

# Title of report: Obesity in Herefordshire

**Meeting: Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Friday 23 September 2022**

**Report by: Director of Public Health**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards)

## **Purpose**

To present background information for the committee to consider the ways in which the council and partners currently tackle obesity in the local population and to make any recommendations around future provision

## **Recommendations**

**That:**

- a) **the committee notes the council's strategies to tackle obesity in line with the council's planned priorities and objectives, and**
- b) **the committee offer any further constructive challenge, define any further action or recommendations to inform and support the development of a new Obesity Plan for Herefordshire.**

## **Alternative options**

1. No further investment or activity to reduce obesity rates across the Herefordshire. This is not recommended as obesity is a significant burden on our health and social care system, economy and wider communities. Obesity has been a national government commitment, since 2016, to prevent and tack obesity through the Childhood Obesity Plan

## Key considerations

2. There has been increased government commitment, since 2016, to preventing and tackling obesity through the Childhood Obesity Plan<sup>1</sup>. The plan aimed to significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within ten years and included such commitments as introducing a soft drinks levy, working with food producers to reduce sugar in foods and introducing food school standards. More recently, the government further published a National Obesity Strategy in July 2020 which outlined actions the government intended to take to tackle obesity and help adults and children to live healthier lives.
3. Both of these strategies are complemented by the NHS Long Term Plan<sup>2</sup> which was published in 2019 and set out specific actions to support people in managing their weight. This includes:
  - a) access to weight management services in primary care for people with a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes or hypertension with a BMI of 30
  - b) Expanding the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme over the next five years, including a new digital option
  - c) Test an NHS programme supporting very low calorie diets for obese people with type 2 diabetes
  - d) Take action on healthy NHS premises
  - e) Nutrition training, and an understanding of what is involved in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, this currently varies between medical schools
4. Whilst Herefordshire does not have a specific Healthy Weight Strategy, our current Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy<sup>3</sup> includes a number of priority areas where reducing levels of obesity can make an important contribution to achieving these. A new Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently being developed and this will be published early 2023. As part of the development of the strategy the council will be reviewing our priorities for the future.

## Community impact

5. The council's County Plan includes a number of commitments that will contribute to reducing levels of obesity in Herefordshire through the three focus areas; Environment, Community and Economy. This includes actions to tackle climate change such as increasing active travel, utilising our natural resources more effectively, supporting communities and ensuring our children are healthy.
6. The council's 2020/22 delivery plan prioritises tackling health and wellbeing inequalities. These conditions influence our opportunities for good health, and how we think, feel and act, and this shapes our mental health, physical health and wellbeing. They also impact on the care that people receive and the opportunities that people have to maintain wellbeing and lead healthy lives. Specific commitments aim to ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve and improvements to the overall mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents of all ages with a more diverse and increased level of support that helps people to make healthy food and lifestyle choices.

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<sup>1</sup> [Childhood obesity: a plan for action - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action)

<sup>2</sup> [NHS Long Term Plan](https://www.nhs.uk/longtermplan/)

<sup>3</sup> [Health and wellbeing strategy 2016 \(herefordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2016/)

## Environmental impact

7. There are no direct environmental impacts connected with this report or the outcomes it seeks to deliver. Initiatives and programmes to promote a healthy weight will likely have a positive impact on the environment e.g. food sustainability, reduced carbon admissions, increased active travel.

## Equality duty

8. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
9. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. The ambitions and actions set out in this report will directly lead toward delivering these outcomes.

## Resource implications

10. Fulfilling the recommendations and considerations outlined in the report will require investment from the council and wider partners (e.g. Integrated Care Board) aligned with commissioning responsibilities. Funding for weight management services will need to come from the Public Health Ring Fence Grant. There will also be a requirements for increased staffing resource to oversee this work programme and co-ordinate across partners.
11. As part of the Covid-19 economic and recovery plan, the council invested £850,000 Government Grant funding in an initiative called Get Active. The aim of *Get Active* was to increase opportunities for individuals of all ages to become more active and experience new opportunities through culture and leisure facilities. The programme's focus was on supporting physical activity, in particular enabling inactive people to become more physically active through a combination of support to address barriers to participation and a diversification of opportunities to be more active, including improved infrastructure and access to green space. There are no plans in place to continue many of these initiatives.

## Legal implications

12. This report provides background information to allow the committee to consider the ways in which the council and its partners could better tackle obesity in Herefordshire and therefore there are no legal implications arising from the report.

## Risk management

13. The associate risks to human health as a result of childhood obesity are set out in Appendix A.

**Consultees**

None

**Appendices**

Appendix A: Obesity in Herefordshire

**Background papers**

None Identified