergies between this recommendation and one made by the Children, Young People and Learning Policy Overview Committee in its report entitled 'Reducing the Risk of Young People Engaging in Criminal Activity and Anti-Social Behaviour' where it was recommended:

"That the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services requests that officers explore the feasibility of working with the Borough's schools to develop and strengthen interventions designed to divert young people from criminal and anti-social behaviour. Officers are also requested to explore the provision of drug and crime awareness education available to young people to ascertain whether it is sufficient and meets the needs of particular communities and age groups."

In response to this recommendation, a number of actions are being taken. Public Health has brought together a number of stakeholders (e.g., police, schools, school nurses, youth workers and substance misuse providers) who have a role to play in this area. These organisations will be able to discuss the current offer and investigate the potential for creating a universal offer to raise awareness regarding substance misuse (alcohol and drugs) and crime prevention.

An Emotional Wellbeing Questionnaire (which includes questions relating to misuse of alcohol and drugs) is being developed and it is anticipated that this will go out to all schools via the Participation Officers (EWO's) once it has been piloted. The feedback from this questionnaire can then be used to inform the planned drugs awareness training for professionals working with young people.

Other work being undertaken includes a detailed needs assessment being undertaken by the Early Intervention Team's Young People Substance Misuse Service (SORTED) and Substance Misuse Stakeholder Workshop. This psychoactive substances workshop is planned for April 2016 and will be provided for school staff and professionals working within the local authority, as well as outside agencies (including school nurses and police personnel).

Recommendation 4:

The Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Committee of Hillingdon's Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is in the process of reviewing information from partner agencies about their safeguarding activity and practices. This includes information from Hillingdon Hospital and the Urgent Care Centre in relation to the number of under 18s presenting with alcohol related problems. This and other key activity information is being reviewed for challenge and reporting at each LSCB operational and executive board meeting and will be included in the Hillingdon LSCB Annual Report that is considered by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

The recommendations set out in this report do not have any direct financial implications for the Council as the actions proposed in these recommendations can be contained within existing resources.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendations?

The recommendations, if agreed, will support health related work in the Borough to prevent the abuse of alcohol by young people, ultimately assisting our external partners by reducing the impact on the services that they provide.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The Committee heard evidence from a wide range of witnesses, further details of which can be found in the review report itself.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications noted above.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no legal impediments to Cabinet agreeing the recommendations set out in this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.