

**Intelligent Commissioning (IC) Pilots:
Notes of OSC Workshop on Drug-related deaths**

Monday 7 March Youth Offending Service Conference Room, Regency Road
Brighton. 10am – 11.30am

Councillors Present: Gill Mitchell, Anne Meadows and Warren Morgan

INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman Councillor Gill Mitchell introduced the Workshop on the Intelligent Commissioning Pilots. This first of three dealt with Drug-Related Deaths (DRDs) Pilot, arranged as agreed following the first workshop on 7 December. This was an opportunity for Scrutiny input into each of the pilots' commissioning recommendations and additionally, into the overall Commissioning Framework to be used by other service areas.
2. The Commissioner Community Safety answered initial questions and clarified that deaths due to long-term illness or accidents relating to drugs were not included for the purposes of the pilot.
3. The definitions and practices used by the local Coroner formed the basis of this pilot. Any distinction between the approach adopted by the Coroner for Brighton & Hove and elsewhere had been widely quoted, but it was neither helpful nor would it affect the outcome of the pilot.
4. Members were surprised that the 45 – 54 year age group has the highest rate of DRDs in the City and nationally; arguably younger people are more closely associated with risky drug-taking. Increased awareness in the community could help families, neighbours and carers to be more aware to look out for those at greater risk.
5. Answering a query on allocating resources for treatment and prevention, the Commissioner commented that almost all the individuals at highest risk of a drug-related death were already well known to the services. It was intended to continue engagement with and/or treatment of this group of people, whilst still focussing on prevention services and activities.
6. The approach to funding taken by the Pilots was not just a 'wish list.' Overall current costs to the City were being analysed and evidence gathered for potential savings as the foundation for commissioning recommendations.
7. The Dual Diagnosis scrutiny review had identified the importance of improved joint working between drugs and mental health services as a key issue.
8. The workshop also discussed the importance of providing enough supported housing for challenging clients.
9. Answering questions the Commissioner said that Dr Tom Scanlon chaired the Harm Reduction Strategy Action Group, currently funded via the pooled budget.

10. The long-established Substance Misuse Adult Joint Commissioning Action group included a wide range of professionals including council officers such as Supporting People This was chaired by the Substance Misuse Commissioner of the PCT and it would be helpful if this were to become a dedicated role. The Commissioner would provide further information on this role.

11. The Commissioner described the intelligence-based work of Operation Reduction, aimed at disrupting the drug market and giving users an opportunity for treatment, and services an opportunity for assertive engagement to encourage this. This successful model was now being used elsewhere and joint initiatives with other Cities were in progress. The statutory duty to deal with drug issues lies with the local authority.

12. The Commissioner, Community Safety gave a presentation including a narrative that had been circulated earlier to OSC Members. She also referred to the needs analysis of DRDs that formed the basis of the 7 December OSC workshop

14. Members discussed the key objectives:

1. **Adequate Information and Advice for all and targeted to those most at risk**

- a) Information on the nature of addiction, those most at risk.
- b) Intelligence eg on levels of purity and levels/sources of supply.
- c) Provision of education for young people
- d) Integrated Offender Management Board manages and develops pathways (eg earlier assessment for those leaving prison or treatment.)
- e) The Commissioner would forward a brief on needs analysis and more detailed action plan to O&S Members.
- f) Locally there is a high prescription rate for benzodiazepine; GPs are important partners. Dr Christa Beazley had given evidence to HOSC about the level of forensic information that GPs receive. Councillor Meadows suggested a helpful GP contact that she would forward.

2. **Provision of Treatment Services**

- a) Workforce skills and competent staff are essential in risk-assessing and taking action regarding individuals at risk.
- b) The Commissioner would provide more information on the level of provision of detox facilities in the City.

- c) Retaining individuals in treatment and a positive and enduring attitude of 'not giving up on them' by professionals was essential.
- d) Overdoses by children were not known locally but provision of lockable Cabinets to clients with children was a national initiative.
- e) The workshop discussed the very wide variety of drug users' social issues.
- f) Members considered how the provision of a key worker in clients' own accommodation and a warden and key worker in supported housing can help support continuing access by clients to key services.

3. Overdose Prevention

- a) Extended training on the emergency use of Naloxone

4. Sharing Information

- a) Sharing information between services was key particularly for individuals who had overdosed.

5. Effective Enforcement

- a) Operation Reduction was being used elsewhere as a national example of good practice.

GENERAL

15. Recommendations, that had not been costed, on outcomes and priorities for the three IC pilots, were now scheduled for April Cabinet.

16. There was no evidence of significant duplication of work between agencies.

17. The Commissioner was asked at what stage a preventative intervention was deemed in the IC model to be successful and the implications of this for performance management and procurement. The example was given of a reduction in the level of hate crimes due to sustained efforts over some years, and maintaining that reduction as performance improved.

18. A White Paper on breaking the cycle of crime and reoffending was expected in the Summer – copies of the Green paper would be forwarded.

19. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to scrutinise health matters.

NEXT IC WORKSHOP

The next workshop - on Domestic Violence - would be held in Hove Town Hall Council Chamber on Monday 14 March at 1.30pm

