

Committee: Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: **8th November 2016**

Agenda item:

Wards: ALL

Subject: Physical Activity for the 55s and over.

Lead officer: Dr Dagmar Zeuner, Director of Public Health.

Lead member: Councillor Tobin Byers. Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health.

Contact officer: Barry Causer, Public Health Commissioning Manager.

Recommendations:

- A. To note the development of the prevention framework, that has a focus on community and population approaches to health improvement, including physical activity.
 - B. To note the range of commissioned services, projects and organisations that promote and support residents who are over 55 years of age to be physically active.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on activities that support residents who are aged over 55 years of age to become more physically active.
- 1.2. The council faces a challenging financial position, with reducing budgets that mean that behaviour change programmes that are highly resource intensive are no longer affordable. The Prevention Framework, which has a focus on community and population approaches, will compliment the extensive range of activities and organisations that support residents who are over 55 years of age to be more physically active.

2 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

- 2.1. The evidence of health gain from an active lifestyle is now well established and the Chief Medical officer (CMO) has highlighted significant health benefits including reducing the risk of many chronic conditions, such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type two diabetes, cancer, obesity and musculoskeletal conditions.
- 2.2. Adults should aim to be active daily, and over a week activity should add up to 150 minutes in bouts of ten minutes or more. Older people should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days per week.
- 2.3. Being physically active is also central to our mental health and people who are inactive have three times the rate of moderate to severe depression of

active people. Staying physically active can also reduce the risk of vascular dementia and have a positive impact on non-vascular dementia.

- 2.4. Being inactive is an issue at every age, but the evidence shows us that people become less active as they age. Generally, the more we do, the greater the benefit. Moving those who are inactive to a significant level of physical activity would have the greatest benefit, but any shift helps.

3 LOCAL CONTEXT

- 3.1. The financial challenge that the council faces means that one to one, resource intensive, interventions are less affordable and public health will have a greater focus on community (e.g. key settings such as schools and workplaces) and population (e.g. licensing and planning) approaches to support residents to lead healthy lifestyles, including physical activity.
- 3.2. In line with this approach, the Council along with Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and other partners are in the process of developing a strategic prevention framework. The aim is to produce a shared preventative approach, across organisations in the public, voluntary, community and private sector that respond to the changing needs of a growing and ageing population through solutions that are effective and sustainable. The framework recognises the major impact of the places where we live, work and play on health and wellbeing, as well as individual behaviours and choices.
- 3.3. The framework is based on a whole system approach and focuses on changes at population, community and individual levels that maximise opportunities for individuals and families to adopt healthy lifestyles as part of daily life. Related specifically to physical activity, the prevention framework will seek to increase physical activity (and reduce physical inactivity) through
 - a) Population level approaches e.g. working to influence the new Mayors London Plan and Transport Plan. These critical plans, directly linked to local planning and transport policies, will help to develop an environment that promotes healthy choices such as active travel.
 - b) Community approaches e.g. promoting physical activity in key settings including the development of healthy workplaces where many over 55's are in employment.

4 MERTON APPROACHES TO INCREASING OVER 55'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

- 4.1. In Merton, there are a number of commissioned services, projects and organisations that promote and support residents over 55's to be more physically active. These include –
- 4.2. Healthy Lifestyles. A procurement exercise has recently started to identify a provider to support residents to lead healthy lifestyles. This service will promote self care through active outreach and engagement of communities, digital interventions and targeted support to vulnerable groups across a number of behaviours including weight management, stop smoking and increasing physical activity levels.

