

Committee: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 28th March 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Annual Public Health Report on Childhood Obesity and Child Healthy Weight Action Plan progress update

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Recommendations:

- A. To receive the independent Annual Public Health Report (APHR) 2016/17.
 - B. To help disseminate and promote key messages and resources set out in the Annual Public Health Report 2016-17 among stakeholders and residents.
 - C. To endorse and champion the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016 – 18
 - D. To consider how Health and Wellbeing Board members can champion strategic priorities and actions that make healthy eating and being active easy choices for children and families, identifying opportunities to embed within every day business.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Health and Wellbeing (H&W) Board on progress since agreeing childhood obesity as a key H&W Board priority for 2016/17.
- 1.2. The report presents the Annual Public Health Report (APHR) 2016/17 'Tackling childhood obesity together' and the Merton Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016-18. It sets out progress to date and strategic priorities, where leadership from the H&W Board could add most value.
- 1.3. Both the APHR 2016/17 and the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016-18 have been endorsed by Cabinet and Merton CCG Governing Body.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Tackling childhood obesity is a national and local priority. Merton includes reducing childhood obesity as one of the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing (H&W) Strategy 2016–18.
- 2.2. The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed at their meeting on 19th April 2016 for childhood obesity to be a priority area for 2016/17. Following this, an H&W Board seminar was held in July 2016 where the Board reinforced and reasserted its commitment to tackling childhood obesity locally, including pledges to involve Cabinet and Merton CCG Governing Body on the issue.

2.3. In February 2016, Merton took part in a pan London thematic peer review on childhood obesity. This involved mapping and assessing the boroughs progress against an evidence-based whole systems framework.

A summary of the findings from the thematic peer review is shown in figure 1 below. Appendix 1 also provides more details on the thematic review process and findings from the review.

Figure 1: Summary of childhood obesity peer review for Merton



2.4. The Child Healthy Weight Action Plan and work on childhood obesity has been informed by learning from the peer review.

2.5. A pan London ‘Great Weight Debate’ was undertaken lead by the Healthier London Partnership (HLP) between October–December 2016. Merton actively participated in the debate and had the highest number of responses (311) of any borough to the London ‘Great Weight Debate’ survey.

2.6. Responses from Merton residents showed:

- *Over two thirds of respondents are aware of the high rates of childhood obesity in London*
- *87% of respondents think childhood obesity is a ‘Top priority’ or a ‘High priority’*
- *Top areas that make it harder for children to lead healthy lifestyles included (in order of priority):*
 - *Too many cheap/unhealthy food and drink options*
 - *Safety concerns for children (not letting them play outside)*
 - *Too many fast food shops*
 - *Too much advertising of unhealthy food and drinks*
- *The top 3 things that already exist in Merton to encourage a healthy lifestyle included:*
 - *Parks*

- *Local leisure facilities*
- *Local sports and youth clubs*
- *The top 3 things that will support children in London to lead healthier lifestyles included*
 - *Less marketing and advertising of high fat and sugary food and drink*
 - *Cheaper healthy food and drink*
 - *Support families to cook healthier meals*

Findings will inform the development of the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan. However, there were low numbers of respondents from certain groups, including young people, men and BAME groups. The response rate was also higher in the west of the borough than the east. In response to this, local engagement work is taking place with these groups and areas, which will promote awareness of child healthy weight and further refine our Action Plan.

3 DETAILS

3.1. Annual Public Health Report (APHR) ‘Tackling Childhood Obesity Together’:

The Health and Wellbeing Board prioritisation of childhood obesity resulted in the Director of Public Health focusing on this challenge for her 2016/17 independent Annual Public Health Report. The APHR was published in March 2017 and complements the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan. It provides the facts and figures about childhood obesity in Merton and the evidence about what works as an easy local reference and resource to support joint efforts.

A hard copy of the report is available to Board Members. It is also available on the following link: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/annualpublichealthreport.htm>

The APHR and Action Plan were endorsed by LB Merton Cabinet and Merton CCG Governing Body in January 2017 and have been widely disseminated to leaders and stakeholders. They have been positively received, for example, a local school governor requested a hard copy of the APHR to be sent to all head teachers, which has been done.

3.2. Child Healthy Weight Action Plan

3.2.1 The Child Healthy Weight Action Plan was developed with partners and responds to the pan London peer review. The plan 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 by leveraging in additional funding from other sources to enhance the plan.

3.2.2 The Action plan is a working document and will evolve over time. The objectives and actions cover four areas:

- **Leadership commitment, communication and community engagement;**
- **Changing the food environment-** improving the availability of affordable healthy food;
- **Changing the physical environment-** increasing levels of physical activity through health promoting environments;
- **Enabling early years settings and schools to promote healthy eating and physical activity** every day, underpinned by mental health and wellbeing; supporting health care and other professionals to make every contact count.

