

# Health Scrutiny in Wiltshire

The coat of arms of Wiltshire, featuring a shield with green and white horizontal stripes, a blue chief with a white cross, and a golden eagle crest above the shield, surrounded by green foliage.

## Healthier Wiltshire 2014

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### **Bid to the Centre for Public Scrutiny – Health Scrutiny Support Project – Action Learning Funding**

Scrutiny Topic: The Community Strategy aims to make Wiltshire the healthiest county in which to live by 2014

Action Learning Topic: How to enable a multi-agency approach to the delivery of the diet and nutrition element of the ‘Healthier Wiltshire 2014’ Project

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## The Wiltshire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Wiltshire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee comprises the following stakeholder representatives

- nine county councillors
- four co-opted district councillors, one from each of the district councils in the county
- three representatives of the PCT PPI Forums in Wiltshire
- one from the Wiltshire & Swindon Users Network

In addition representatives from the three PCTs and the NHS Trusts providing services to the residents of Wiltshire regularly attend the committee's meetings, to improve understanding of issues affecting the NHS and the wider health community, and to fulfil their section 7 duties to consult with the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee before carrying out service change. The committee also engages with the departments of the County Council which deliver adult and children's social services.

1.2 Over the past year the Committee has completed detailed reviews of NHS Dental Services, Ambulance Services and Mental Health Services in South Wiltshire. It has also made a referral to the Secretary of State for Health regarding the provision of maternity services in Kennet and North Wiltshire.

1.3 The contact for this bid is:  
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## 2. The Project

2.1 Following a comprehensive community planning exercise the Wiltshire Strategic Board (WiSB) has selected four key themes for improving life in Wiltshire. The themes are outlined in the community strategy, 'A County Fit for Our Children'. The themes are cross cutting and being delivered via projects to improve community safety, waste efficiency, adult basic learning and health.

2.2 A project to make Wiltshire the healthiest county to live in by 2014 has been sponsored by WiSB and a steering group is overseeing the delivery of the project.

2.3 The Healthier Wiltshire project has been set up to implement the health aims of the strategy. The project was established in 2004 and has developed its aims and objectives in line with the public health White Paper, 'Choosing Health – Making Healthier Choices Easier'. The project steering group has established a number of sub-groups to deliver the key themes of the project: improvements in the following areas:

- smoking cessation
- reduction of alcohol and drug misuse
- more physical activity
- improved diet and nutrition.

Among the target groups for implementing the strategy are employers, who will be encouraged to actively promote healthy lifestyles among their employees.

2.4 To do this the Healthier Wiltshire project is using the banner of 'Exemplar Employers' to improve the quality and nutritional value of food offered to employees in work places through canteen and vending machine facilities. The Action Learning project will focus on two public

and one private sector employer. This will provide relevant experience for dissemination to both private and public sector employers at the end of the project.

- 2.5 The diet and nutrition element of the project is an important component of the overall plan but unfortunately it has been slow to get underway. Members of the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Healthier Wiltshire steering group have agreed that this topic would benefit from a detailed piece of scrutiny work in order to identify the problems and to move the project forward to implementation stage. The committee felt that this current gap in the Healthier Wiltshire project offered an excellent opportunity to bid for HSSP funding, to link health scrutiny to the community strategy and to contribute in a proactive way to an existing Wiltshire wide 'Choosing Health' project.
- 2.6 The Healthier Wiltshire project has already established links with schools and is about to conduct a survey in order to understand more about the lifestyle choices made by young people. The County Council has recently completed a scrutiny review of its school meals contract and so further exploration of the promotion and benefits of healthy eating is considered by all partners to be timely and worthwhile. The 'Exemplar Employers' initiative will complement the focus on young people by targeting the working population.

### **3. The Scrutiny Topic**

#### **3.1 Rationale:**

- 3.1.1 The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been supportive of the Healthier Wiltshire project for some time, but has allowed the steering group a suitable period in order to set its aims and objectives and to identify those best placed to deliver the various elements of the project.
- 3.1.2 Centring this scrutiny project on an element of the Healthier Wiltshire project brings health scrutiny and the community strategy together and will enable the committee to scrutinise the planning and delivery of a number of initiatives aimed at improving health across the county and linking into the wider targets outlined in 'Choosing Health'.
- 3.1.3 Through the action learning the committee members will develop a set of skills and practices which are relevant to their role.

