

North East Health Forum; Regional Advisory Group for Economy, Culture and Environment

14:00 – 16:00, 6 June 2008

Board Room, NHS North East

Minutes

Present

Stephen Singleton, Public Health North East/ NHS North East
(Chair)

Keith Aungiers, Public Health North East

Nicola Bailey, Hartlepool Social Services

Robin Beveridge, One North East

Steve Brooker, North East Assembly

David Chappel, North East Public Health Observatory

Carolyn Clayton, Northern TUC

Eva Diran, Sustaine

Philip Edwards, Government Office for the North East

Cynthia Games, Living Streets

Abdul Khan, BECON

Hilary Knox, Association of North East Councils

David Lacey, Community Energy Solutions

John Main, VONNE

Simon Mills, Public Health North East

David Robinson, Tynedale District Council

Martin Shaw, Natural England/Regional Green Exercise Group

Ross Smith, North East Chamber of Commerce

Andy Stephenson, North East Domestic Energy Forum

John Woodhouse, Health Protection Agency

In Attendance

Rachel Fisher-Thompson (minutes)

Apologies for absence

Ann Baxter, Stockton Borough Council

Cam Donaldson, Newcastle University

Graeme Farnworth, Government Office for the North East

Councillor Mick Henry

Melanie Laws, Association of North East Councils

Dr Jane MacNaughton, Durham University

Eugene Milne, PHNE

Dan Monnery, Government Office for the North East

Pat Ritchie, One NorthEast

Richard Robson, Tynedale Council

Kevin Rowan, TUC

Ruth Stevens, Regional Green Exercise Steering Group
Alex Watson, North East Assembly
Margaret Wightman, VONNE
John Wilkinson, NEPHO

1 Introduction

1.1 Stephen Singleton welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Cam Donaldson had agreed to take on the role of Chair of the Health Forum but had been unable to attend today's meeting. In his absence Stephen would chair the meeting.

1.2 He went on to explain that it had been agreed at the last meeting of the Health Forum that this group was the right group to take on the role of the regional advisory group for Economy, Culture and Environment but that the group would also retain its role of potentially generating ideas about the public health agenda.

1.3 He thanked members for putting their names forward to be members of the group.

1.4 Stephen informed the group that in some instances existing groups are taking on the advisory group role and these will be reviewing their membership and terms of reference to either take on or incorporate in other business this role.

2 Terms of reference

2.1 The proposed terms of reference, common to all the regional advisory groups, had been circulated with the agenda and Stephen invited comments from the group.

2.2: David Chappel suggested that there was also a function in terms of input to regional strategies such as the Integrated Regional Strategy. Robin Beveridge explained that the governance of the new regional strategy was still being discussed and that health and well-being could feature as a sub-board of the regional leadership board although this was not agreed yet. Hilary Knox agreed that the Forum was setting up at an opportune time to feed into the process.

2.3 Stephen said that if some of the actions proposed for this theme were being dealt with in other forum then this group may decide that they do not need to address them. The group may be the forum for wider discussion in generating added value to other people's structures, making sure all linkages are made.

2.4 He went on to say that this group formally exists to advise the RDPH office on whether it is leading in a strong enough way to achieve the objectives in the strategy.

2.5 It was agreed that the proposed terms of reference were acceptable for the group with the addition of a term of reference about the leadership role of the group.

Action: PHNE

3 Membership

3.1 Keith Aungiers was leading the process to establish the regional advisory groups and informed the group that a grid would be produced showing membership of all the regional advisory groups.

Action: Members to contact Keith Aungiers, Rachel Fisher-Thompson or Cheryl Nicholson if they wanted to put forward a representative from their organisation for another advisory group.

3.2 Elaine Richardson, District Pathways to Work Manager was proposed as a representative for Jobcentre Plus on the group. It was agreed that she should be accepted as a member of the group.

Action: Rachel Fisher-Thompson to inform Elaine Richardson of the group's decision

3.3 It was agreed that all future membership proposals would be considered and agreed by the group as a whole.

3.4 Martin Shaw proposed that the minutes of the meetings be made public. It was agreed that the minutes would be posted on the Public Health North East website: www.phne.org.uk

Action: Rachel Fisher-Thompson

3.5 It was agreed that the private sector was not adequately represented and Ross Smith agreed to follow this up and recommend an appropriate representative.

