



CRAIGAVON
Borough Council

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FRANCIS ROCK
Chief Executive

LC/CH

23 March 2005

Regional Strategy Team
DHSSPS
Room 4.22
Castle Buildings
Belfast
BT4 3SJ

Dear Sir/madam

Re: A Healthier Future

Further to our earlier response on the issue of smoking in public places, please find enclosed a response from Craigavon Borough Council on the remainder of the consultation document.

Yours faithfully

Lorraine Crawford (Mrs)
Director of Environmental Services

Enc

RESPONSE TO A HEALTHIER FUTURE: A TWENTY YEAR VISION FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

Policy Direction 1. Our overall aim is still to improve the physical and mental health and social wellbeing of the people of N Ireland.

Policy direction 2. We remain committed to Investing for Health, as the overarching cross- governmental policy for promoting population health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

The document recognises the role of other government departments and the role of the range of partners in Investing for Health in implementing A Healthier Future over the next twenty years. Craigavon Borough Council advocates that the role of local government in the implementation of this strategy should not be overlooked. Local government has an important role to play in protecting health, and promoting health and wellbeing through its Environmental Services and Leisure Services departments, a role that was recognised in Investing for Health. To enable the vision as portrayed in the document to be realised will require the commitment and action of all sectors – government, business and community.

Policy direction 4. We will make it a strategic priority to fully engage with and support the development of, people and caring communities who will: (i) actively promote health and wellbeing; (ii) have a central role in managing chronic conditions and (iii) be partners in the design and management of our health and social services.

Craigavon Borough Council welcomes the department's commitment to engage with people on their health and wellbeing and on their health and social services and in particular the proposal to establish a regional Public Involvement Steering Group for health and social

services to drive a co-ordinated programme of engagement supported by a service wide training and development programme.

Policy Direction 6. We will place an emphasis on delivering effective community based services with a special focus on chronic condition management and the problems associated with disadvantage.

Policy Direction 7. We will work, over the next twenty years, towards providing services against clear standards of access. Our vision is that, when people need health and social care, they will have immediate access to services based in their communities and to the appropriate form of emergency care. People in the future will not wait more than three months for any form of treatment or care. Access standards will apply equally across all dimensions and across all areas, including urban and rural areas.

Craigavon Borough Council would support community based services and welcome the proposed increased capacity in primary and community care, both in terms of investing in more staff and in significantly approved infrastructure.

Policy Direction 8. We will develop Multi – skilled teams and networks based primarily in communities but supported by, and including, people working in hospitals.

The approach to providing a network of primary and community care facilities as set out within the strategy if realised will give greater access to services. These health and care centres will be a one stop shop within the community.

Policy Direction 10. We will place a special emphasis on meeting the needs of key groups by tailoring services to those needs and by placing greater emphasis on them.

It is recognised that a single service will not suit everyone's needs and therefore services must be tailored to address the specific needs of people especially where people find it difficult to have their voice heard. Craigavon Borough Council would concur with the actions set out to meet the needs of the key groups.

Policy Direction 15. We will set in place flexible plans, appropriate organisational structures and effective, efficient processes to support the implementation of A Healthier Future.

The introduction of health and wellbeing plans produced by the Boards and the Trusts will more accurately reflect the needs of the community. The recognition that area based and participative approaches to planning, are particularly appropriate for health and social services because the factors determining our levels of health and wellbeing primarily falls within the remit of other departments and agencies is significant. For the strategy to be effectively implemented will require a co-ordinated approach from all sectors and not just HPSS. The role of the Investing for Health Partnerships is vital to this process.

One of the specific questions asked in the Consultation is " Are the proposals for taking the strategy forward adequate ?" What the document fails to address is the resources required to make the vision a reality, and whether these are available. Craigavon Borough Council would advocate that more funding should be allocated to preventative medicine and the implementation of the Investing for Health strategy.