

APPENDIX A

Committee/Meeting: Full Council	Date: 25/01/2012	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:
Report of: Corporate Director: Stephen Halsey Originating officer(s) Rachael Sadegh, Interim DAAT Co-ordinator		Title: Substance Misuse Strategy Wards Affected: All wards	

Lead Member	Cllr Ohid Ahmed
Community Plan Theme	A Prosperous Community A Safe and Cohesive Community A Healthy and Supportive Community
Strategic Priority	

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1. On 8 December 2010 the government launched its new drug strategy, 'Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug-free life'. The strategy places emphasis on providing a more holistic approach to recovery, aims to reduce demand, takes an uncompromising approach to crack down on those involved in drugs supply, and puts power and accountability in the hands of local communities to tackle drugs and the harm they cause.
- 1.2. In Tower Hamlets, we have over recent years made considerable progress in reducing the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets and NHS East London and the City, alongside treatment providers, the Metropolitan Police and London Probation have worked hard together to ensure that we support healthy lifestyle choices, provide high quality treatment and tackle drug / alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.3. The Partnership is keen to build upon progress to date and further improve the approach to tackling the harm associated with drug and alcohol misuse in the borough. The substance misuse strategy has been drafted by partners to outline the partnership approach for 2012-2015.

2. DECISIONS REQUIRED

- 2.1 Full Council is recommended to:-
- Consider the strategy and approve for adoption by LBTH

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 3.1 The strategy supports the achievement of objectives within three of the four Community Plan themes:
- A Prosperous Community
 - Supporting more people into work and improving employment skills
 - Supporting residents through national welfare reform
 - A Safe and Cohesive Community
 - Focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour
 - Reducing re-offending
 - Reducing the fear of crime
 - A Healthy and Supportive Community
 - Helping people to live healthier lives
 - Keeping vulnerable and high risk children, adults and families safer and minimising harm and neglect

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. The Council has an obligation under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to formulate and implement strategies in conjunction with other specified responsible authorities for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances. There is Partnership agreement that the strategic approach to drug and alcohol abuse should be come together in one overarching Substance Misuse Strategy as many of the issues are replicated across the client groups. This strategy will support the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy in Tower Hamlets (the Community Safety Plan). The Community Plan also refers to alcohol / drug strategies within both the Safe and Cohesive Community theme and the Healthy and Supportive Community theme reflecting widely held local concerns about these issues.
- 4.2. Doing nothing would fail to address the needs of client groups and the concerns of residents. It would fail to address the concerns of the Partnership or adequately evolve services to become more effective in a period where resources face unprecedented pressures. This is not considered an option.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1. Tower Hamlets is an area of high deprivation with low income households, both of which are associated with a greater level of harm resulting from substance misuse.
- 5.2. Average rates of alcohol consumption across Tower Hamlets are relatively low due to a large proportion of the population who do not drink, estimated to be 33%. However 43% of people who do drink have harmful or hazardous drinking patterns. Levels of all recorded alcohol related crime, alcohol related violent crime and alcohol related sexual offences are significantly worse than the national average. In addition, the borough sees high rates of male alcohol specific and alcohol attributed hospital admissions.
- 5.3. It is estimated there are around 3795 Opiate and Crack Users in Tower Hamlets and 52% of residents who responded to the Annual Residents Survey (2010/11) said that drug misuse or dealing was a very or fairly big problem. During the period April to July 2011, Tower Hamlets saw the highest number of class A offences in London.
- 5.4. By working in partnership, we can address the problems associated with drug and alcohol misuse. Via this strategy, LBTH and partners aim to help people who are affected by substance misuse or dependent upon drugs or alcohol.

6. BODY OF REPORT

- 6.1. The Substance Misuse Strategy 2012-15 is the first combined drug and alcohol strategy for Tower Hamlets. It is a 3 year partnership strategy and has been developed in conjunction with all partners and other significant stakeholders.
- 6.2. Two documents have been produced; the full technical document and a shorter summary document aimed at residents and parties requiring an overview.
- 6.3. The Strategy is divided into two chapters, drugs and alcohol. Each chapter is further divided into three pillars;
 - prevention and behaviour change,
 - treatment,
 - enforcement / regulation.
- 6.4. The three pillars are underpinned by a partnership commitment to improving data, intelligence and surveillance.
- 6.5. Prevention and behaviour change commitments within the Strategy include information, promotion and prevention activities, multi-agency

communications plan, expansion of screening for alcohol problems, access to good quality education in schools.

