



**South  
Cambridgeshire**  
District Council

**REPORT TO:** Environmental Services Portfolio  
Holder's Meeting  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Director, Health and Environmental Services

28 January 2016

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## **ACTIVE & HEALTHY 4 LIFE (EXERCISE REFERRAL) SCHEME**

### **Purpose**

1. To update on the operation of the council's Active & Healthy 4 Life exercise referral scheme as per the decision of the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder's meeting of 12 December 2014.

### **Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:
  - (a) Notes progress made in developing the scheme since July 2015
  - (b) Notes and comments on the action plan at Appendix 1
  - (c) Endorses the withdrawal of the scheme at the Girton centre (Prime Time) with effect from 01 April 2016
  - (d) Notes the review of three further centres for decision after the next report
  - (e) Agrees that the interval between progress reports on the scheme is extended from six to twelve months.

### **Background**

3. Active & Healthy 4 Life is the council's exercise referral scheme, operating in partnership with local health centres and sports centres to provide residents with specified medical conditions with a low cost, 12-week supervised course of exercise.
4. The scheme improves health by increasing physical activity, and as such, contributes towards Objective 9 of the Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020, *Work with GPs and partners to link health services and to improve the health of our communities*.
5. The scheme was brought before the Environment Services Portfolio Holder meeting for review in December 2014 in the light of changes to external funding arrangements. (The scheme was supported by a grant from Public Health, and formerly the NHS, until 2014 when new regulations requiring funded schemes to be free at point of delivery made this no longer feasible).
6. It was decided at the meeting in December 2014 to continue the scheme at the nine centres where it was then operating, and to reduce costs by co-ordinating the scheme from within existing resources.

7. It was also decided to further promote the scheme with GPs to increase take up and targeting of the right people, and to review the scheme at six monthly intervals and make recommendations to the Portfolio holder.
8. The first of the six monthly reviews was at the Environmental Services Portfolio meeting on 23 July 2015.

### **Considerations**

9. The action plan presented at the meeting on 23 July 2015 has been progressed, (see Appendix 1).

### **Key achievements over the past five months**

- a. Regular communication developed with centres through meetings, site visits, GP presentations, phone calls and emails.
- b. All 20 GP surgeries in South Cambs have been contacted and updated on the scheme.
- c. For the first time, a guide for health professionals has been produced. This incorporates the Annual Report 2014/15 and has been distributed to all GP surgeries in S Cambs.
- d. Eight health centres have taken up the offer of visits to practice meetings by the scheme manager accompanied, where possible, by the local referral instructor. A further two are scheduled. (see Appendix 1 for details).
- e. A presentation toolkit has been developed for delivery to health professionals.
- f. 63 health professionals have registered with the scheme since April 2015. This brings the total to 211 health professionals in South Cambs registered with the scheme (a further 307 from Cambridge, Hunts, Herts and E Cambs are also registered, mostly through reciprocal arrangements with schemes based in their districts).
- g. A presentation promoting the benefits of the scheme is scheduled for the Local Health Partnership on 19 January 2016.
- h. The target patient group has been clarified, with the result that the referral process has become simpler. The patient leaflet has been redesigned to reflect this, and the new leaflet distributed.
- i. New sessions in the evening have been added by Melbourn and Sawston sports centres responding to demand.
- j. The new software has been in use for nine months. A number of issues have been identified. These are being addressed with the aim of resolving them before the new financial year begins.

