

Report to: **Audit, Best Value and Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **24 June 2013**

By: **Director of Public Health**

Title of report: **An Introduction to Public Health**

Purpose of report: **To introduce the new public health responsibilities of East Sussex County Council and outline the recommendations of the Public Health Joint Reference Group.**

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is recommended to (1) consider and comment on the introduction to the Council's public health responsibilities; and (2) endorse the recommendations of the Public Health Joint Reference Group.

1. Financial appraisal

1.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

2. An Overview of Public Health

2.1 On 1 April 2013, the responsibility for commissioning public health services transferred from Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to upper tier local authorities, NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

2.2 The Director of Public Health will provide this Committee with an introductory presentation on the Council's new public health responsibilities. Attached as **Appendix 1** are the slides to accompany the presentation.

3. Public Health Joint Reference Group

3.1 The Audit, Best Value and Community Services Scrutiny Committee and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a joint reference group to provide additional oversight and scrutiny during the final year of the Public Health Team's transition into the Council.

3.2 The joint reference group made several recommendations. These are detailed in **Appendix 2. The Committee is recommended to endorse these recommendations and, where appropriate, take them forward through the ongoing scrutiny work programme.**

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Local Members: All

Background Documents

None

Public Health Transferring to Local Authorities

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 includes the transfer of responsibilities for Public Health from NHS Primary Care Trusts to Local Authorities from 1 April 2013.

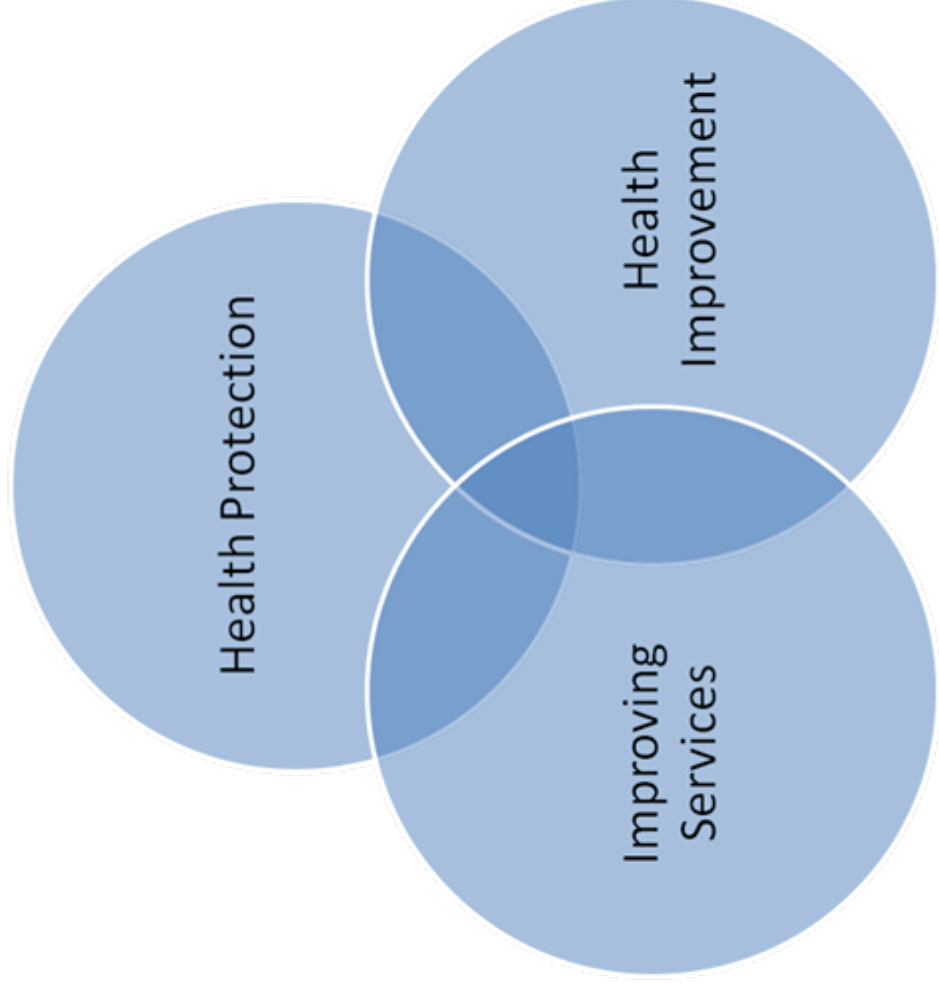
In transferring to local government, the NHS public health team will be bringing with them specialist knowledge and a set of specialist skills that include analysis and interpretation of population data and the local factors that impact on health.

