



meeting	JOINT HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	21 September 2004	agenda item number

Centre for Public Scrutiny – Health Scrutiny Support Programme

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The report advises Members on the establishment and implementation of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's (CfPS) Health Scrutiny Support Programme. Information on the programme is attached to this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Health Scrutiny Support Programme is a three year programme of support for local authorities who have powers to scrutinise health issues as established by the Health and Social Care Act 2001.
- 2.2 One of the programme's elements is to provide practical support and advice for the implementation of health scrutiny through an Implementation Advisory Team (IAT).
- 2.3 The IAT will support all social services authorities across England, free of charge, with the team consisting of a partnership between the Democratic Health Network of the Local Government Information Unit and the Peer Clearing House of the Improvement and Development Agency.
- 2.4 Up to 5 days advisory support will be available between October 2004 and March 2006. The support will be provided in six tranches throughout this period with approximately 7 authorities from each region supported within each tranche.

3 Issues

- 3.1 The support provided to each authority will vary depending on the level of development required by individual authorities. Types of support available

include : understanding the health scrutiny function; creating capacity for carrying out the function; work programming and topic selection; scoping, planning and delivering reviews and measuring impact; relationship building with health bodies, amongst others.

- 3.2** It would appear that there is scope for this programme to be accessed by the Joint Health Select Committee. Taking this approach would be consistent with the City/County Councils' partnership approach to tackling health and equality issues. Although the support is for " top tier " Councils, the CfPS "is keen to explore ways in which district councillors particularly involved in joint health scrutiny committees can be supported". Specific mention is also made in the CfPS literature encouraging 'joint' registrations.
- 3.3** The IAT will be available to provide generic support for the health scrutiny process for councillors and officers but will not be able to provide formal training sessions nor undertake any work normally carried out by establishment staff.
- 3.4** The CfPS is currently in the process of undertaking a diagnostic form which will assist authorities to focus on their key development issues. The form will be designed to balance ease of completion with a focus on key issues thereby producing a more comprehensive tool for self evaluation.
- 3.5** A scrutiny officer from both the City and County Councils could form a small project team to progress this registration and provide feedback to this committee as appropriate.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1** That Members agree to 'register' for support from the CfPS Health Scrutiny Support Programme in a 'joint' registration and utilise the benefits of the service through this committee.
- 4.2** That a small 2 member scrutiny team (city/council representative) be established to progress this joint registration.

Cllr Jim Napier
Chair of the Joint Health Select Committee