



## **HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL**

**18 OCTOBER 2004**

### **SCRUTINY OF HEALTHY LIVING REVIEW**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with additional information requested at the Health Scrutiny Panel which took place on 31 August 2004.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Panel notes the information that has been provided, with a view to considering recommendations.
- 2.2 That the Panel begins to finalise the review's recommendations following the Healthy Living seminar.

#### **3. INFORMATION REQUESTED & SUPPLIED**

- 3.1 The Panel will recall that at the last meeting, on 31 August 2004, it heard evidence from three services working to tackle people's financial difficulties, which can contribute to ill health. Those three services were the Welfare Rights Unit, the Money Advice Service and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).
- 3.2 The Welfare Rights Unit was requested to provide information pertaining to three main areas. These were, the amount of welfare paid/received on a ward by ward basis, documentary evidence to support the assertion that there are joined up working arrangements and documentary evidence on a ward basis of outcomes of 'take up' campaigns, together with copies of accompanying correspondence. This information is enclosed at the back of this report

marked as **Appendix 1**. The Welfare Rights Service, as a matter of courtesy has also sent a copy of their 2003-04 Annual Report. As the Panel did not request a copy of this and due to its size, it is not included in the Appendices. A copy is, however, available from the Scrutiny Support Officer as a Background Paper.

- 3.3 The Citizens Advice Bureau was requested to provide a copy of the protocol, which exists to govern the community legal network stakeholders and information about demand for debt advice/assistance on a ward by ward basis, including reports of take up campaigns. This information has been duly supplied and is attached, marked as **Appendix 2**.
- 3.4 The Money Advice Service was requested to provide a smaller quantity of information than the other two services. The information requested by the Panel was statistical evidence to support the claim that there was an increase in demand for the debt advice service, following publicity about the debt advice service. The information that has been supplied refers to a period of time immediately before and after a front-page story in the Evening Gazette and is as follows.
- 3.5 The statistics show that in the three weeks prior to the appearance of the article the service took on 12 new cases involving a total of around £63,000 debt. In contrast, in the following three weeks there were 24 new cases with a total debt value of around £111,000. The documentary evidence of this is marked as **Appendix 3**.

#### 4. **NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 A Healthy Living Seminar has been arranged for 15 November 2004. The purpose of this will be to look at the feasibility of creating a multi-agency strategy surrounding Healthy Living, the challenges and opportunities around this and the potential tools for evaluating Healthy Living Initiatives and measuring their impact. It is anticipated that the seminar will be the final event for this review before recommendations are finalised. It is regretted that the seminar is not to be held until mid November, although speaker availability has dictated this.

#### 6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 Middlesbrough Welfare Rights Unit, Annual Report April 2004 – March 2004.

**Contact Officer:**

Jon Ord – Scrutiny Support Officer

7 October 2004

Telephone: 01642 729706 (direct line)

Email: [jon\\_ord@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:jon_ord@middlesbrough.gov.uk)