Action: Ross Smith

4 Review and prioritise commitments

4.1 Stephen Singleton introduced this item saying that the group had come together to provide cross sector thinking about fundamental issues, share ideas to advise his office about the strategy and potentially to provide advice for others/other work streams. To build on the strategy as well as execute it as individuals and as representatives of their organisation.

4.2 A general discussion then took place on how to take this forward. Steve Brooker proposed mapping current work and progress against each of the section's proposed actions, allocating them red, amber, or green status and the group could then focus on those areas where action had stalled. Stephen Singleton said that his team would take this work forward.

Action: PHNE

4.3 Economy

The following issues were raised: the 'North East economy' doesn't have a purpose, members didn't understand what 'locus of control' or social capital meant, there is no common understanding of what sustainable growth is, measuring the economy, the use of language in communicating the strategy, a need to be clear about 'who' was asking 'who' for what, that knowing what the 'ask' is, is critically important, knowing whose behaviour we are aiming to change, research agenda

4.3.1 It was agreed that the forum needed three things to progress this section:

a. Narrative – more straightforward, explicit and transparent language and clear objectives

Action: PHNE

b. A glossary of terms – making sure all using language in the same way

Action: PHNE

c. More detailed work from for example PHO, PCTs LSPs on using data and which data is most important

Action: PHNE to take forward

4.4 Regional Research and Development

The following issues were raised:

4.4.1 It was noted that the Universities were not represented at the meeting limiting the discussion on this section. It was agreed to invite Helen Pickering to come along to a future meeting to discuss how the group could work better with the Universities, focussing on the big challenges for the region.

Action: PHNE

4.5 Health care research in the region

This section was a sub set of the previous one. It was agreed to invite Cam Donaldson and Helen Pickering to lead a discussion on the research and development agenda and how the group could contribute to this.

Action: PHNE

4.6 Buildings, warmth and energy efficiency

4.6.1 David Levy queried why there were two separate sections, buildings, warmth and energy efficiency and energy both covering energy. He suggested that these should be amalgamated under one heading. North East Home Insulation Partnership (NEHIP) is already taking forward Warm Front and insulation schemes in the North East and David proposed that the actions should be changed to say 'we will support the aim of NEIP.'

4.6.2 He went on to say that the key areas that the group could focus on were 1. Fuel poverty and carbon management and 2. Climate change.

4.6.3 The following discussion raised issues about the role of the regional housing board, private sector housing in the rural areas, heat as a missing issue and whether the focus on buildings was just about warmth or did it include where and how houses were built?

4.6.4 It was agreed that the priority issues for development for this section were a. fuel poverty and b. climate change/sustainability in the context of carbon management. These sections needed rephrasing to make clear what we mean by fuel poverty, and in terms of climate change, the link between health and carbon management.

Action: PHNE

4.7 A physically active environment

4.7.1 Martin Shaw pointed out that there was an interdependency between sections, such as the physical activity and the obesity advisory group and that any action this group took forward would need to marry up with their activity.

4.7.2 The following discussion focussed on the importance of knowing our physical environment and how we encourage people to use it and the links between the two, and 'play' and 'supervised play'.

4.7.3 Cynthia Games raised the issue of walking and the lack of local authority walking strategies. It was agreed that access to walking was an important issue.

4.7.4 It was agreed that there may be aspects that were relevant to this group but this agenda was being taken forward elsewhere through the obesity group and there was a general feeling that this was not a top priority for this group.

4.8 Transport

4.8.1 The discussion raised issues around the health benefits of not going to work, the need to look at school transport and school pick up times.

4.8.2 It was agreed that a more open discussion was needed on how ambitious the group could be on transport issues and who the group should be talking to.

5 Name of group

It was agreed that the group would be known as the North East Health Forum; Regional Advisory Group for Economy, Culture and Environment

6 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 9 September 2008, 10:00-12:00, Board Room NHS North East

Tuesday 2 December 2008, 10:00-12:00, Board Room NHS North East

Tuesday, 3 March 2009, 14:00 – 16:00, Gallowgate 3, Citygate