- 6.6 Treatment commitments within the Strategy include improving access to and effectiveness of treatment, redesigning the drug / alcohol treatment system to improve outcomes and localise services, targeted outreach for difficult to engage drinkers and drug users, improving our response to parental substance misuse, embedding a recovery focus within treatment services.
- 6.7 Enforcement and regulation commitments within the strategy include actions to enforce law relating to alcohol and drugs and reduce associated antisocial behaviour and crime, implementation and enforcement of borough wide alcohol control zone, under age sales test purchases, operations to uncover illicit alcohol, dealer-a-day initiative, joint tasking approach to drug / alcohol related crime and ASB.
- 6.4. A communications plan is currently in development to determine how the Strategy will be publicised to stakeholders and residents. An action plan will also be developed for all 3 strands of the Strategy and overseen by the DAAT Board to ensure accountability and demonstrable improvement activity. The Strategy also calls for the designation of anti drug / alcohol champions across the borough and this is in accordance with the National Drugs Strategy.
- 6.5. A wide consultation process was undertaken in July / August 2011 via stakeholder focus groups and an online survey. Online responses were received and additional feedback gained via focus groups from service users, service providers, partners, councillors and residents. Feedback has been taken into account and changes to the Strategy approved by the Strategy Steering Group and DAAT Board. Formal responses to each consultation response have been written and will be available on LBTH and NHS East London and the City websites.
- 6.6. Contribution to the Community Plan
- 6.6.1. *A Prosperous Community*

Opiate and Crack Users are amongst the most disadvantaged groups in society, frequently having physical and mental health problems as well as offending histories, often coupled with limited skills or employment experience. Many employers are reluctant to recruit current or ex drug users, particularly if they have a history of offending. DWP estimates indicate that there is a higher than average percentage of benefit claimants who are Opiate and Crack Users in Tower Hamlets (9.24% of Job Seekers Allowance claimants, 11.27% of Income Support claimants, 5.15% of Disability Living Allowance claimants, 9.53% of Incapacity Benefit claimants). Whilst the same information is not available for alcohol misusers, there will also be an impact of alcohol misuse on worklessness. This group will also be affected by changes within the Welfare Reform Bill.

The Strategy commits to embedding recovery into treatment services to enable, empower and support drug / alcohol users to progress along a

journey of sustainable improvement to their health, wellbeing and independence, and focus support for them to secure accommodation, education and employment, and to reconnect with their local communities.

6.6.2. *A Safe and Cohesive Community*

Alcohol intoxication is associated with almost half of assaults and more than a quarter of domestic violence incidents. In Tower Hamlets, alcohol related crime is significantly higher than the national average. Similarly there are well documented associations between dependent Class A drug use and acquisitive crime. In 2010/11, where mandatory drug tests were undertaken, 31% of those tested had a positive result for opiates or cocaine. Residents' surveys show that residents are concerned about drug / alcohol associated anti-social behaviour and this is addressed by including enforcement and regulation as a central pillar of the strategy. The Strategy commits to a wide range of actions to tackle drug / alcohol related crime and antisocial behaviour as well as strategies to reduce re offending by individuals with a drug / alcohol addiction.

6.6.3. *A Healthy and Supportive Community*

Regular heavy drinking is leading to a rapid rise in liver disease and alcohol misuse causes breast and mouth cancer, reduces fertility, damages unborn babies and affects cardiovascular health. Approximately 15% of hospital admissions are alcohol related and 1 in 5 general hospital beds are occupied by a patient with an alcohol related issue. People who misuse drugs may present with a range of physical and mental health problems including thrombosis, abscesses, overdose, hepatitis B and C, HIV, depression, anxiety and paranoia.

The treatment pillar of the Strategy commits to a range of activities to improve wider health outcomes for all individuals who use drugs and / or alcohol as well as addressing their addiction specifically. The prevention and behaviour change pillar addresses the early intervention and prevention activities required to help individuals recover from addiction and discourage individuals from misusing drugs / alcohol.

