

# Southend-on-Sea City Council

Report of the Director of Commissioning & Director of Public Health

Agenda  
Item No.

To

Health & Wellbeing Board

On

8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Report prepared by:

Jamie Pennycott, Drug & Alcohol Commissioning Officer

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## National Drug Strategy and Grant Funding Progress Report

Relevant Scrutiny Committee - People  
Cabinet Member: Councillor Kay Mitchell

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update the Board on progress in implementing the requirements of the National Drug Strategy, "[From Harm To Hope](#)", with particular regard to:
- The development of Strategic Partnership arrangements and the introduction of a Southend Drug & Alcohol Executive Group
  - The delivery of a local joint strategic needs assessment to inform our understanding of need and gaps in service provision
  - Progress against the development of a local Drugs & Alcohol strategy
  - Progress against the proposals for the use of the Year 1 (2022/23) round of the Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant (SSMTRG)
  - Progress against the proposals for the use of the latest round of funding for the Rough Sleeping Drug & Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG)

### 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- 2.1. Note the actions taken so far

### 3. Background

3.1 On 6th December 2021, HM Government published the new 10-year national drug strategy, From Harm to Hope. The strategy was written following an independent Review of Drugs initiated by the Home Secretary in February 2019 led by Professor Dame Carol Black, and identified three key strategic priorities:

- To break drug supply chains
- To deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system
- To achieve a shift in the demand for drugs

3.2 This strategy was accompanied by guidance outlining the structures and processes through which local areas across England should work together to reduce drug related harm, as well as additional funding to improve services in line with the ambitions of the strategy.

3.3 Key requirements outlined in the guidance to be delivered by April 2023 included the need to:

- Identify a local Senior Responsible Officer
- Establish a local combating drugs partnership
- Agree a governance structure for taking forward actions
- Conduct a local needs assessment to review data evidence
- Agree local delivery plans and associated performance frameworks to monitor impact

3.4 As outlined in previous reports, the new national strategy has provided additional funding to enhance the specialist drug and alcohol treatment system: In 2022/23 this equates to £403,977 via the core Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant and £390,499 via the Rough Sleeping Drug & Alcohol Treatment Grant. A brief overview of the actions taken and plans to use the SSMTRG funding are outlined in 4.5, with actions taken and planned for the RSDATG funding in 4.6.

#### **4. Progress to date**

4.1 In line with the national strategy, Southend has now established a Drug & Alcohol Strategic Executive Group (outlined in section 4.2) to oversee the local actions against the ambitions of the national strategy, and to report to the national Joint Combating Drugs Unit.

4.2 As the suggested membership of the strategic oversight board in the national strategy would duplicate large portions of the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership, as outlined previously, a Drug & Alcohol Strategic Executive Group has been established comprising the following key members:

- Director of Commissioning
- Director of Public Health
- Essex Police Force Lead for Drugs & Alcohol
- ICS Director of Strategic Partnerships
- Deputy Director of NHS Alliance
- Head of South Essex Probation
- Lead Commissioner for Public Health
- Drug & Alcohol Commissioning Officer

This group will provide governance and decision-making for the drug and alcohol commissioning intentions, and the Director of Public Health will act as the Senior Responsible Officer reporting to the national Joint Combating Drugs Unit.

4.3 The group have also ensured that other key strategic partners are engaged and informed on activities and decisions, with both the Lead Commissioner and Drug & Alcohol Commissioning Officer reporting to the Community Safety Partnership Board.

4.4 The group are working closely with partners and Essex County Council and Thurrock Council's respective Drug and Alcohol executive groups to ensure better alignment in strategic commissioning, prevention and optimal utilisation of our resources.

4.5 The proposal for the first year of the SSMTRG has been approved by OHID and will enable expansion of the capacity of the treatment system by approximately 10% (an additional 10.4 posts), in line with the ambitions of the national Drug Strategy. The proposal also requested funding to expand the capacity of the commissioning team to meet the increased monitoring and reporting burdens that will come with the system expansion, as well as additional resource to invest in training and workforce development and the piloting of a fast-track pathway for vulnerable women into treatment and rehab services.

4.6 The proposal for the extension of the RSDATG has also been approved by OHID. While the primary recommendations within our proposal reflected a need to increase the capacity for outreach and engagement with rough sleepers and those at risk of losing their accommodation, our proposal to expand the treatment capacity with this grant funding as well, particularly with regard to specialist treatment for dependent alcohol use and for co-occurring mental health and substance misuse concerns, has also been approved.

4.7 A local needs assessment has been delivered to explore the impact of substance misuse across the city, reviewing the current provision and activity and identifying gaps and areas for local development to inform the development of a Southend Drug & Alcohol Strategy.

4.8 The needs assessment has identified 28 recommendations for system development and a consultation event was held on 12<sup>th</sup> October to review and group these into priority strategic areas. The presentation from the needs assessment, along with a link to a survey on Your Say Southend, were also shared with a wide range of strategic partners who were unable to attend the consultation event.

4.9 The key strategic priority areas have provisionally been identified as:

- Prevention approaches
- Reducing drug-related deaths
- Criminal justice pathways
- Needs of an ageing population
- Place-based working

4.10 The final draft of the Southend Drug & Alcohol Strategy is due for completion early in 2023 and will be shared with both the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership for further consideration once completed.

## **5. Next steps**

5.1 Upon agreement of our local strategy priorities, work will begin to develop local delivery plans which will outline the specific workstreams and actions required to meet the objectives of both the National Drugs Strategy, and Local Drugs & Alcohol Strategy.

5.2 A further update will be provided in the new financial year to update on these plans and the local arrangements for taking these forwards.