



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## CABINET

**Subject Heading:**

Havering Combating Substance Misuse Strategy 2024- 2029

**Cabinet Member:**

Councillor Gillian Ford

**SLT Lead:**

Mark Ansell, Director for Public Health

**Report Author and contact details:**

Anthony Wakhisi  
Tel: 01708 433 980  
[anthony.wakhisi@havering.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.wakhisi@havering.gov.uk)

Tha Han  
Tel: 01708 432 295  
[Tha.Han@havering.gov.uk](mailto:Tha.Han@havering.gov.uk)

**Policy context:**

The combating substance misuse strategy and the priority areas highlighted within the report will support the people and place objectives and in particular the following policies and strategies: Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Serious Violence Strategy, Licensing Policy, Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 - 2025, Housing Services Domestic Abuse Policy and Safeguarding Risk Assessment Policy.

**Financial summary:**

The implementation of the strategy will be supported by an annual investment of £1.44 million from public health grant and a three - year supplementary grant (2022-25) that totals just under £1 million from the central government.

**Is this a Key Decision?**

Yes - Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more  
Significant effect on two or more Wards

**When should this matter be reviewed?** Not applicable

**Reviewing OSC:** Not applicable

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

People - Things that matter for residents - X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy - X

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place.

## **SUMMARY**

A final draft of the Havering Substance Misuse Strategy 2023 has been completed and is now ready for approval. This strategy was produced jointly with all key stakeholders and has been produced in response to the national strategy and to replace the existing local strategy which expired in 2019.

Havering had a similar strategy called the “Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2016-19,” the revision of which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a new 10- year national drugs strategy called ‘From Harm to Hope: A 10-year Drugs Plan to Cut Crime and Save Lives’ was published by the government in December 2021. The national strategy was accompanied by a three year supplementary grant to increase capacity in the local treatment system. The grant requires local partnerships to produce a new strategy. Thus Havering Combating Drugs Partnership (“CDP”) drafted this strategy in response to the national drugs strategy thereby renewing the previous Havering strategy.

Our strategy covers all substances which have the potential for abuse and addiction, except tobacco. It treats addiction as a chronic (long-term) health condition and requires all relevant local agencies to work together to provide effective long-term support. It aims to tackle the stigma around addiction to encourage individuals and families who are affected to get support, and to minimise community violence towards those with substance-misuse problems.

The draft strategy describes some key findings from the needs assessment; for example, it is estimated that 1 in 5 adults (around 41,000 people) in Havering drink excessive amount of alcohol and 14,000 16 to 74-year-olds use illicit drugs. Two workshops with local and regional partners and people with lived experience followed by direct communication with delivery partners informed the set of actions in the strategy.

Substance misuse and addiction affect more than just the person with dependency problems – they can affect the family and wider community in many ways. Substance misuse can lead to criminal behaviour including domestic violence, assaults, antisocial behaviour, theft and burglaries, sexual exploitation, slavery and gang violence. This is why the partners in Havering will work together to:

- break drug supply chains;
- deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system;
- achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs; and
- reduce risk and harm to individuals, families and communities.

A plan to address these four key areas was developed through working with all key stakeholders such as the National Health Service (NHS), drug and alcohol treatment services, voluntary care sector, schools, Police, trading standards, licensing, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), children services, adult services etc. To achieve our intended outcomes of reducing drug use and drug-related crime, harm

and deaths, Havering CDP will monitor progress using the national and local outcome frameworks.