- 4.3. Access to information. Residents access information on local physical activities in many different ways including word of mouth from friends and colleagues and increasingly by accessing information on the internet e.g. internet searches engines such as Google, regional portals including www.getactivelondon.com and local websites e.g. www.ageuk.org.uk/merton and Merton I.
- 4.4. Walk 4Life Merton. Promotes and delivers daily walks in the boroughs parks and open spaces with on average 300 people a month attending. The walks are open to all ages and abilities but many attendees are over 55yrs. Many of those that attend enjoy the chance to have a chat and to make new friends and appreciate the social side of the opportunity.
- 4.5. Cycling. The Council provides cycle training for all ages and abilities, encouraging more people to cycle with a wide range of classes and implementing quiet way routes and lanes to support their riding. Last year the service provided maintenance and changing places events, worked with the Met Police to show both drivers and cyclists 'blind' spots on roads and trained over two hundred adults (including 85 over 55 years of age) and over one thousand children.
- 4.6. Workplace health. The majority of residents who are over 55 years of age are still working. As part of the prevention framework (see 3.2), which prioritises community and population approaches, public health will actively promote the development of healthy workplaces, which will include increasing physical activity levels. Importantly, the council is showing local leadership and is championing healthy workplaces, under the 'London's Best Council' vision and the evolving 'health in all policy' pilot.
- 4.7. Voluntary and community providers. There are a large number of voluntary sector organisations that operate in Merton and many of these offer opportunities for residents who are over 55 to be physically active. These are promoted in a number of ways (see 4.3) and operate without direct support or contact with the council.
- 4.8. Social Prescribing. As part of the East Merton Model of Health and Wellbeing, Public Health and are working with a number of partners including MVSC, Merton CCG and the South West London Academic Health and Social Care System to develop a social prescribing pilot. One of the priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board, this pilot will provide GPs with a non-medical referral option, including physical activity opportunities that can operate alongside existing treatments to improve health and wellbeing. A co-ordinator is being recruited by MVSC, funded by the Merton Partnership, and the pilot is due to start delivery in January 2017.
- 4.9. Get Active Wandle Valley. A community project funded by four local authorities and the National Trust, this project targets inactive men and women aged 50+ to promote physical activity. Activities include Healthy Walks and under the Forever Fit banner; Yoga, Outdoor Gym and Seated Exercise classes. The project is linking in with voluntary services, GP surgeries, housing associations, social and adult services in order to target participants and will be developed to take on direct referrals in future.

- 4.10. Physical Activity in the NHS. Public Health are working closely with clinical leaders, NHS England and Merton CCG to build physical activity into care pathways for Long Term Conditions. This include the National Diabetes Prevention Programme where Merton residents who are eligible, get tailored, personalised help to reduce their risk of Type 2 diabetes including education on healthy eating and lifestyle, help to lose weight and bespoke physical exercise programmes.
- 4.11. Leisure Centres. There are many leisure centres across the borough with the majority being provided through the private sector and often these are the venues where our over 55's will choose to carry out their leisure opportunities and physical activity programmes. The council has three leisure centres, one in each of Mitcham, Morden and Wimbledon, which are operated under a contract by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL). There are a number of opportunities within the centres for informal physical activity through use of the health and fitness facilities, swimming, etc. and there are a range of formal groups and classes that people can join in. In order to get more older people involved GLL have established two designated over 55's session co-ordinators at Canons and Wimbledon and established user clubs around these sessions who organises events and activities beyond the centre, including visiting and competing against other centres. GLL have grown the over 55's membership base by 10% over the last year with an increase of over 100 members.
- 4.12. Falls prevention. Falls among people aged 65 and older are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in older populations; they are also a leading cause of loss of independence. A Merton Falls Health Needs Assessment was undertaken by Public Health and the resulting report was produced in January 2015. A Task and Finish Group was set up to improve the falls pathway in Merton and to enhance the coordination and integration of services. This meets on a quarterly basis and developed a falls prevention strategy which is being implemented across the partnership. Funded jointly by PH Merton and Merton CCG, the main falls prevention service is provided by CLCH as part of the Community Health Services since April 2016 at the Wilson Hospital. Between April and August 2016, 935 people with falls have been provided this service.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. Due to the financial position caused by austerity, one to one interventions that support healthy lifestyles are not affordable. Through the prevention framework, there will be a focus on approaches at a community and population level that have a strong evidence base and are shown to be cost effective.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1. NA

7 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 7.1. NA

8 TIMETABLE

- 8.1. NA

9 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. This report has no direct financial, resource or property implications however reducing budgets across the Local Authority may have an impact on programmes and services that support increasing physical activity and reducing physical inactivity.

10 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. NA

11 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. NA

12 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. NA

13 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. NA

14 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- 14.1. NA

15 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1. NA

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