

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CABINET

17TH JANUARY 2023

CABINET MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH – COUNCILLOR MATT GOLBY

Report Title	Public Health Framework
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

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List of Appendices

Appendix A – Public Health Framework 2022-24

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report is to introduce the Public Health Framework, which sets out the approach and key priorities for the expenditure of the public health grant in the period 2022-24. The framework outlines how the council will assure that:-

- The public health grant is spent in support of strategic priority areas
- Expenditure is demonstrably in line with the grant determination requirements
- Governance processes are robust and adequate
- Public health outcomes are reviewed and monitored

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Director of Public Health (DPH) is assigned as a statutory chief officer for their authority and the principal adviser on all health matters to elected members and officers. They have a vital leadership role for system-wide efforts to secure better public health across the following domains:- health improvement; health protection and population healthcare.
- 2.2 The DPH has a number of statutory responsibilities, including:-
- All of their local authority's duties to take steps to improve the health of the people in its area
 - Any of the Secretary of State's public health protection or health improvement functions that s/he delegates to local authorities
 - Exercising their local authority's functions in planning for, and responding to, emergencies that present a risk to the public's health
 - Their local authority's role in co-operating with the police, the probation service and the prison service to assess the risks posed by violent or sexual offenders
 - Such other public health functions as the Secretary of State specifies in regulations and under dental public health powers.
- 2.3 To support these responsibilities, the DPH is responsible for a public health grant. The level of the grant is set by the Treasury and is ring-fenced for specific uses. In 2022/23, West Northants Council has been allocated £19,107,223 for public health services.
- 2.4 The ring-fenced grant is provided on the condition that the 'main and primary purpose of all spend from the grant is to secure public health improvement'. The DPH and Chief Executive/S151 Officer have to confirm that expenditure of the grant is in line with the grant determination criteria as set out by the Department of Health & Social Care.
- 2.5 Business case bids are welcomed into Public Health from internal and external partners as well as local voluntary and community groups, which have identified a need, or that would benefit the health and wellbeing of their customers.
- 2.5 The framework accompanying this report clearly sets out the grant conditions by which the Public Health Grant should be spent, alongside local and national priorities. The framework also outlines measures that are being taken by Public Health officers to ensure a robust governance process is in place for initiatives that may require funding from the grant. It details the process to ensure there is a robust approval process in place that scrutinises the public health outcomes proposed to be met, as well as value for money and sustainability of any project that is brought forward for approval.

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet note the contents of the attachment and approve the adoption of this framework going forward.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 Bringing forward this paper to Cabinet is to ensure there is complete awareness and transparency around the usage of the Public Health Grant and conditions by which it should be spent. It is also to ensure a clear governance process is in place and agreed.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 Following the disaggregation of the countywide Public Health team on 1 October 2022, and the formation of Public Health in West Northamptonshire, it was important to set out clearly the factors involved when allocating non budgeted spend through the Public Health Grant. The attached paper therefore details the conditions of how the Public Health Grant should be spent, expectations of the role of the DPH and commitment to residents in West Northants on how the grant and more specifically, the reserve, would be used to improve health outcomes.
- 5,2 Also, important to clearly identify, is the process taken to allocate funds and to ensure information about such is available in one place. The accompanying framework document therefore encapsulates all of this information to help guide, not only the public health team, but others, through this process to ensure the correct governance is followed.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 A reserve budget has been built up in Public Health over the last few years and it is now imperative that a plan to spend this is in place. Key themes of investment have therefore been identified by the DPH, in line with local priorities as follows:-
- Adults and Early Years - Wellbeing and Prevention
 - Wider Determinants - Housing/Homelessness/Anti-Poverty/Environment
 - Communities and Health Improvement
- 6.2 As well as identifying the local needs, it is also important that we ensure a robust, fair and equitable system is in place to assess and review requests for funding. Although this approach is something that Public Health has adopted for funding requests in recent years, this has been the first time that requests have been invited in such frequency. It has therefore become necessary for us to ensure rigorous processes are in place to award funding and to assure that public health outcomes are at the centre of all bids.
- 6.3 As there is quite a complex series of conditions surrounding public health grant spend it is also important for us to ensure the parameters that we have to follow, are understood across the council and with local partners. This not only safeguards that the rules and conditions are being followed appropriately, but also helps others to focus on areas that public health can help to

fund, meaning that time is not wasted by all parties on bids that would not be appropriate.

7. Implications

a. Resources and Financial

This paper does not ask for a specific sum of money to be spent but rather outlines the parameters around how resources should be spent, and the priorities for the use of the Public Health Reserve, and the processes involved in doing this.

b. Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

c. Risk

The risk of not adopting this framework would be for ambiguity to remain present for the spend of the Public Health Grant which may lead to money being inappropriately spent, with potential repercussions from the Department of Health & Social Care and the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities.

Without this being approved, there would also be a lack of clarity on the process of approving business cases within Public Health. This could cause delays in projects and work streams being started, some of which are extremely time sensitive and could have a damaging impact on the council's reputation, particularly for high profile issues such as fuel poverty in winter.

d. Consultation

The principles of having a framework document in place have been shared with the regional DPHs who is supportive of this approach. In addition, the framework has been shared with our external audit partner.

e. Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

The Public Health framework is a statement of the key priorities of the public health services grant. It has not been considered by Scrutiny but would fall within the remit of the People Scrutiny Committee.

f. Climate Impact

- g.** There is an opportunity for the framework to positively impact on the climate through promoting public health and wellbeing initiatives with a positive environmental impact e.g promoting physical activity.

h. Community Impact and Inequalities

Many of the areas of spend impact certain communities or cohorts affected by health inequalities, so this paper helps to streamline a process which will benefit these at risk groups and those with protected characteristics .

i. Communications

The Council's corporate communications activities will keep the public informed and engaged on the key priorities for expenditure as part of the Public Health Framework and how these objectives and outcomes will benefit local communities.

8. Background Papers

[Public Health Grant Circular](#)