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# Proposed Review of the Health and Wellbeing Board

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**Report being considered by:** Health and Wellbeing Board

**On:** 12 September 2024

**Report Author:** Gordon Oliver

**Report Sponsor:** Dr Matt Pearce

**Item for:** Decision

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## 1. Purpose of the Report

To present the draft brief for the proposed Local Government Association review of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

For the Health and Wellbeing Board to approve the brief for issue to the Local Government Association to inform their review of the Board's governance arrangements and working practices.

## 3. Executive Summary

At the meeting on 11 July 2024, it was agreed that the next 'Hot Focus Session' should focus on how to improve the effectiveness and operation of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Local Government Association has a support offer for Health and Wellbeing Boards. They have been approached by the Director of Public Health and have indicated that they have capacity to support a review in the latter part of 2024. A draft brief has been prepared and is provided in Appendix A.

## 4. Supporting Information

4.1 Health and Wellbeing Boards have been in place since 2013 and are a single point of continuity in a constantly shifting health and care landscape. The last few years have been a time of significant and complex change, with the Health and Care Act 2022 introducing major reforms to the NHS landscape, including the formation of Integrated Care Systems, and a greater focus on 'place' level activity. Health and Wellbeing Boards need to evolve and adapt to operate within this new context.

4.2 Core Membership of Health and Wellbeing Boards is defined in legislation, but in West Berkshire, the opportunity has been taken to expand membership to include additional Members of the Council's Executive, opposition Members, officers, and representatives from NHS Trusts and other partner agencies and organisations, whose activities relate to the wider determinant (or building blocks) of health. In total, there are currently 20 Members.

4.3 Key functions of the Health and Wellbeing Board are:

- To produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

- To produce a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- To develop a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment
- To encourage greater integration and partnership working (including through the Better Care Fund).

4.4 Health and Wellbeing Boards are also statutory consultees for a number of strategies, plans, and proposals.

4.5 It is important to ensure that meetings are an effective use of Members' time and that the Board is making meaningful decisions in order to drive improvement in the health and wellbeing of the local population and to reduce health inequalities.

4.6 The Board is supported by a Steering Group, which ensures effective forward planning, agenda preparation, performance and programme management, and delivery of the Board's decisions. In turn, the Steering Group is supported by a complex network of sub-groups, many of which were formed to deliver the previous Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4.7 The West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board is looking to undertake a review of its governance arrangements and working practices in order to increase its overall effectiveness in improving the health and wellbeing of the local population and reducing health inequalities. It was agreed at the meeting on 11 July 2024 that this would be the focus of the next 'Hot Focus Session'.

## 5. Options Considered

5.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) has a support offer for Health and Wellbeing Boards, which provides an opportunity for them to refocus their purpose, strengthen their role in the new system architecture, and operate effectively in the new context. The LGA can provide a range of support including workshops or peer challenge activity, for single Health and Wellbeing Boards, or groups of Boards.

5.2 An internal review was considered, but it was felt that the external perspective provided by the LGA would be valuable.

## 6. Proposal(s)

The LGA has been approached and they have confirmed that they would be able to support a review within the 2024/25 financial year. It is proposed to undertake reviews of the Reading and West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Boards in tandem. This would allow for synergies and opportunities for joint working at the Berkshire West Place level to be identified. A draft brief has been prepared and is attached in Appendix A. It is proposed that the review be carried out towards the end of 2024.

## 7. Conclusion(s)

The proposed review is timely, given the recent period of change within the health landscape. It would: address Members' concerns about the effectiveness of the Health and Wellbeing Board; ensure that the right partners are represented to deliver the Board's priorities; and that governance structures are fit for purpose.

## 8. Consultation and Engagement

The Health and Wellbeing Steering Group and West Berkshire Council's Corporate Board have been consulted on this report and the associated brief.

## 9. Appendices

Appendix A – Draft LGA Review Brief

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### Background Papers:

None

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### Health and Wellbeing Priorities Supported:

The proposals will support the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities:

- Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
- Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
- Help families and young children in early years
- Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
- Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

The proposals contained in this report will support the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities by improving the Health and Wellbeing Board's governance arrangements and working practices in order to increase its overall effectiveness in improving the health and wellbeing of the local population and reducing health inequalities.

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