

Norfolk Members' Planning Forum

21st September 2022

Item 4

Planning in Health Protocol

1. Background

- 1.1 The built and natural environment is a key determinant of health and wellbeing, and shapes health inequalities. There is a body of research showing that the environment people live in is inextricably linked to health across the life course. For example, the design of neighbourhoods can influence physical activity levels, travel patterns, social connectivity, mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 1.2 Public Health would like to better engage with spatial planning bodies in Norfolk to ensure that local plans have the necessary hooks and levers to ensure health and wellbeing are a key consideration in proposed future development, and to develop tools and resources to make it easier for spatial planners to embed health and wellbeing in their work.
- 1.3 The process governing how health organisations are consulted about planning applications is set out in the Planning in Health Protocol. It sets out how relevant NHS organisations, public health and local planning authorities jointly consult to ensure that health considerations are adequately accounted for in plan making, planning applications and their subsequent development.
- 1.4 The protocol has been revised to take account of new structures and policy within both health and spatial planning
- 1.5 The Member's Planning Forum is asked to:
 - 1.5.1 Note the new approach to embedding health and wellbeing in spatial planning
 - 1.5.2 Endorse revised Planning in Health Protocol

2. Main content

- 2.1 The protocol governs how relevant NHS organisations, public health and local planning authorities will jointly consult to ensure that health considerations are adequately accounted for in plan making and in planning applications and their subsequent developments. In this context health considerations includes planning for health service provision – such as the provision of enough doctor's surgeries to meet population needs – and promoting health and wellbeing in the design and provision of developments, such as provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, access to green spaces or maintenance of good air quality.
- 2.2 The protocol sets out the size and scale of development when it will apply and provides information about the types of activities that can be undertaken, such as health impact

assessment, to promote healthy planning and development and includes a health planning checklist.

Changes in this revision

2.3 The changes made in this revision are to:

- 2.3.1 Ensure greater consideration of health promotion through the planning process
- 2.3.2 Update the protocol to reflect new NHS structures and changes in national planning policy
- 2.3.3 Make the protocol more accessible, as well as clarifying partner roles and responsibilities

2.4 The protocol is a multiagency-owned document between planning authorities and health organisation and was agreed at the Norfolk Strategic Planning Group on 9th June. It has been endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board District Council Subcommittee in September, and will be adopted through each planning authorities' own processes subsequent to this meeting.

Future Direction

2.5 Best practice in promotion of health through planning takes different forms in different places. Essex County Council has developed the comprehensive [Essex Design Guide](#). This ever-evolving document recognises the impact of people's living and work environments on their sense of identity, wellbeing and health. The design guide aims to make it easier for developers and planning to "design in" health. Similarly, Hertfordshire's [Health and Wellbeing Planning Guidance](#) sets out expectations of developers in terms of the delivery of health developments and communities. This document recognises health and wellbeing as an essential part of the planning process, placing specific emphasis on active travel, multi-functional open space and high-quality urban environments.

2.6 Local health partners want to now start to promote the protocol and support its use to move towards emulating similar best practice in Norfolk.

2.7 The Town and Country Planning Association has long championed healthy place making through campaigns and awareness raising such as the development of [20 minute neighbourhoods](#), and it has offered to work with Norfolk health organisations and planning authorities to carry out several workshops to help promote the use of local public health evidence to inform the creation of local plans and tools such as health impact assessments and design guides. These are planned for September and October.

3. Recommendations or actions

3.1 The Member's Planning Forum is asked to:

- 3.1.1 Note the new approach to embedding health and wellbeing in spatial planning
- 3.1.2 Endorse the revised Planning in Health Protocol