Some Implications and Challenges from the Proposed Fundamental Changes to Public Health

Cllr Robin Brown
Portfolio Holder for
Health & Adult Social Services
Northamptonshire County Council

What are the proposed fundamental changes to Public Health?

- **Empowerment of local government and communities to shape their environments and tackle local problems**
- **Establishment of Public Health England (PHE)**
- **Directors of Public Health to be strategic leaders for PH and health inequalities in local communities. To be joint LA & SofS for Health appointments**
- **Transfer of local health improvement functions to local authorities with ring fenced funding from April 2013**
- **LA broadly defined as upper tier or unitary authority**

What are the proposed fundamental changes to Public Health?

- **LA to be responsible for planning for and responding to emergencies that threaten PH**
- **DPH to produce annual report on the health of the local population to be published by the local authority**
- **Establishment of Health & Wellbeing Boards**

Where are we in Northamptonshire?

- **Well established Nene Commissioning covering most of county - phase 1 pathfinder**
- **One other consortium based around Corby. In early stages of development**
- **Good working relations between two consortia**
- **Ongoing work with both members and officers across all partners to develop approach to delivery of PH and establishment of H&WB Board**
- **Early discussions around transfer of PH responsibilities and staff to LA**

Challenges and issues

- **Membership of the H&WB Board**
  - Too large unwieldy; too small unrepresentative?
  - Should the VCS be represented and if so how?
  - Is one voluntary organisation able to represent others particularly from a different sector? Could/should countywide infrastructure organisation represent voluntary bodies?
  - Representation of DC/BCs?
  - If a main purpose of H&WB Board is to increase democratic legitimacy on health what should member:officer ratio be?
- **ToRs of Board**
  - Scope of responsibility
  - Authority beyond statutory functions

Challenges and issues

- **Localities, and representation & understanding of local issues at H&WB Board and within commissioning bodies**
- **Support for H&WB Board – no additional resource**
- **How will PH sit within Council?**
  - Standalone Directorate or
  - Division within Directorate or
  - Dispersed across Council with DPH in floating support role
- **Size of the PH grant? What will ring fence look like?**
- **Governance over expenditure of PH grant**
  - Cabinet or H&WB Board?
- **How engaged with prevention and H&WB agenda will GP Consortia be?**

Health Inequalities in Northamptonshire

- **Significant differences in life expectancy.**
  - 7 Years between Corby and South Northants
- **Current PH agenda aims to reduce inequality – smoking, alcohol, obesity etc, with particular focus on deprived urban areas particularly Corby and parts of Northampton**
- **Need for PH expenditure to be based on evidence of need – JSNA; and aligned with JHWS**
  - Role for H&WB Board?
- **Co-production of JHWS with all partners inc. VCS and users of services**

Working with the VCS and Users/Carers in Northamptonshire

- **Northamptonshire Volunteering Centre – Countywide infrastructure organisation**
- **Training for VCS in submitting tenders electronically**
- **Participation of VCS key to Northamptonshire's success in bids for:**
  - Carers Demonstration Site – Northamptonshire Carers
  - Dementia Demonstration Site – Alzheimer's Society
- **User/carer voice through such mechanisms as:**
  - CIL Board
  - LD Partnership Board
  - Carers Partnership Board
  - 50+ network
- **Co-production – eg Carers Strategy 2011-14**

Questions and Discussion