#### **3.2 Added value – Action Learning:**

- 3.2.1 The committee will use the action learning element of the project to establish a set of principles with which to engage groups and individuals that will be transferred to future health scrutiny reviews.
- 3.2.2 The committee will also establish a method for employers and public health practitioners to use when measuring success in the short and medium term as improvements resulting from public health initiatives often take many years to become apparent.

#### **3.3 Patient & Public Involvement/Engagement:**

- 3.3.1 The committee has established links with the network of PPI Forums in Wiltshire, who are supportive of this proposal and keen to work with the health scrutiny committee to promote patient, public and user involvement.
- 3.3.2 The committee will work to establish the methods used by employers to communicate with staff in order to identify the most effective way of disseminating findings and health messages to the wider work force, and to utilise these mechanisms where possible to gather information.
- 3.3.3 The committee will seek the views and advice of trades unions and representatives of employers.

3.3.4 Provision has been made within the budget for the committee to work with Business Link and the Wessex Chamber of Commerce to establish effective routes of communication with employers.

**3.4 Collaborative working arrangements:**

3.4.1 The committee has developed successful joint working practices with a range of partners, including social services, the NHS and patient and public involvement groups. It is intended that the committee and members of the Healthier Wiltshire steering group will work together to carry out the scrutiny work. The review will be co-ordinated and facilitated by the Health Scrutiny Officer, working closely with the Healthier Wiltshire Project Manager, whose detailed knowledge of the project will ensure that the committee is kept up to date with developments within the wider project and within the Wiltshire Strategic Board.

3.4.2 The committee will employ a consultant to manage the action learning element of the project, to improve its joint working practices and to further develop a mechanism to promote inclusiveness.

**3.5 Consideration of local health issues:**

3.5.1 The committee will take as its initial evidence base, the annual reports of the Directors of Public Health of the PCTs, and a report written by Dr Sharon Collins on behalf of Wiltshire County Council which focussed on the causes and effects of rural deprivation. The committee will benchmark the findings in these documents against the national picture and will consider the guidance given in 'Choosing Health' in order to establish where Wiltshire fits into the national picture.

3.5.2 The committee will also liaise with the British Nutrition Foundation, the Food Standards Agency, the Wiltshire Health Promotion Unit and any other appropriate organisation, in order to enable full understanding of national guidance and the local picture.

3.5.3 Evidence shows that within Wiltshire the most common causes of death are coronary heart disease, stroke and cancers, which mirrors the national picture and reflects the major focus in the 'Choosing Health' White Paper. Wiltshire also has a higher than average rate of deaths caused by road traffic accidents and Wiltshire Constabulary together with the community safety partnership is tackling this issue.

**3.6 Consideration of local health inequalities issues:**

3.6.1 Within Wiltshire there are a number of pockets of deprivation, caused by a several factors, including lack of access to health care facilities and general health inequalities. There is a clear need for an effective and wide reaching health promotion and education programme.

**3.7 Consideration of the local socio-economic and political context:**

3.7.1 Wiltshire is a predominantly rural county comprising a mixture of country towns and smaller settlements. While its image is of a prosperous part of central southern England the 2001 census shows that although employment levels are high average income for those employed within the county is low, the higher earners tend to out commute.

3.7.2 A higher than the national average proportion of the working population work more than 49 hours a week and a significantly higher proportion than the national average of those in work are unable to afford to buy a home. Internal transport links are not good and there are a significant minority of those living and working within the county who describe themselves as being in bad health. So, a significant minority of people is neither affluent nor healthy and this project will involve them as employees rather than residents.

3.7.3 Wiltshire has a high reputation regionally and nationally as being a county strong on partnership. The County Council and other public and community bodies have invested significant time at a senior level over the past five years to agree joint priorities, address gaps in provision and get rid of duplication. This approach has worked well with measurable benefits in funding attracted to the area and a higher profile regionally and nationally for Wiltshire. The County Council's community planning service has recently been awarded

Beacon status and the commitment to partnership as a necessary condition for progress is integral to how the County Council works.

