

Request for new task group

Date		Suggested by	Cllr Maggie Skilling
Title	Public Health		
Explain briefly what this task group is about	<p>The Health reforms set out in Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS (the NHS White Paper) and Healthy Lives Healthy People (Public Health White Paper) have significant implications for local government, and particularly for upper tier local authorities who will take on a number of new responsibilities.</p> <p>These changes mean Lancashire County Council will be responsible for the health improvement function of Public Health in Lancashire by 2013. This includes addressing issues around people's lifestyles as well as inequalities in health and the wider social influences of health.</p> <p>The reforms provide a number of opportunities one of which is to help us increase the local democratic legitimacy of action to improve health and wellbeing and the commissioning of effective services.</p> <p>However to achieve this aim, County Councillor's need to have the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure they can effectively challenge commissioners and providers of services.</p>		
Has anyone else done any work on this topic recently?	<p>The Joint Health Unit has held a number of seminars regarding the wider reforms in the NHS White Paper</p>		
Why does there need to be a task group review of this?	<p>At the Health Scrutiny Committee on 28 February members were presented with a report on the proposed changes to the way that public health functions would be organised and funded.</p> <p>During the discussion it became clear that there was a lack of clarity amongst members on a range of issues which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the County Council's responsibilities;• the budget implications;• what it wanted to deliver (rather than deciding this after funding had been allocated); and• the role of elected members.		

What are the key objectives of this task group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To clarify the role of elected members in the understanding and promotion of the public health function delivered by the County Council.
If the task group is successful, what difference will scrutiny have made?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The production of clear and consistent guidance to elected members on the public health function. Elected members will have a comprehensive understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the local authority regarding public health.
What will be the measure of success?	Members can confidently describe and explain the public health function within local government and how it impacts on other service areas, not just within the County Council but also services provided by District Councils.

How will this contribute to corporate priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving health and well-being
Who will the task group need to get evidence from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Health Unit NHS Lancashire Adult & Community Services Other upper tier local authorities
What are the main issues that need to be covered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the County Council's responsibilities; the budget implications; what services will be delivered, how and by whom
Does this task group need to be done by a certain time? Please explain why	The intention is that this task group will begin in September and only require a few meetings to gather evidence. The report can then be presented to the Health Scrutiny Committee in January.
Committee	Health Scrutiny Committee