

## **Committee: Cabinet**

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

Wards: All

## **Subject: Annual Public Health Report on Childhood Obesity and Merton's Child Healthy Weight Action Plan**

Lead officer: Dr Dagmar Zeuner, Director of Public Health

Lead member: Councillor Tobin Byers (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health), Councillor Katy Neep (Cabinet Member for Children)

Contact officer: Julia Groom, Consultant in Public Health

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. Cabinet are asked to receive the independent Annual Public Health Report (APHR) 2016-17, note the key messages and endorse publication.
  - B. Cabinet are asked to endorse and champion the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016 – 2018.
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### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 (section 31) requires the Director of Public Health to prepare a report on the health of the people in the area of the local authority each year. This is an independent report which the local authority is required to publish. The report is an opportunity to focus attention on issues of concern and this year the Director has chosen to focus on the issue of childhood obesity, which is a priority for our local Health and Wellbeing Board, as it is for London and nationally.
- 1.2. The Annual Public Health Report (Appendix 1) complements the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan (Appendix 2) which sets out details of our commitments on tackling childhood obesity.
- 1.3. Childhood obesity is a complex problem and there is no single solution. The evidence is clear that a preventative, whole systems approach to tackling obesity is needed. This approach recognises the major influence of 'place' (where we live, work and play) on health and wellbeing, as well as individual behaviours and choices.
- 1.4. The publication of the APHR as well as the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan provides an opportunity to better understand childhood obesity locally, but also for stakeholders and partners to think about how they can actively support children and families in making the healthy choice the easiest and preferred choice in Merton.
- 1.5. Cabinet are asked to receive the APHR, note the key messages and endorse publication. Cabinet are also asked to endorse and champion the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan.

## 2 DETAILS

### 2.1. Background

#### Annual Public Health Report:

- 2.2. Childhood obesity is an epidemic: there has been a significant increase since the 1980's and the WHO now regards it as one of the most serious global public health challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. London has higher rates of childhood obesity than other global cities including Paris, Sydney and New York.
- 2.3. In Merton an estimated 4,500 children aged 4-11 years are overweight or obese– equivalent to 150 primary school classes. One in five children entering Reception year are overweight or obese and this increases to one in three children leaving primary school in Year 6. Childhood obesity contributes to health inequalities: the gap in obesity between the east and west of the borough is widening in both Reception and Year 6 and is nearly 10% in Year 6.
- 2.4. The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health sets out the challenge of childhood obesity in Merton and is a call to action to partners to work together on the solutions.
- 2.5. It brings together data and information from a range of sources and provides evidence about what works as well as examples of action to tackle obesity at the population, community and individual level, to provide a local reference and resource to support our joint effort. It recognises the good work already taking place across the borough and highlights some examples underway.

#### Child Healthy Weight Action Plan

- 2.6. Over the past year following a pan-London review on childhood obesity, a Child Healthy Weight Action Plan has been developed with partners. The Plan will also be presented to Merton Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body to endorse, reflecting our joint commitment to this priority. The APHR report complements the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan, which sets out details of commitments on childhood obesity from the council and its partners. These are designed to be delivered within existing resources; by making better use of external resources and we will also work with partners

to lever in additional funding from other sources which will enable us to enhance the Action Plan.

2.7. The action plan focuses on 4 key themes:

- Leadership, communication and engagement
- Food environment – increasing availability of healthy food
- Physical environment – increasing levels of physical activity and health promoting physical environment
- Early Years and school aged settings and pathways

2.8. It is recommended that Cabinet champion the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan and areas where leadership from the council will have most impact; including:

- a) Support consideration to signing up to the Local Government declaration on Healthier Food and Sugar Reduction.
- b) Use 'Health in all Policies' programme approach to embed action on childhood obesity within Council business.
- c) Further promote Healthier Catering Commitment with local businesses and fast food retailers in the east of the borough.
- d) Explore healthier catering pledges for all council venues and events and build into contracts.
- e) Support development of a Food Poverty Action Plan.
- f) Undertake health impact assessments as part of major developments, including estates and Morden leisure centre, to identify opportunities to promote physical activity and access to healthy affordable food.
- g) Promote and encourage school travel plans, London Healthy Schools programme and roll out of 'Daily mile'.
- h) Explore opportunities to increase family physical activity in parks, especially in the east of the borough.
- i) Promote on-going engagement with key borough partners such as AFC Wimbledon and All England Lawn Tennis Club.
- j) Support communication, promote staff champions and engage with residents.

2.9. The development of the APHR and the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan provides an opportunity to take a whole systems approach to tackling the complex issue of childhood obesity locally. This approach will have mutual benefits as promoting healthier environments is also more economically and environmentally sustainable.

2.10. The council is well placed to embed action to tackle childhood obesity across its business, for example, by identifying opportunities to add value to existing

services and contracts, promoting active travel and helping front line staff to engage with service users and residents about food and physical activity.

2.11 Halting and then reducing the gap in childhood obesity between the east and west of the borough, by improving in the east (levelling up), has been set as one of our targets to be London's Best Council by 2020. The Public Health Team has responsibility for leading the delivery of the action plan and will do so by working alongside colleagues, partners and residents.

2.12 There is interest and enthusiasm across the borough - Merton had the highest number of responses of any borough to the London 'Great Weight Debate' survey. As we continue to engage with stakeholders and residents through the APHR, Action Plan and subsequent conversations, we will further refine our approaches, creating collective and sustainable actions to address childhood obesity locally.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. N/A

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1. The Annual Public Health Report and Child Healthy Weight Action Plan has been developed with engagement and input from stakeholders and partners. Further communication and engagement with residents and stakeholders is planned as part developing and co-producing our approach to childhood obesity locally.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

The APHR will be published and disseminated in February 2017. Progress on the child healthy weight action plan will be monitored annually and reported to the Children's Trust Board and Health and Wellbeing Board annually.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. The Child Healthy Weight Action Plan is based on delivery within existing resources by embedding it within council business; by making better use of external resources. We will also work with partners to lever in additional funding from other sources which will enable us to enhance the Action Plan.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 (section 31) requires the Director of Public Health to prepare a report on the health of the people in the area of the local authority each year. This is an independent report which the local authority is required to publish.

## **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. A main focus of the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan is tackling health inequalities by first halting and then reducing the gap in childhood obesity between the east and west of the borough by improving in the east (levelling up).

## **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. N/A

## **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. N/A

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

- Appendix 1: The Director of Public Health’s Annual Public Health Report 2016-17 – Tackling Childhood Obesity Together
- Appendix 2: Merton’s Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016 – 2018

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. N/A

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