

Subject:	Independent Drugs Commission Report		
Date of Meeting:	12 June 2013		
Report of:	Director of Public Health		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Peter Wilkinson, Linda Beanlands	Tel: 29-6562
	Email:	Peter.wilkinson@brighton-hove.gov.uk , Linda.beanlands@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 In 2012 the Safe in the City Partnership established an Independent Drugs Commission to review the current state of drugs problems in the city and the approach being taken by local services to address these issues. The Drugs Commission addressed four key areas and published its final report with recommendations in April 2013. The final report has been received by the Safe in the City Partnership and a plan for the Substance Misuse Programme Board to address the recommendations has been developed.
- 1.2 This report asks the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) to note the Independent Commission's report and the actions to date of Safe in the City Partnership in response.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the HWB notes the Independent Drugs Commission report (**Appendix 1**), and the Safe in the City Partnership's responses to the Drugs Commission report recommendations (as set out at Part 3 of this report).
- 2.2 That the HWB instructs officers to bring back a further report on the progress of the recommendations of the Independent Drugs Commission to a future HWB meeting.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Independent Drugs Commission was established following an invitation from the Safe in the City Partnership with the intention that the Commission would review the city's response to the problems associated with local drug use. The Commission had ten members and was chaired by Peter James, a local author. The vice-chair was Mike Trace, a former Deputy UK drugs czar. Officers from a range of local organisations acted as advisors to the Commission.

3.2 A copy of the Independent Drugs Commission report is attached at **Appendix 1**. The report has been welcomed by the Safe in the City Partnership as a helpful and challenging review of local services and approaches. For several of the recommendations relevant local work is already ongoing.

3.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board is specifically identified in two of the recommendations;

- The Health and Wellbeing Board and Safe in the City Partnership should convene a working group led by the local authority, NHS and Police, to explore and make recommendations about the feasibility of establishing a form of consumption room as part of the range of drug treatment services in the city.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board should investigate the value of rolling out a programme of overdose response/first aid training for drug users, and the professionals who work with them.

3.4 There has already been a great deal of press coverage regarding the possibility of establishing local “drug consumption” rooms. However, the actual recommendation in the report is that the feasibility of establishing a form of consumption room should be explored, not that one should definitely be established. Any proposal to establish drug consumption rooms following the feasibility study would be made to a formal committee of the Council at a future date.

3.5 As regards the second recommendation above, as the Drug Commission report acknowledges, there is already a programme of overdose response and first aid training in place in Brighton and Hove. St John Ambulance provides first aid training for certain service users and their carers or family, as well as for some staff groups. Naloxone is a drug which reverses the effects of opiates such as heroin and is used to reverse the consequences of an opiate overdose. Naloxone is given to certain service users to keep with them. The service user receives training in recognising an opiate overdose, first aid training including how to put someone into the recovery position, the use of Naloxone and the importance of calling an ambulance. Service users prescribed Naloxone sign a consent form for another individual to administer Naloxone in the case of an opiate overdose. During 2012 a total of 631 Naloxone mini-jets were prescribed. The programme is continually expanding. Hostel staff are receiving training. Naloxone is dispensed in the Accident and Emergency Department at the hospital.

3.6 **Progressing the recommendations of the Independent Commission**

The Substance Misuse Programme Board (the partnership body overseeing substance misuse strategy in the city) has identified lead individuals to form a working group to review and progress each of the Drug Commission’s recommendations. The lead identified for the drug consumption room recommendation will convene a specific working group to look at the feasibility of establishing a local drug consumption room.

3.7 Implementing some of the recommendations would have significant resource implications and further discussion across a wider audience will be needed once these have been identified.

- 3.8 Updates on the progress being made will be provided by the Substance Misuse Board to the Safe in the City Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board over the next year.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In considering the four key questions and challenges, the Drugs Commission invited evidence from a number of interested third sector providers and service users at each of its meetings. The lead representative of the drug misuse service user group was also a member of the Commission and was therefore fully involved throughout the process. In addition, a number of young people attended a session to participate in the discussion about what more could be done to prevent and protect young people from the harms caused by substance misuse. Wider consultation will be pursued in the coming months for those specific recommendations of the Commission where the views of service users and the wider community will be able to inform further considerations.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The Director of Public Health's 2013/14 budget for prevention and support to drugs abuse in adults is approximately £4.5 million which is committed against a number of contracts. The costs associated with the recommendations from the Independent Drugs Commission would need to be considered against Public Health and Partnership budgets. The progress report will identify future financial commitments.'

Finance Officer Consulted: Anne Silley

Date: 16/05/13

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Any proposals that are brought forward for Council decision pursuant to the recommendations of the Independent Drugs Commission will be reported to the relevant Council committee and should be accompanied by legal and financial advice to support the decision making process. The feasibility study in relation to drug consumption rooms will need to consider and address the legal implications of such an approach.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert
2013*

Date: 10th May

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are none to this report for information. The Safe in the City Partnership will consider equalities issues as part of its response to the Drugs Commission report recommendations.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are none to this report for information. The Safe in the City Partnership will consider sustainability issues as part of its response to the Drugs Commission report recommendations.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are none to this report for information. The Safe in the City Partnership will consider crime and disorder issues as part of its response to the Drugs Commission report recommendations.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The risks and opportunities relating to the Drugs Commission recommendations will be considered by the Safe in the City Partnership.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 There are none to this report for information. The Safe in the City Partnership will consider public health issues as part of its response to the Drugs Commission report recommendations.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 There are none to this report for information. The Safe in the City Partnership will consider corporate priority issues as part of its response to the Drugs Commission report recommendations.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 This is a report for information so there are no alternative options to be considered.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 This is a report for information; the Safe in the City Partnership is the partnership body charged with responding to the Independent Drugs Commission report recommendations.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Report of the Independent Drugs Commission for Brighton & Hove

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None