1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the findings and recommendations of a Communities Scrutiny Committee report on the Council’s substance misuse programme.

1.2 Cabinet is asked to note the findings of the Health Scrutiny Committee report, which can be found in full in Appendix 1, and the response from officers to the recommendations, which can be found in Appendix 2.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet note the content of this report.

2.2 That Cabinet Members note the response from officers, which advise that Cabinet adopt recommendations 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, and amend recommendations 1, 2 and 3.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 In June 2016, the Health Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a themed review into substance misuse.
3.2 The Committee looked at substance misuse at three of its meetings:

- on September 21 2016 the Committee heard about the current provision of drug and alcohol treatment for adults\(^1\)

- on November 23 2016 the Head of Community Safety presented a report on the extent of drug use in Waltham Forest and on the actions being taken by Safetynet, the Borough’s Community Safety Partnership (CSP), to reduce the harm that drug usage causes\(^2\)

- on January 25 2016 the Committee received a report from Public Health about prevention of problematic drug and alcohol use\(^3\)

- The Committee also visited Lifeline on September 5 2016.

3.3 The report (Appendix 1) was drawn up after the final meeting in January for the consideration of the Committee, detailing the key issues arising from the evidence gathering sessions and incorporating additional information gathered before and after the meeting.

3.4 The recommendations made by the Report were:

**Recommendation 1:** The Council should work with Lifeline staff and service users to review the premises and determine what changes are needed to ensure that Lifeline is housed in up-to-date facilities that are welcoming for people actively seeking treatment.

**Recommendation 2:** The Council should continue to work with partners to ensure that the range of services offered by Lifeline is understood by healthcare professionals and the wider community.

**Recommendation 3:** The Council and Lifeline should consider how they can improve treatment readiness for GP and criminal justice referrals.

**Recommendation 4:** The Council should work with the STP board and other partners to secure investment in preventions that will reduce hospital admissions and burdens elsewhere.

**Recommendation 5:** The Council should continue to liaise with the MPS to ensure that performance in this area is monitored and continues to improve.

**Recommendation 6:** The Council should consider whether it is possible to utilise systematic screening explore the benefits of systematic screening techniques and what the potential benefits could be.

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**Recommendation 7:** The Council should continually work to ensure that high quality prevention work is being delivered in all schools, including academies.

**Recommendation 8:** The Council should use its new VCSE provider, Community Waltham Forest, to explore with voluntary organisations what support they can and do provide to residents of all ages to prevent substance misuse.

3.5 Officers have commented on the recommendations, and recommend that Cabinet adopt recommendations 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 and accept the amendments to recommendation 1, 2 and 3 to reflect the fact that Change, Grow Live (CGL) is the Council’s new substance misuse provider. The amended recommendations are:

**Recommendation 1:** The Council should work with CGL staff and service users to review the premises and determine what changes are needed to ensure that Lifeline is housed in up-to-date facilities that are welcoming for people actively seeking treatment.

**Recommendation 2:** The Council should continue to work with partners to ensure that the range of services offered by CGL is understood by healthcare professionals and the wider community.

**Recommendation 3:** The Council and CGL should consider how they can improve treatment readiness for GP and criminal justice referrals.

4. **OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

4.1 It is established practice for the Cabinet to consider each individual scrutiny committee themed review and to make comments on issues contained within the report. Officers are recommending that all recommendations in this report are adopted by the Council.

5. **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)**

5.1 The recommendations contained in this themed review report take into account the Council’s priorities and aims to implement those where relevant to the themed review’s topic.

6. **CONSULTATION**

6.1 A formal consultation process did not take place in the development of this report because it simply seeks to review the work that has been undertaken by the Council and look at what improvements can be made going forward. There is also no statutory requirement to consult.

6.2 The committee received evidence from officers. These are outlined in section 2.3 and 2.4 of the report in Appendix 1.

7. **IMPLICATIONS**
7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

The recommendations have been developed so that they can be implemented within the existing budgets available to relevant services factoring in the reducing Public Health Grant over 2018-19 and 2019-20.

However, if in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are not sustainable within existing resources and officers find that additional expenditure is required, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; or b) proposals to finance their implementation.

7.2 Legal

Part of the Council’s constitution sets out the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules including, in paragraph 6, the procedure for policy review and development. This report has been prepared as part of the annual work programme agreed by Council following consultation with the relevant directors and portfolio lead member (part 6 para.5.1). The procedure rules provide that in carrying out any such policy review or development, Overview and Scrutiny must have regard to available budgets and resources (para.6.2) and make recommendations to Cabinet (6.1.1).

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making a decision. The Council will consider the impact of changes that might arise as a result of implementing the recommendations on those with protected equality characteristics, in particular where there is likely to be an impact on residents or service users from any changes to, or decommissioning of existing services.

7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

As outlined above, the report and its recommendations are expected to have a positive impact on all residents. Sustainability issues will be carefully monitored to identify any adverse effects from the implementation of any of the recommendations. Where a negative impact arises, mitigating action will be taken.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

The recommendations that Cabinet is asked to agree are intended to be cost neutral, with a process for referral back to Cabinet if this is not the case. As such the recommendations in the themed review report do not impact on the Council’s transformation programme.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None.