### **3.8 Consideration of the strength of the local health economy:**

3.8.1 The local health economy has had financial and organisational problems since the PCTs were formed in 2001/02. The PCTs are currently reviewing their services across three of the four district areas in Wiltshire. The review involves community, stakeholder and patient involvement. At the same time the health scrutiny committee is working with the NHS to ensure that the public can play a full part in planning and delivery decisions. It is expected that the review will result in a significant redesign of services, and the scrutiny committee will ensure that any opportunities to align Healthier Wiltshire project aims within this service redesign are acted upon.

### **3.9 Arrangements for the action learning element of the review:**

3.9.1 The planning and focus for this review has been discussed by health scrutiny committee members at county and district council levels. The importance of involving patients, employers, service users, staff and political representatives has been agreed by all.

3.9.2 It is intended that the action learning element of the review will focus on the engagement of employers as a way to reach a large percentage of the population employed locally. This will be achieved by employing a consultant, expert in the field of diet and nutrition, to work alongside the scrutiny committee and the representatives from the Healthier Wiltshire project. The consultant will be drawn from the public health field and will be skilled at communicating with different organisations in order to be able to develop, with the committee, a mechanism for disseminating information through different types of organisations. The consultant will also be asked to assist the committee with taking national guidance and translating it so that it is applicable at a local level, for instance, the lifestyle messages in 'Choosing Health'.

3.9.3 The early action learning element of the review will take two public and one private organisation to use as pilots, and will work with each of these organisations to identify what can be achieved and how to measure success in order to ensure organisational benefits are clear.

3.9.4 Wiltshire Constabulary and Kennet District Council have agreed to take part as the two public sector pilot employers and negotiations are underway with a number of private sector employers. The pilot organisations will then work with the action learning consultant and the committee members over a number of months to identify targets, constraints, methods for delivery, and benefits.

### **3.10 Arrangements for dissemination of learning from the project:**

3.10.1 The health scrutiny committee and the Healthier Wiltshire project group will agree a method for disseminating findings to the organisations and individuals involved in the review, but it is expected that existing organisational communication methods, through HR departments, will be key to ensuring that employees have access to information. The outcomes will also be disseminated vertically at a regional and national level.

### **3.11 Innovation and development of process and practice:**

3.11.1 The innovation will lie in development of methods for promoting and improving peoples' health while they are at work, in making employers aware of how they can influence the health of their staff and their productivity through a number of initiatives, and as a way of reinforcing key healthy lifestyle messages.

3.11.2 The committee will work with local business networks, such as Business Link, Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses, to ensure widespread dissemination of information on completion of the scrutiny review.

3.11.3 The committee will also establish effective methods for engagement with a variety of different organisations, which can be transferred to future scrutiny reviews.

#### 4. Funding for the Project:

- 4.1 Wiltshire County Council will provide meet the costs of all co-ordination and committee administration for the project from its existing health scrutiny budget.
- 4.2 It is envisaged that a consultant with appropriate skills will cost in the region of £500 per day and that 30 days work will be required. The consultant will be responsible for their own administrative arrangements, but will be entitled to claim expenses for travel and subsistence.
- 2 days familiarising local background and documents including drawing up a work programme, making arrangements for visits etc
  - 17 days working with employers to develop protocols and processes
  - 2 days to investigate the arrangements in other parts of the country
  - 4 days to draft interim and final report and protocols
  - 2 days to discuss recommendations with employer representatives
  - 1 day for attendance at a meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
  - 2 days for local dissemination

Activity	Cost
Consultant time – 30 days @ £500 per day	£15,000
Travel and Subsistence – based on 1000 miles at 48p per mile and £10 per day subsistence plus a small reserve for hotel bills if necessary	£1,500
Consultation / dissemination event	£1000
Use of Business Link / Chamber of Commerce databases	£1000
Information leaflets for distribution in places of employment	£1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£20,000</b>