

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES**CABINET****DATE: 21 JULY 2011****REPORT OF: STRATEGIC CABINET MEMBER FOR
COMMUNITY BUSINESS AND
CULTURE****LEAD
OFFICER: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
COMMISSIONING, CORPORATE
POLICY AND STRATEGY****SUBJECT: FULL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE DRUG MISUSE
TASK GROUP****WARDS: ALL****KEY DECISION?: NO****IN FORWARD PLAN: N/A****For general release****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report sets out the full response of the Executive to the report of the Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group which was agreed by the Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 24 March 2011. This report completes the response to the Task Group's recommendations, an initial response to which was reported to Cabinet on 10 May 2011. The report of the Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group is attached in **Appendix A** and the full response to the recommendations is attached in **Appendix B**.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 At its meeting on 10 May 2011 the Executive agreed an initial response to the findings of the Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group Report. This set out the steps that would be taken to enable a full response to be made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.2 Those steps have now been taken and this report contains the Executive's full response to the recommendations made in the report.

2.3 The Strategic Cabinet Member for Community Business and Culture will report back to the Environment, Sustainability and Community

Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2011 with the Executive response, which is attached in **Appendix B**.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. That Cabinet agree the full response to the Drug Task Group's recommendations as at Appendix B.

4. DETAIL

4.1. The Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish the Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group to examine why the Community Safety Partnership was not meeting centrally imposed targets for getting problematic drug users into treatment. There was concern not only about the loss of funding but also that the centrally set targets were based on poor data and did not reflect the local picture. In examining the issue the Task Group focused on:

- Understanding the problems associated with drug use in Richmond upon Thames;
- The controls, treatments and remedies that could be used to help minimise the health harms, violence and anti-social behaviour associated with drug misuse;
- Making recommendations to ensure the Council and its partners is doing everything it can to reduce drug misuse.

4.2 During the nine months in which the Task Group operated there have been three significant changes to national drugs policy:

- the abolition of inappropriate drug targets;
- a new National Drug Strategy launched; and
- the introduction locally of powers to test for drugs on arrest.

4.3 The Task Group report was considered by the Community Safety Partnership and by the Substance Misuse Joint Commissioning Group and the Executive has taken their comments into account in agreeing this response. As a result of the rapidly changing backdrop, a significant number of recommendations in the report are already in train. Funding issues are also more acute than before, so it is even more important that the Council obtains the best results from diminishing resources and focuses these resources on identified priorities.

4.4 The Executive recognises that the recommendations fall within four key themes. These are:

- The social and economic cost of drug use: this is an area where work is already being done and accurate data is vital. The extrapolated costs drug use published in the report are not

considered realistic and work is being undertaken to address this point.

- The need to focus on early intervention, focusing on resource intensive families and the service provided for young people: this relates to current work and planned future work;
- Review of the progress of the intensive Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) and the effects on wider services: this relates to current work already identified and planned future work;
- The support of drug users by considering diverse needs, staff training and awareness of services, community activities and outreach work; this area links to aspects of current work or planned future work. There is a real need to be realistic and focus diminishing resources on identified priorities.

4.5 A number of the recommendations relate to work that is currently planned for 2011/12 in the Community Safety Partnership Plan and Drug Treatment Plan. There are clear commitments within the Plans to look at the cost of drug use, resource intensive families and reviewing the progress of the intensive Drug Intervention Programme and this is reflected in the response.

4.6 Recommendations 1a) to 1c), 2, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 13 are agreed. Recommendations 3, 4, 9, 14 and 15 are partially agreed. Recommendations 5a) and b), 11, 12, 16 and 17 are not agreed. The full response to the recommendations is attached in **Appendix B**.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group consulted with a arrange of stakeholders as set out in their report, attached in **Appendix A**.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications of this report for this financial year. Any financial implications as a result of the response to the recommendations for future financial years will be identified as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 There are no policy implications at this stage. The Drug Treatment Plan has already been agreed which picks up some of the issues in the report. It is expected that any recommendations taken forward will feed into policy decisions during 2011/12; or into the 2012/13 Plan.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 In its response to the Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group, Cabinet will take account of the risks relating to the recommendations in the report.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT/CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The Council has a duty to identify the impact of any changes in service made as a result of the Task Group recommendations and their impact on local people.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 There are no environmental impacts from this report.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- Response to the Report of the Drug Misuse Task Group May 2011;
- Drug Misuse Scrutiny Task Group Report March 2011;
- Richmond upon Thames Community Safety Partnership Plan 20011-14;
- Richmond Community Safety Partnership Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2011/12.

13. CONTACTS

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