What is Public Health?

“The science and art of promoting and protecting health and well-being, preventing ill-health and prolonging life through the organised efforts of society”

Public Health is concerned with the overall health and well being of populations and communities. It involves identifying health risks and developing plans and programmes to improve and protect the health of populations as a whole.

Three Key Domains of Public Health Practice



Local Authority Public Health Functions and Responsibilities

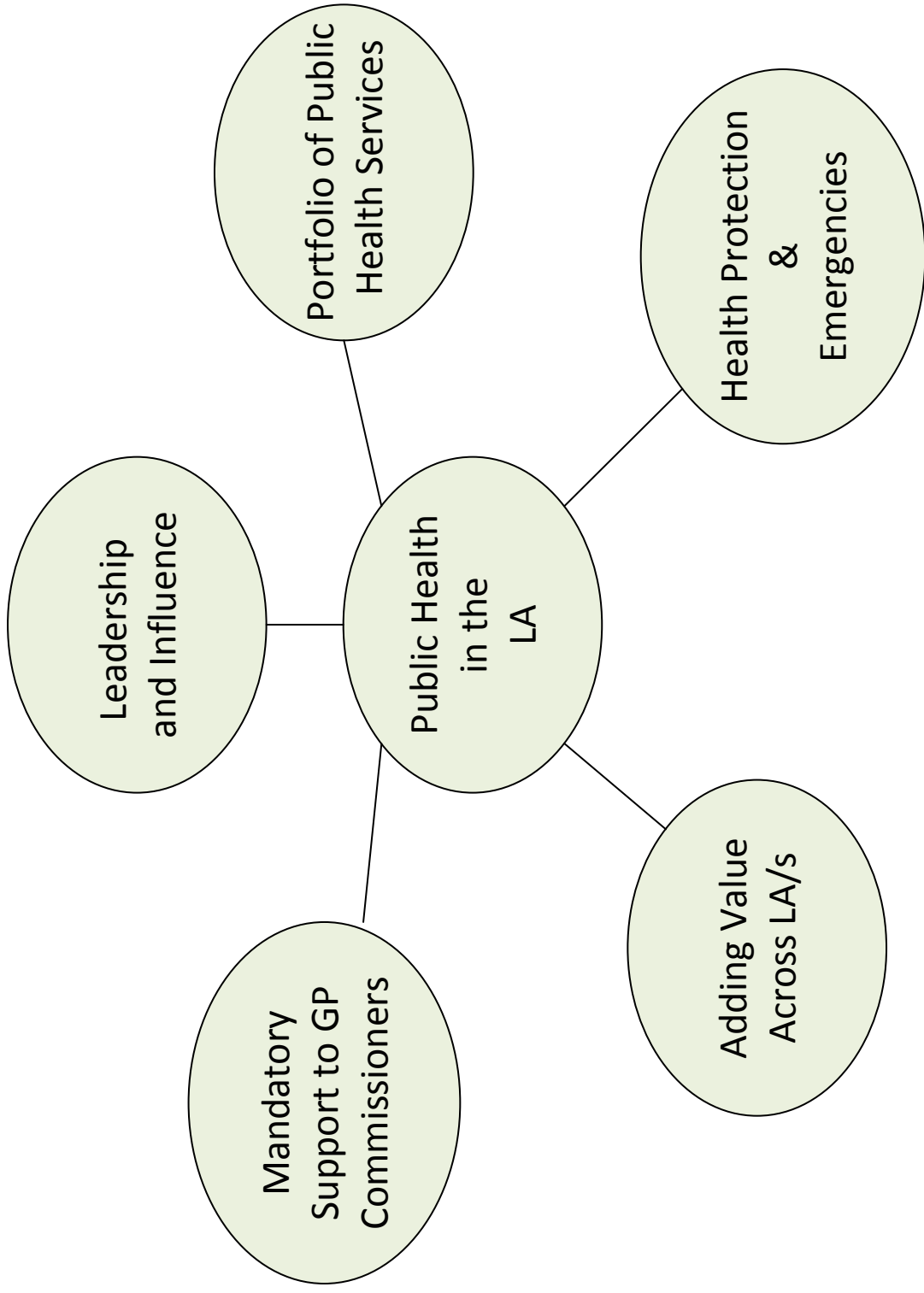
Mandated Services:

- Sexual health services
- Health protection
- Public health advice service to Clinical Commissioning Groups
- NHS Health Check Programme
- National Childhood Measurement Programme

Range of Other Services But Level Determined by Local Need

Public health services for children and young people 5-19 yrs	Alcohol and drug misuse services	Tobacco control and smoking cessation services	Interventions to tackle obesity	Locally-led nutrition initiatives
Increasing levels of physical activity	Dental public health services	Accidental injury prevention	Populations initiatives to reduce and prevent birth defects	Population mental health services
Behavioural and lifestyle campaigns – cancer and long term conditions	Local initiatives to reduce excess deaths as a result of seasonal mortality	Local initiatives on workplace health	Promotion of community safety and the prevention of violence	Local initiatives to tackle social exclusion

Public Health in the Local Authority



Ring-Fenced Public Health Grant

Published on the 10 Jan 2013 by the Department of Health.

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Ring fenced grant for 2 years set, £23.8m for 2013/14 and £24.5m for 2014/15.

The Council had been planning for a worse case scenario using a figure of £20m (which was based on the returns made from the 10/11 and 11/12 audited spend, and 12/13 forecast).

Action Taken

- Portfolio Plan agreed through County Council.
- Smooth and safe transition of both public health staff and commissioned services
- 3 year comprehensive service review agreed for all public health areas to maximise best value and health outcomes and to reflect priorities in the Council Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Contingency reserves in place for pandemic influenza and costs incurred as part of the service review

Recommendations of the Public Health Joint Reference Group

The Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a joint reference group to provide additional oversight and scrutiny during the final year of the transition of the Public Health Team into East Sussex County Council.

The reference group met with officers from the Public Health Team and the Policy Team four times between June 2012 and February 2013.

The group discussed:

- the roles and responsibilities of the Public Health Team;
- how the Public Health Team will integrate into the Council;
- the role of Members in promoting public health.

The reference group made a number of recommendations:

Recommendations

- 1. Some public health responsibilities are now split between commissioning organisations and this could affect the delivery of the service. The Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee should pay close attention to the performance figures for these services, for example, immunisation.**
- 2. The Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee should be aware of the progress of the Public Health Team's service review programme and consider specific review recommendations when necessary.**
- 3. Increased efforts to promote NHS health checks should result in a significant increase in uptake. The Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee should monitor the progress of health checks to ensure that this is the case.**
- 4. The Audit, Best Value and Community Services Scrutiny Committee should consider the public health implications of all reports they are asked to scrutinise.**
- 5. All Members should use their position as community leaders to raise public health awareness.**
- 6. The Public Health Team can help build Members' knowledge of public health by sending them a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Profile of their division.**

The Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee is recommended to endorse the reference group's recommendations. Recommendations 1-3 could be included as future agenda items on the Committee's work programme.

