

Overview from CIEH Northern Ireland

Meeting of Council

4 September 2008

Report from Graham Jukes, Chief Executive

1.0 Summary and recommendations

- 1.1 This report summarises the activities and progress in ongoing projects in Northern Ireland being led by Gary McFarlane since the last meeting of Council.
- 1.2 This report should be read in conjunction with the 2008 business plan for Northern Ireland.
- 1.3 Council is recommended to note the report.

2.0 Detail

- 2.1 Launch of the key findings from the research study commenced in March 2007 to evaluate the effectiveness of the smokefree legislation on indoor air quality. A summary of these are attached at appendix 1. This was the first piece of research that was designed to evaluate impacts of the smokefree legislation to be publicly reported in NI and as such further assists the positioning of environmental health as key stakeholders in this topic area.
- 2.2 Following on from the Health Ministers proposals for future health reforms (as part of the ongoing review of Public Administration) the CIEH was invited to submit concepts and ideas on the future structures and details of the ministers proposals to a special Task Group convened by CMO. As part of the preparation for this, and in the interests of consistency and consensus, we facilitated a discussion and subsequent joint paper with the Chief Environmental Health Officers Group (CEHOG). The director also met with the minister concerning the proposals. Some of this thinking, in particular how environmental health might be positioned within the new public health system, would appear to have been received favourably. The paper is attached at appendix 2.
- 2.3 Briefing to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure Committee on Climate Change and the need for urgent government intervention and action.

- 2.4 Completion of secondary research in a project to attempt to develop a model/methodology for a regional environmental health report that utilises key health and environment indicators. The director has also had preliminary discussions with the University of Ulster about the potential for collaboration on this work which will continue into 2009.
- 2.5 Ongoing input to the development of national occupational standards for Health Protection.
- 2.6 Plenary presentation entitled "Climate Change - the case for urgent and coordinated environmental health action" at the IFEH Conference
- 2.7 Further work to gather potential case study material to support the public health advocacy model and toolkit developed by the Public Health Alliance and the delivery of a presentation of the current toolkit at the IFEH Conference.
- 2.8 Following on from the 2008 joint all Ireland Conference, which is currently organised between the EHOA and the NI Region, the director recently participated in a meeting with EHOA Board to review the current format and status of the event with a view towards future development of this conference.
- 2.9 Also, following on from discussions earlier in the year regarding a potential collaboration between the CIEH and EHOA on the issue of climate change in an all island context, the director has held some preliminary discussions with both EHOA colleagues; wider public health and environmental networks; and government officials within NI with a view to planning an all island conference around the health and economic implications of climate change and the need for multidisciplinary coordinated, integrated action in 2009. The concept is to facilitate engagement and participation in this discussion through the use of multiple sites and using the latest technology thereby allowing maximum participation as well as minimising the carbon footprint of the event. If this comes to fruition the event could, potentially, be extremely innovative, high profile and ground breaking.
- 2.10 Initial meeting to plan a profiling conference and celebratory gala dinner, in partnership with the University of Ulster. The undergraduate programme at UUJ has now been established for 25 years and these events will mark the contribution that environmental health in NI has made to public health and wellbeing over that period. The date has been agreed as 19 June 2009 and it is hoped that the events will not only further boost the profile and positioning of EH, but also provide a platform to share excellence.

3.0 Implications

Environmental	None
Equal opportunities	None
Financial	Within existing or anticipated/planned budgets
Legal	None
Personnel	None
Public health	None
Public relations	None
Background papers	Available from G McFarlane, Director NI
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