This strategy will be implemented over a five-year period commencing from the date of publication and will be reviewed at least annually by the Havering Combating Drugs Partnership and amendments made where necessary. Feedback from the consultation and engagement with service users has been incorporated into the final draft and the Equality Health impact Assessment report is also included. Havering Combating Drugs Partnership has signed off the final draft and allowed submission for approval by Cabinet. The draft strategy has also been presented at the Health and Wellbeing Board and Place-based Partnership meetings and adopted.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Approve and adopt the Havering Combating Substance Misuse Strategy 2024-2029

## **REPORT DETAIL**

1. Below is the executive summary of the Havering Combating Substance Misuse strategy 2014 -2029:
2. Substance misuse is the abuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances that affect perception, consciousness, understanding, mood or emotion. It is a worldwide public health issue. Substance misuse not only harms the individual, but also their family, communities and society. The UK is one of the European countries most affected by drugs. Demand for drugs across the population is very high – over three million adults reported using drugs in England and Wales in 2021.
3. Drug use increases crime, damages people’s health, puts children and families at risk and reduces productivity. It affects everyone, with the most deprived areas facing the greatest burden. The UK Government estimates that drug use costs society nearly £20 billion a year. In England and Wales, nearly 3000 deaths a year are related to drug use.
4. In Havering, statistics show that substance misuse is still an issue which needs to be prioritised, and that to tackle it we need a long-term approach where relevant agencies work in partnership. Latest statistics show an increase in the number of crime incidents that are related to substance misuse each year. Cases nearly tripled between 2016 and 2022, from 388 to 1084. There were 938 ‘possession of drugs’ crimes and 146 ‘drug trafficking’ crimes reported in Havering in 2022.

5. Alcohol-related deaths among males have also been rising in the last three years. The latest data (2020) showed that for every 100,000 deaths in Havering, 57 were related to alcohol. This was higher than the London average where 51 out of every 100,000 deaths were related to alcohol. In 2020 and 2021, 528 adults in Havering were in drug treatment services. The number has not changed significantly in the last five years, suggesting that there are still many people who need treatment but are not accessing it.
6. Across 2020 and 2021, only 18% of people known to be dependent on alcohol contacted alcohol treatment services. In Havering, it is estimated that more than 67% of people aged 15 to 64 who use opiates or crack (or both) are not in treatment. It is also concerning that out of 364 adults accessing treatment for substance misuse for the first time during 2019 and 2020, 21% were parents or adults living with children.
7. This strategy has been drafted in response to the UK's national 10-year drugs strategy ([From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives](#)), which was published in December 2021. The national strategy sets out how the government will try to:
  - fight illegal drug use;
  - cut off the supply of drugs by criminal gangs;
  - give people with a drug addiction a route to a productive and drug-free life;
  - offer a world-class treatment and recovery system; and
  - change attitudes in society about the perceived acceptability of illegal drug use (with education and being tougher on those in possession of illegal drugs).
8. It has three overarching priorities, namely:
  - breaking drug supply chains;
  - delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system; and
  - achieving a generational shift in the demand for drugs (to reduce number of people wanting to use drugs).
9. To help us meet the aims of this plan, Councils including Havering are being supported by a three year supplementary substance misuse grant (2022-25) that totals just under £1 million. We are using the additional money to strengthen local treatment services and joint working, increase the local workforce and increase the numbers in treatment over this three year period. The Havering Combating Drugs Partnership (Havering CDP) was fully formed in August 2022 to lead the local response set out in this strategy. To benefit local residents, our strategy has been guided by a detailed local-needs

assessment and builds on many existing activities and policies across a range of areas, including enforcement, treatment, recovery and prevention.

10. Our strategy covers all substances which have the potential for abuse and addiction, except tobacco. It treats addiction as a chronic (long-term) health condition and requires all relevant local agencies to work together to provide effective long-term support. It aims to tackle the stigma around addiction to encourage individuals and families who are affected to get support, and to minimise community violence towards those with substance-misuse problems.

11. The strategy acknowledges that although addiction problems can be seen across all communities, some people and communities are more affected than others so need more support and personalised solutions. These include veterans, rough sleepers, people from the LGBTQ+ community and the children of people with addiction problems.