## **Patient data**

10. From April to December 2015 (a period of nine months) a total of 122 patients had accessed the scheme. This compares with a total of 218 patients accessing the scheme for the twelve months from April 2014 to March 2015.
11. On current trends five of the ten centres are on track to come close to, equal or exceed last year's patient numbers (Comberton, Cottenham, Impington, Sawston and Swavesey). Patient numbers at four schemes (Cambourne, Gamlingay, Linton and Melbourn) are significantly down on the previous year. The Girton scheme is new this year so no data exists from last year for comparison.
12. Patient numbers since 2008/9 by sports centre can be viewed in Appendix 3. Factors specific to each centre which are likely to have contributed to the figures are noted in Appendix 2.
13. General reasons likely to have caused this decline include:
  - (a) Previous years included significant numbers of referrals for obesity (the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest category of referrals in 2014/15). Following clarification that the scheme is not appropriate for patients with obesity, these referrals have ceased this year.
  - (b) Alternative options for patients wishing to become more active are increasingly available, e.g. Everyone Health services and the healthy walks programmes.
14. Patient data reporting on referral reasons, origin of referrals, completions and non-completions will not be possible until the software issues noted above (para 9 i) have been resolved. This is anticipated to be before the financial year end.

## **Review of centres**

### **Girton**

15. The scheme has been piloted at Prime Time in Girton since April 2015. It has had significant local promotion (leafleting in Girton, a press release and an Open Day), and two visits to the local GP surgery, (one with the Practice Manager and one to a Practice Meeting). Despite this, uptake of the scheme has been insufficient for it to be financially viable for the centre. Following discussion with the centre management, we recommend that the scheme is withdrawn at Prime Time with effect from 01 April 2016.

### **Gamlingay**

16. Only four patients have taken up the scheme at the centre in Gamlingay since April. A number of factors may operate against the scheme, including the small size of the gym and availability to patients in Gamlingay of exercise referral services from bordering districts, Central Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire.
17. We recommend reviewing the scheme in Gamlingay to better understand the issues there and identify whether there is a realistic likelihood of increased benefit to the local community in the future.

### **Cambourne and Cottenham**

18. Patient numbers at both these centres are relatively low, and there have been staffing issues at both centres.

19. A new instructor with a track record of pro-activity started at Cottenham in September 2015, and the same instructor is due to start in Cambourne in February 2016. We are optimistic that numbers at both centres will pick up over the coming months.

20. We recommend that the scheme is kept under review at these three centres until September 2016, and a decision made regarding the future of the scheme after that date.

#### **Linton**

21. The scheme at this centre was very well run in the year 2014/15 with a high number of referrals. This was due to a very pro-active instructor and the relationship she developed with the local surgery.

22. This instructor left the centre in June 2015, after which the scheme was suspended by the centre management. We were unable to influence this decision particularly as no replacement instructor could be found.

23. A meeting with the centre manager took place in July 2015 at which numerous options were discussed. It was decided to restart in September 2015 provided a new instructor could be found. However, the manager subsequently left and efforts to contact the centre have not been successful.

24. We recommend that the future of the scheme at this centre is kept under review whilst we continue to make efforts to communicate with them.

#### **Comberton, Impington, Melbourn, Sawston and Swavesey**

25. The scheme is operating well at these centres and we recommend no change to current arrangements.

26. Further information on the operation of the scheme at each centre is available in Appendix 2.

#### **New payments structure for centres**

27. A new payment structure will be implemented as part of the 2016/17 Service Level Agreement for centres. This will replace the current structure in which each centre receives an equal one off payment for admin regardless of the number of referrals and completions at the centre, (see Appendix 1, point 10)

#### **Implications**

In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

#### ***Financial***

28. Changes to the software require an additional £2000 expenditure beyond budget. Other than this, the scheme has operated within budget so far this financial year, with the end of year forecast also within budget.

#### ***Legal***

29. The scheme is run in compliance with the National Quality Assurance Framework (2001) and current best practice.

### **Staffing**

30. Carrying out the coordination of the scheme in-house has meant re-prioritising the workload of existing staff. This is currently sufficient to enable the scheme to be managed in compliance with the National Quality Assurance Framework (2001).

### **Risk Management**

31. Each centre is required to sign a Service Level Agreement with the Council. The agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of each partner. A further agreement is also in place regarding the IT hardware (tablets).

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

#### **Aim 1 - Wellbeing**

32. The Active and Healthy for Life scheme contributes to the Council's objective of working with GPs and partners to link health services and improve the health of our communities. The scheme is effective for medium and low risk populations for specific health conditions plus develops social networks of like-minded people.

### **Background Papers**

Where the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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