

## Health and Wellbeing Peer Challenge 2014

### Audience

HWB Board members, Elected members, Corporate Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team, Health Overview Scrutiny Committee, Strategic and wider partners

### Purpose

To inform Council, NHS staff and wider partners about the forthcoming health and wellbeing peer challenge and what this means for Blackpool

### Introduction

From 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014, Blackpool Council will host its first Health and Wellbeing Peer Challenge. This will involve a 4 day on site visit led by the Local Government Association (LGA) and a health and wellbeing peer team.

### Background

The LGA working with the Department of Health, Public Health England and national and local health and local government stakeholders has developed a programme of exploratory and forward-thinking Health and Wellbeing peer challenges which form part of a wider Health and Wellbeing systems improvement programme, to support councils and their strategic partners to achieve successful health outcomes in the new health landscape.

### Why Health and Wellbeing Peer Challenge

Peer Challenge is the cornerstone of the LGA's Health and Wellbeing systems improvement support programme, applying the LGA's tried and tested approach of sector-led improvement to health and wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing Peer Challenge aims to help councils and their Health and Wellbeing Board's (HWBs) strengthen local accountability and revolutionise the way they evaluate and improve services.

Reforms to the NHS give local authorities a much stronger role in shaping and holding services to account, improving the health of their local population and ensuring that that population has an effective consumer champion through their local Healthwatch organisation.

The team explores how the council and its partners are working together to deliver successful health outcomes through their health and wellbeing board, their new public health and local Healthwatch responsibilities. Through a comprehensive programme of discussions, observations, workshops, focus groups and visits, the peer team develops and feeds back its findings and recommendations at the end of the four days, enabling the council and the health and wellbeing board to focus on key issues to take their agenda forward

This peer challenge will focus on how the council is implementing its statutory health responsibilities by way of a systematic challenge through a peer team to improve local practice. The peer challenge will also focus on

- Evaluating the impact of Blackpool Health and Wellbeing Board on addressing key health priorities
- Understanding what Blackpool's public health 'Outliers' are so that the Health and Wellbeing Board can prioritise actions
- Understanding the tools and techniques available to help evaluate, assess and evidence achievements
- Helping to accelerate the journey from strategy development to action planning and implementation.
- Testing out how integrated Blackpool Health and Wellbeing Board's health objectives are with the council's other strategies and those of partners

## The benefits of a peer challenge

- Encourages self reflection
- Gives a new perspective
- An outsiders view is often valuable – helps you see the wood from the trees.
- Inevitably the peer reviewers bring and share their experience
- They are surprisingly illuminating even though they are short and focussed
- Should result in learning
- Should result in an action plan for improvement

## Quotes from local authorities on the benefits of peer challenge

*The feedback has helped us to focus on where we can improve and develop and build on what we do well. It has been a valuable experience and it's always good to hold up the mirror and see how others view what you do.*

### Wiltshire Council

*The peer challenge has been a real opportunity to celebrate Wirral's strengths and opportunities, including enormous opportunities for economic regeneration and investment in the area.*

### Wirral Council

*Having an independent external view at a time when local government is facing many challenges has been extremely helpful and has enabled us to move forward with an increased sense of confidence...We now need to make sure the people we serve are fully aware of the city council's strengths and the suggestions identified by the peer team for further development.*

### Norwich City Council

## How?

To maximise the benefits of the challenge; it needs to be based on open and honest dialogue and information. In the lead up to and during the visit the peer team gathers a range of information. Before the challenge visit, this information includes background documents, data and analysis of local needs and progress, a financial and a self-assessment by HWB members.

During the challenge visit the peer team will talk to a range of people, local partners and stakeholders, via interviews, focus groups and other meetings. These discussions enable the peer team to explore local context and progress further, using a framework of initial questions to help probe into how the above areas are progressing.

## What will happen?

**Peer challenge is not an inspection.** The team will seek to help Blackpool Council through the Health and Wellbeing Board recognise and celebrate its strengths as much as identifying areas to explore. Members of the team are knowledgeable about, and experienced in, health and wellbeing, from local authority and NHS perspectives. They are acting as 'critical friends', enabling an open and honest exchange to drive improvements forward. During the four day visit, members of the challenge team will meet and talk with a cross-section of staff within the Council, elected members and representatives of partner organisations, especially those represented on the HWB. The team will feed back their conclusions and recommendations on the final day. This will be followed by a written report that the Council will have the opportunity to consider and respond to.

## Further Information

### Blackpool Council

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