

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

<b>1. Meeting</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL</b>
<b>2. Date:</b>	<b>28 JANUARY 2010</b>
<b>3. Title:</b>	<b>TACKLING ALCOHOL AND DRUG MISUSE IN ROTHERHAM</b>
<b>4. Directorate</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S</b>

### **5. Summary**

Rotherham has considerable issues and problems in relation to alcohol misuse, some of the indicators pointing to the fact that even amongst other areas in the Yorkshire and Humber region, Rotherham's population are excessive consumers of alcohol. The patterns and trends of Rotherham's drug using population have remained static for some years characterised predominantly by opiate (heroin) use, but with increasing amounts of crack and cocaine use. Young Peoples Substance Misuse features alcohol predominantly, but with increasing number experiencing difficulties with their use of cannabis and a range of other "recreational" drugs.

The Safer Rotherham Partnership also acts as a Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) to which the Alcohol and Drug Strategy Team report.

Good progress is being made against the local Alcohol Strategy, but more sustained effort will be required in order to make the necessary impact on excessive alcohol consumption in the borough. Good progress is being made to engage with drug users and access them into treatment, although there needs to be more sustained effort to ensuring that more drug users leave the treatment system in a planned and sustainable way.

### **6. Recommendations**

**A good summary of the current assessment of need and strategic objections in relation to tackling Rotherham's adult drug using population can be found in the Strategic Summary of the 2010/11 Treatment Plan which is attached (Appendix 1).**

**The Young Peoples Substance Misuse Plan equally undertakes a needs assessment and sets out some key issues for the coming year. Document attached (Appendix 2).**

**In relation to alcohol a paper was presented to the SRP earlier today outlining progress against the local Alcohol Strategy and highlighting areas that need improvement (Appendix 3).**

**The recommendation of this paper would be for members to consider and to support the lengthier recommendations made in the three attached papers.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

See recommendations.

## **8. Finance**

Treatment for adult drug misusers is funded by the National Treatment Agency (Special Health Authority) under the Department of Health and is routed through NHS Rotherham on behalf of the Partnership. NHS Rotherham also contribute a further £717304 into this area of work. Funding for activities around young peoples substance misuse is supported by a ring fenced budget that is allocated to the Local Authority which is looked after by the Young Peoples Joint Commissioning Group. This funding has effectively been reduced for the last few years and is expecting its first uplift in 2010/11. Overall however, this amount of funding remains small (£240,000) and really covers only the very specialist work with young people. There is much more investment via general young peoples services both in the areas of schools and youth provision, within the Youth Justice and Care systems and directly in the YOS.

Funding for work around alcohol has been problematic since the production of the National Strategy which indicated that work to tackle alcohol misuse had to come from within existing budgets. Funding was made available through the SRP for an Alcohol Co-ordinator who has developed and implemented the Local Alcohol Strategy. Funding for this post is not secure beyond March 2010. Additional investment in treatment services has been made by NHS Rotherham to enable services to be provided within the general practice setting. Whilst all partner agencies undertake work around alcohol, more partnership working around a preventative agenda would be likely to pay off in the medium to long term.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Possibly the greatest risk outlined by this paper is that would be the risk of failing to take seriously Rotherham's alcohol problem, which although mirrored in many other areas of the country is considerable. In addition to the more immediate problems of youth nuisance, anti-social behaviour and the night time economy, it would be difficult to tackle areas such as domestic violence and longer term health problems without addressing the underlying alcohol problem. Alcohol problems will also be continuing to hold back the local economy and although many areas have workplace policies in existence, they focus mainly on the area of dealing with individual problems as they occur rather than looking at a preventative and awareness raising agenda.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implication**

Some of these are covered in the area looking at risks, but in summary it will be most likely to be seen in a failure to meet a number of other targets if these issues are not adequately addressed.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

National Drug Strategy

National Alcohol Strategy

Local Alcohol Strategy

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