



meeting **HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE**

date **2 May 2006**

agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the Select Committee

Food Exercise and Diet in Schools (FEDS)

Purpose

1. To update members of the Select Committee of current progress with the Food, Exercise and Diet in Schools project (FEDS).

Background

2. The Health Select Committee established the Food, Exercise and Diet in Schools project (FEDS) in September 2004 to undertake a mapping exercise around food, exercise and diet initiatives, including the availability of cooking in Nottinghamshire schools, and their impact on the promotion of health equalities.
3. The Study aimed to:
 - map and produce a list of national or regional programmes currently undertaken in schools;
 - compile evidence of each programme's success or otherwise from a school's perspective;
 - compile a list of local initiatives run by schools, or groups of schools;
 - provide an overview of suggested further uses for the data.
4. The FEDS project was overseen by a project steering group with representatives from a number of different agencies including head teachers, school governors, the regional government office (GO-EM) and Primary Care Trusts. In addition the group included representatives from Nottinghamshire County Council's Education, Environment, Culture and Community and Chief Executive's Departments.
5. The project submitted its report to the Select Committee on 12 April 2005 where it was approved and forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration. At the Cabinet meeting of 27 April 2005, the report was

allocated to Councillor Mick Storey, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education, for response to the Health Select Committee.

6. A publication was produced by the Health Select Committee to highlight the results of the mapping exercise and was circulated to all schools within the County. The publication was principally funded by a grant from GO-EM and is also available on the internet. Additional copies of the publication have been provided following requests from schools and health partners. The publication was featured in the Evening Post and a showcase of best practice initiatives in the fight against obesity published by the European Economic and Social Committee. It was also received by HRH the Prince of Wales.
7. The Select Committee invited the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education to provide a response to the meeting on 8 November 2005. The Portfolio holder attended the meeting but was unable to provide a response, the Minutes of that meeting record:

“Councillor Storey, the Cabinet Member for Education stated that he was not able to respond to the Select Committee’s report at this stage. He added that the report had gone to Cabinet and a response was to be made in due course. He pointed out that there were budgetary implications. He added that he was not able to give an indication of when a response would be available. “

8. In setting the programme of work for 2005-06, the Select Committee agreed that the project should be continued, but that an element of the work would be dependant upon the response from the Cabinet.

Issues

9. The completed Study was submitted to Cabinet over a year ago. The Cabinet has been invited to send a representative to attend today’s meeting to provide a response to the FEDS report or to indicate when Members can expect to receive one.
10. The project for 2005-06 was to include a questionnaire to collect data from schools comparable to that collected in 2004-05. This would allow the Select Committee to analyse the take up of initiatives in schools during 2005 and evaluate the perceived successes and weaknesses of these initiatives.
11. A bid was submitted to GO-EM on behalf of the Select Committee and a further grant of £2,500 has been secured. These funds would cover the majority of the costs of a publication comparing the new data to that previously collected and also highlighting new initiatives.
12. A questionnaire was circulated to schools in March 2006. This was published using the schools online newsletter (WIRED). At the end of

the original consultation period only 30 responses had been received. Use of WIRED in 2004-05 produced a similar number of results, however when the questionnaire was posted to Healthy Schools Co-ordinators a total of 150 schools replied.

13. Given the small amount of responses received from schools this far the Select Committee's views are sought with regard to the producing a booklet comparing last years and this years results. As £2,500 has already been secured from GO-EM it would seem prudent to continue the project by following up schools and producing a second booklet during the summer 2006.
14. Since the original Study the Government has increased the funding available to schools. Future work may wish to consider how this investment has been spent in Nottinghamshire.
15. The Building Schools for the Future Programme is a Government initiative to rebuild or renew every secondary school over a 10-15 year period. Members may wish future work to consider how the findings of the previous FEDS Study and views of schools relates to this initiative.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

the study of Food, Exercise and Diet in Schools (FEDS) be continued.

Councillor James T Napier Chair, Health Select Committee

Background Papers
Correspondence with PCTs
Correspondence with Clarence House
Civil Society on the Move for a Healthier Europe