7. **COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications emanating from this report, the funding of drug / alcohol services in the borough is mostly via external funding. From 2013/14, the pooled treatment, drug intervention programme and PCT mainstream budgets will be incorporated within the Public Health budget transferred to the Local Authority. The strategy covers the period for this arrangement and relies upon funding both external and internal to redesign the treatment system to be lean and flexible in delivering value for money.

8. **CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE
(LEGAL SERVICES)**

- 8.1. It is proposed to introduce a substance misuse strategy, which will contain a Tower Hamlets Partnership approach to tackling the problems associated with drug and alcohol misuse in the borough.
- 8.2. The Council has an obligation under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to formulate and implement strategies in conjunction with other specified responsible authorities for –
- Reduction of crime and disorder
 - Combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances
 - Reduction of re-offending.
- 8.3. The proposed strategy may fulfil the Council's obligation in relation to the second of the areas specified in paragraph 8.2. Pursuant to section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council is required, before adopting the strategy to have due regard to the likely effect of the strategy on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder, misuse of drugs and alcohol and re-offending in Tower Hamlets.
- 8.4. Under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, the Council is required in the discharge of its functions to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Council is also required by section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to make arrangements for ensuring its education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The proposed strategy may be considered consistent with these requirements to the extent that it will focus on education for children and young people.
- 8.5. The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 require there to be a strategy group to prepare strategic assessments and to prepare and implement a partnership plan for Tower Hamlets on behalf of the responsible authorities. For the purposes of preparing the strategic assessment and plan, the strategy group is required to engage with persons who live and work in Tower Hamlets about specified matters. Before adopting the strategy, the Council will need to be satisfied that the required consultation has taken place.
- 8.6. The report draws links between the proposed strategy and the Tower Hamlets Community Plan. The links with the Community Plan may provide power for the Council to carry out the actions falling to it under the strategy. The Council is empowered under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 to do anything which it considers likely to promote the social, economic or environmental well being of Tower Hamlets, provided the action is not otherwise prohibited by statute. This power includes the ability to incur expenditure or to give financial assistance to or enter into arrangements or agreements with any other person. The power may be exercised in relation to, or for the benefit of: (a) the whole or any part of Tower Hamlets; or (b) all

or any persons resident in Tower Hamlets. In exercising the power, regard must be had to the Community Plan and there should be evidence to demonstrate the likely benefits.

- 8.7. The council actions proposed under the strategy may in addition be supportable by reference to a number of the Council's other statutory functions. For example, in relation to the supply of alcohol the Council has functions under the Licensing Act 2003 as both a licensing authority and an enforcing authority. A key objective under the Licensing Act is the prevention of crime and disorder and the Government's guidance on licensing makes further reference to how authorities may relevantly exercise their powers. There are thus opportunities for the Council in the exercise of its Licensing Act functions to achieve objectives under the substance misuse strategy. In respect of these and other statutory functions it will be for officers to ensure that the Council acts lawfully within its statutory functions.
- 8.8. Before adopting the strategy, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. Some form of equality analysis will be required and the report indicates that an equality impact assessment will be prepared by the Partnership.
- 8.9. The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 provide that the making of a crime and disorder reduction strategy pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is a function that is required not to be the sole responsibility of the Council's executive. This prescription is reflected in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution, which includes a crime and disorder reduction strategy in the policy framework. Paragraph 4.1 of the report indicates that the substance misuse strategy forms a part of the Council's crime and disorder reduction strategy and, on this basis, it will need to be agreed by Full Council.

9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Individuals who misuse drugs and / or alcohol are often marginalised members of the community many of whom are in poverty. Implementation of this Strategy has implications for; reducing inequalities, ensuring community cohesion and strengthening community leadership.
- 9.2 Substance misuse issues affect significant numbers of residents in Tower Hamlets directly or indirectly. Treatment and enforcement and regulation activities are provided directly to the public and are covered by the Strategy. All treatment services are monitored regularly to ensure equality of access and outcomes across all 9 protected characteristics. A partnership EQIA is currently being conducted to establish the full impact of the Strategy and implement any measures necessary to mitigate against any differentials.
- 9.3 Treatment services have been developed to appeal to various different population groups within Tower Hamlets. The Strategy commits to a

redesign of the treatment system and it is essential that a new system continues to offer equitable access to all client groups and those individual groups do not perceive access to services or allocation of resources to be unfair.

