**North Somerset People and Communities Board Commitment to Prevention and Early Intervention**

**Introduction**

The People and Communities Board is one of the two delivery bodies working within the North Somerset Partnership (NSP) structure. The Board brings together children's and families, community safety, health, housing, social care and stronger communities work streams. The board meets the statutory functions for a Health and Wellbeing board and Community Safety partnership.

The board recognises that prevention and early intervention is a very important part of responding to the need and demand in all the areas the board covers. This commitment is a high-level strategic document. It sets out the vision, aims and objectives through which prevention and early intervention policies and services will be developed and delivered.

**Why are Prevention and Early Intervention Important?**

The Care Act places an emphasis on prevention and early intervention:

“At every interaction with a person, a local authority should consider whether or how the person’s needs could be reduced or other needs could be delayed from arising. Effective interventions at the right time can stop needs from escalating, and help people maintain their independence for longer.” (DoH Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 page 3)

Whilst this Act is primarily concerned with adults there is also the “Early Help” initiative, which arises from the Public Heath Strategy of 2011 “Healthy Lives Healthy People”. This focuses on early intervention but in the lives of children to prevent complex situations developing that require intensive interventions at a later stage in their lives.

All the organisations that are members of the People and Communities board recognise the importance of prevention and early intervention in their particular area. Whether working with children, young people and their families, social care for adults and older people, in community safety, fire and rescue, housing and public health all benefit from a prevention and early intervention approach. This includes providing information and advice so that people can take their own action to be healthier or safer or adequately housed. It also means services being provided early enough to avoid a situation getting significantly worse or a crisis, either of which could have serious consequences.

The overriding reason for prevention and early intervention is that it clearly can improve quality of life and opportunity. There is also a financial element which is important to take into consideration at a time when all public services are experiencing significant budget pressures. A prevention and early intervention approach, although needing initial and longer-term investment, can reduce or delay demand for more expensive solutions.

Attached as Appendix 1 is a needs analysis developed by the North Somerset Public Health team. It gives a clear profile of the population of the district and highlights some of our challenges.

**Definition of Prevention and Early Intervention**

The following definition of prevention has been adapted from the Department of Health document "Making a strategic shift to prevention and early intervention" (2008). As the original definition had been developed from a health focus it has been changed slightly to meet the wider perspective of the board.

**Primary Prevention/Promoting Wellbeing for people who have no Particular Care or Safety Needs or Symptoms of Illness.**

The focus is therefore on maintaining and promoting independence, safety, good health and wellbeing. Interventions include:

* Providing universal access to good quality information.
* Supporting safer neighbourhoods.
* Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
* Ensuring equal access to education.
* Combating ageism.
* Delivering practical services.
* Screening services to identify individuals at risk.

**Secondary Prevention/Early Intervention for People at Risk, to Halt or Slow Down any Deterioration and Actively Seek to Improve Their Situation.**

Interventions could include:

* Preventative advice and support.
* Early identification of disability or ill health.
* Services to support healthy development in children.
* Enablement.
* Targeted healthy living advice and activities.
* Targeted measures to improve home and personal security.
* Self-care.

**Tertiary prevention: This is aimed at minimising impact or deterioration from established conditions or complex needs.**

The focus here is on maximising people's functioning and independence. Interventions could include:

* Maximising use of benefits.
* Supporting carers including respite arrangements.
* Rehabilitation.
* Specialist support for long term conditions.
* Joint case management of complex needs.

**The Vision**

The vision for the commitment is that of the North Somerset Partnership itself:

**"Sustainable, inclusive, safe healthy, prosperous communities thriving in a quality environment**”.

**The Aim**

The aim of early intervention and prevention policies and services in North Somerset is to provide people who may need to use care, community safety, fire and safety, health and housing services with the advice, information and support they need. This will enable people to keep as healthy, independent, safe and secure as possible whilst reducing reliance on acute services. It will be achieved by supporting a proactive partnership approach towards prevention and early intervention across North Somerset and jointly prioritising initiatives totarget resources effectively.

**The Principles**

The following are the principles that will underpin the development and delivery of prevention and early intervention policies and services in North Somerset:

\* Partnership working for prevention wherever possible.

\* Co-ordinating the approach to information and advice.

\* Enabling the highest level of independence.

\* Promoting self care.

\* Reducing isolation.

\* Developing community networks.

\* Evaluating and prioritising together.

**The Objectives**

*The objectives of the commitment are*

* There will be a reference to this document and consideration of prevention in all strategy documents in future.
* That the development of prevention and early intervention policies and services will be undertaken with reference to this framework.
* That there will be agreed criteria for prioritising resources for prevention and early intervention work.

**Delivering Prevention and Early Intervention**

The delivery of prevention and early intervention takes place across all the partner organisations of the People and Communities Board. Appendix 2 is a table that shows all the strategies and services that help deliver this statement. Each of the policies, strategies and services have their own detailed objectives and targets.

The People and Communities board have a long-standing commitment to prevention and early intervention. The intention is to ensure a coordinated approach to prevention and early intervention going forward.

The board will therefore work over 2015-16 to identify these gaps and duplications. It will do this by bringing together everyone involved in delivering prevention and early intervention to encourage greater integration and closer partnership working and collaboration.

**Ensuring the Commitment is Delivered**

Ultimate responsibility for delivery of this commitment will be with the People and Communities Board. The membership of the board is attached as Appendix 3. Responsibility for delivery of the policies and services contained in Appendix 2 will be with the governance structure shown in the table. This commitment will be reviewed annually.