12. There is a well-established range of specialist treatment services in Havering, but investment in these services is relatively low as the Public Health Grant and Supplementary Grant (2022-25) received by the Council are themselves low. There is still a need for new and cost-effective approaches to treatment, to allow a wide partnership of agencies to do the following:

- Increase the rate of recovery of people who are receiving treatment for drug or alcohol dependency (or both).
- Support the residents with the most complex needs (including poor physical and mental health, homelessness, unemployment and contact with the criminal justice system) who need help in many areas of their lives to address their substance misuse, reduce harm and support recovery.
- Support parents with substance-misuse problems, to minimise the harm to children (including the increased risk that they will experience similar problems later in life).

13. Substance misuse and addiction affect more than just the person with dependency problems – they can affect the family and wider community in many ways. Substance misuse can lead to criminal behaviour including domestic violence, assaults, antisocial behaviour, theft and burglaries, sexual exploitation, slavery and gang violence. This is why the partners in Havering will work together to:

- break drug supply chains;
- deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system;

- achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs; and
  - reduce risk and harm to individuals, families and communities.
14. A plan to address these four key areas was developed through working with all key stakeholders such as the National Health Service (NHS), drug and alcohol treatment services, voluntary care sector, schools, Police, trading standards, licensing, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), children services, adult services etc. A detailed plan is available in appendix 2 of the full report.
15. Our vision is that by local agencies working together to tackle the supply chain and reduce demand, we will further reduce substance misuse in Havering. This, along with providing useful information and advice when it is needed, will mean we can protect the users, families and communities from the harms of addiction.
16. To achieve our intended outcomes of reducing drug use and drug-related crime, harm and deaths, we need to be clear about the current situation, our goals and how we will meet them. In May 2023 the UK Government published the National Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework to help local partnerships monitor their progress towards achieving the outcomes. You can read this framework at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-combating-drugs-outcomes-framework)
17. The framework sets out three strategic outcomes of reducing drug use, drug-related crime and drug-related harm and deaths. It also includes medium-term goals of reducing drug supply, increasing engagement in treatment and improving outcomes for recovery, as well as 22 supporting measures. The supporting measures allow partnerships to monitor their progress towards meeting the outcomes through two key aims:
- Putting in place more timely, interim and proxy measures which can tell us about the progress towards meeting the strategic and shorter-term outcomes.
  - Having a wider picture of the progress, allowing us to monitor the overall effect of the strategy and to see unexpected trends.
18. The intended outcomes (and the methods we are putting in place to meet them) which are set out in this document are aimed at all partners who are involved in implementing our five-year strategy. Our strategy emphasises the importance of shared responsibility for each outcome, with the aim of avoiding the problem of individual organisations being pulled in different directions by competing outcomes and targets. The Havering CDP board will organise and monitor progress towards the intended outcomes. This will involve making

sure local partners are accountable to the UK Government, each other and local residents.

19. Considering different groups and people with protected characteristics is a key part of this strategy as it aims to promote equality and meet the needs of people from all communities, particularly those who have often not received an effective service in the past (including women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds).
20. The Havering Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) represents the Havering CDP as they have overarching responsibility for implementing this strategy in local areas. The SRO (on behalf of the Havering CDP) will report and answer to the UK Government and will monitor local areas' progress towards meeting the intended outcomes set out in national and local frameworks. Progress will be monitored in the context of the whole system. This means, we will be aware that in the short term, we could expect improvements in some areas as a result of more planned activity and services meeting demand. However, in the longer term, the number of improvements might slow down as we successfully implement our strategy and the underlying problems are reduced.
21. This strategy will be implemented over five years from the date it is published. We will review it at least once a year and make amendments as necessary.

## REASONS AND OPTIONS

### **Reasons for the decision:**

Havering had a similar strategy called "Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2016- 19," the revision of which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a new 10- year national drugs strategy called 'From Harm to Hope: A 10- year Drugs Plan to Cut Crime and Save Lives' was published by the government in December 2021. The national strategy was accompanied by a three year supplementary grant to increase capacity in local treatment system. The grant requires local partnerships to produce a new strategy. Thus Havering CDP drafted this strategy in response to the national drugs strategy thereby renewing the previous Havering strategy.

### **Other options considered:**

None to consider as it is a [UK government requirement](#).



## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

The receipt of the supplementary grant for drug treatment puts a condition on the local authorities to continue existing investment in substance misuse treatment services.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred statutory responsibility for the commissioning of public health services, including drug and alcohol services, to local authorities.

The non-statutory Government Guidance for local delivery partners called “From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives” 2022 requests local Combating Drugs Partnerships to be set up, to analyse the local data and draft strategy and frameworks to combat drugs misuse and then to report to the national team and continue to review performance on an annual basis.

The proposed strategy complies with the guidance and there are no legal implications in approving this.

If any grant conditions apply then these will have to be complied with, however, this is not the subject of this Report.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

There are no implications or risks anticipated to Council staff as the employees involved in the delivery of the service are employed directly by the existing Supplier. The Strategy will align existing good work of the council teams and external partners to the strategy.

### **Equalities implications and risks:**

A comprehensive equality health impact assessment was completed and approved and is included in appendix 2 of the strategy document.

The Equalities business partner later raised two concerns which were addressed as follows:

**Issue 1 raised:** Ways in which the Council/wider partnership(s) – will address experiences around intersectionality and lived experiences that impacts on residents and communities experiencing the most adverse experiences/ impact/contribute to substance misuse, and furthermore other forms of scrutiny on personal allowable use of treatments.

**Response:** In addition to the three national priorities on breaking supply chain, world-class treatment and recovery system and generational shift in demand, Havering's strategy includes one additional priority to reduce risk and harm to individuals, families and communities. Under this priority, multidisciplinary multiagency partners will collaborate in supporting those at higher risk or those who have suffered from harm of drugs and alcohol misuse, and raise awareness and training around neurodiversity.

**Issue 2 raised:** I feel there's a need to build in/ evidence greater diversity on provider/supplier/treatment panels and facilities that may potentially provide/handle immediate remedial support and support measures responding to the needs of our changing population, taking account of any accounts of discriminatory and detrimental treatments demographics.

**Response:** A needs assessment including demographics analysis was carried out and was used in drafting the strategy. The Council will regularly review its needs assessment and drugs strategy equalities impact assessment which will include the analysis of treatment service and wider demographic population data. In addition, the Council holds regular contract monitoring meetings with the local drugs service provider which includes reporting on and responding to the needs of the local treatment population. Also, following the recent cultural competency review, the Council and local provider are working on delivering a cultural competency action plan in 2024/25 to improve the local response to the needs of the local population.

### **Health and Wellbeing Implications and Risks**

The health and wellbeing implications are included as part of the equality health impact assessment report which is in appendix 2 of the strategy document. No risks have been identified in relation to the implementation of the strategy. Below is the summary:

The combating substance misuse strategy will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of all Havering residents. This impact is clearly outlined in the strategy document and includes an action plan and local strategic outcomes. These include:

- A greater collaboration among members in delivering services that will lead to improved multi-agency working arrangements including the formalisation of previous loose and informal arrangements
- Increased referrals from police, courts and probation into drug treatment
- Improved co-ordination of relevant local services leading to improved delivery of services including easier information sharing and access to information
- Involvement of service users and frontline professionals in the development of the local strategy and associated plans leading to a wider co-operation and ownership of local plans and services
- Service expansion to deliver new high-quality drug and alcohol treatment places

- More people recovering from addiction in sustained employment, stable and secure housing

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The strategy has no direct impact on the environment and climate change.

*[» Climate Change Committee Guidance \(havering.gov.uk\)](https://www.havering.gov.uk/climate-change-committee-guidance)*

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- [Review of drugs part two: prevention, treatment, and recovery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-drugs-part-two-prevention-treatment-and-recovery)
- [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives)
- [Guidance for local delivery partners \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/guidance-for-local-delivery-partners-accessible-version)
- The Havering Combating Substance Misuse Strategy 2024-2029
- Havering Combating Substance Misuse Needs Assessment 2022
- Havering Combating Substance Misuse EHIA 2023 (see appendix 2 of strategy document)