- 9.4 The Strategy consultation process involved a wide range of community groups. It commits to ongoing engagement with community groups to support them in providing an impetus for sustained, coordinated action aimed at reducing drug related crime and strengthening community resilience.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this strategy.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The risks to successful implementation of this strategy relate to; the strength of the Partnership, availability of resources, and the continued prioritisation of strategies to tackle issues associated with substance misuse. The life of the Strategy includes the Olympics period and this will represent a challenging time for the management of substance misuse issues.
- 11.2 The Partnership currently operates a well attended Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Board with representatives from all key stakeholders. Members of the DAAT Board are also proactive in Safe and Cohesive and Healthy and Supportive Community Plan Delivery Groups. The strategy action plan will be monitored through the DAAT Board to ensure Partnership involvement.
- 11.3 Drug and alcohol focussed services are currently funded via external grants, LBTH funds and NHS ELC funds. With the advent of Public Health England and the transfer of Public Health responsibilities to Local Authorities, future funding streams are uncertain both in terms of size and ringfencing restrictions. However, partners acknowledge the wider savings and benefits that are possible via investment in drug / alcohol services.
- 11.4 Whilst residents remain concerned about the impact of drug / alcohol misuse in the borough, it is envisaged that strategies to tackle substance misuse will be prioritised though this cannot be guaranteed by all partners in the current economic climate. The Mayor has committed resources to substance misuse focussed enforcement and treatment services and has identified substance misuse as a priority.
- 11.5 During the Olympics period, it is expected that there will be a rise in drug / alcohol related crime and antisocial behaviour and transport logistics will present operational difficulties for treatment services. LBTH is working in partnership with the NHS and the Police to agree and implement actions to minimise the impact upon residents and service users.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 One of the three defining pillars of the strategy is Enforcement and Regulation. Key commitments outlined within this pillar include:

- Implementation and utilisation of a borough wide alcohol control zone to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Creation of an environment where anybody under the legal drinking age is restricted from obtaining alcohol from licensed premises
- Improvements to the management and planning of the night time economy
- Disruption of the supply of drugs through effective enforcement
- Implementation of a results focused Integrated Offender Management Programme
- Work to be undertaken with community groups to support them to provide an impetus for sustained, coordinated action aimed at reducing drug related crime and strengthening community resilience.

12.2 We will measure success against these commitments via; residents' perceptions in the Annual Residents' Survey, Dealer a Day data and substance misuse related re-offending data.

11. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

13.1 It is estimated nationally that for every £1 spent on alcohol treatment, £5 is saved elsewhere and for every £1 spent on drug treatment in Tower Hamlets, £3.95 is saved on health and crime costs.

13.2 The majority of financial resources for drug / alcohol activities are via external grants though there is a significant investment from LBTH. The strategy commits to a substantial redesign of the drug / alcohol treatment system. This redesign process starts in October 2011 and is scheduled to be completed by October 2012. The redesign process is necessary to develop a lean, flexible and client centred treatment system which eliminates duplication, is cost efficient and delivers excellent value for money.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Tower Hamlets Substance Misuse Strategy 2012-2015
Summary

Appendix 2 – Tower Hamlets Substance Misuse Strategy 2012-2015
Technical Document

Appendix 3 – Substance Misuse Strategy Action Plan

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
Population estimates of problematic drug users in England who access DWP Benefits: A feasibility study, DWP Working Paper No 46	Rachael Sadegh, LBTH, 0207 364 4594, Anchorage House, Clove Crescent
Drug Treatment Value for Money Tool –	Rachael Sadegh, LBTH, 0207 364 4594,

calculation of estimated benefits from drug treatment in Tower Hamlets (NTA tool)	Anchorage House, Clove Crescent
Papers referred to in the Substance Misuse Strategy that are not publicly available	Rachael Sadegh, LBTH, 0207 364 4594, Anchorage House, Clove Crescent