A copy of the action plan is attached and a summary is available on the following link:

http://www.merton.gov.uk/childhood_healthy_weight_action_plan_summary_for_web.pdf

3.3. **Progress to date**

3.3.1 The APHR provides case studies of local activity. In addition the following actions have been completed or are in progress as part of work to tackle childhood obesity in Merton:

- Child Healthy Weight Steering Group set up and meeting regularly.
- Merton participated in the London Great Weight Debate (GWD) where over 300 residents completed the survey (the highest response rate in London).
- Merton engagement work is taking place to engage with children and young people, residents in the east of the borough, BAME communities as well as giving consistent messages around child healthy weight.
- Small amount of funding won from Greater London Authority (GLA) to develop a Food Poverty Action Plan, linking childhood obesity and child/family poverty. Work has begun and will be completed in August 2017.
- The '*Daily Mile*' is being promoted to schools. The aim of The *Daily Mile* is to improve the physical, emotional and social health and wellbeing of our children by getting them to run or walk a mile during the school day. Lonesome Primary School is one of the first schools in Merton to have taken up the challenge of running The *Daily Mile* and other schools are also being encouraged to take up the challenge.
- Healthy Start Vitamins project initiated to review the current status of vitamins uptake, availability and processes with a view to make recommendations to improve uptake.
- Early Years Activation Programme being piloted with schools in Merton delivered by All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) to provide training and support for Nursery and Reception staff to implement a structured 10 minute physical activity session with evaluation supported by Public Health

- Support being provided to schools to reach Bronze, Silver and Gold Healthy Schools London (HSL) status following on from targeted work in the east of the borough
- Support being provided to local businesses and fast food retailers in the east of the borough to sign up to the Healthier Catering Commitment through Environmental Health.
- Make Every Contact Count –training to increase confidence of frontline staff to talk about healthy weight using every contact as an opportunity to raise the issue providing appropriate support and signposting, including training for early years and schools staff.

3.3.2 Health and Wellbeing Board leadership

Going forward there are a number of strategic priorities for tackling childhood obesity where leadership from the HWBB will have most impact. Six key areas are identified below and Board members are asked to consider the role they could play in championing these:

a) *Food Environment - Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food and Sugar Smart borough pledge*

- The Declaration on Sugar and Healthier Food is a new initiative promoted by Sustain to help London local authorities tackle the proliferation and marketing of unhealthy food and drinks. To sign the declaration a Local Authority has to commit to take at least six different actions across six key areas such as improving the food controlled or influenced by the council; reducing prominence of sugary drinks and promoting free drinking water; supporting businesses and organisations to improve their food offer; tackling advertising.
- *Sugar Smart* borough is supported by Sustain and Jamie Oliver Food Foundation and encourages organisations/boroughs to pledge, promote and run campaigns to reduce sugar wherever possible. In London, Lewisham and Greenwich are *Sugar Smart* boroughs.
- The H&W Board could have an important role to champion the benefits of the complementary Declaration and Pledge and getting council wide and partner support to sign up, following further exploration of the implications.

b) *Physical Environment – Regeneration and Air Pollution*

- Safety, road traffic, ease of walking and access to physical activity facilities and green space all have an impact on the amount of physical activity undertaken. Increasingly, the quality of air around schools and in certain areas has been a topic of concern and debate particularly in London. This is an opportunity to jointly explore how this can be addressed in Merton, through a range of measures such as awareness raising, planning, enforcement and the development of an Air Quality Action Plan which includes consideration for schools. The Mayor of London is also focusing on a '*Healthy Streets*' for London approach

which is about getting Londoners more physically active by using cars less and encouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport. Besides the health benefits of the approach, it also links into improving air and noise pollution, reducing congestion, improving road safety and will bring economic benefits to local high streets.

- Regeneration in Merton (including town centres; High Path, Eastfields and Ravensbury estates; and Wilson campus) is an opportunity to develop health promoting physical and food environments through enhancing physical activity opportunities, access to active travel opportunities and open spaces. The use of Health Impact Assessments (HIA) is a key vehicle to identify opportunities and mitigate negative impacts.
- c) *The Wilson campus and the east Merton model of health and wellbeing*
- The development of the Wilson site and east Merton model of health and well-being is a flagship opportunity to embed action on childhood obesity, promote physical activity and healthy eating, taking a whole system approach, linking with community resources across the area including schools, community groups, local business, leisure facilities and open spaces.
- d) *Health in All policies (HiAP) approach*
- Health in All Policies is an approach to policies that systematically and explicitly takes into account the health implications of the decisions made; targets the key social determinants of health; looks for synergies between health and other core objectives. The council are reviewing opportunities to apply this approach to council business. Childhood obesity is a potential priority, for example, identifying the opportunities of a particular policy, such as the Social Value Act, or by systematically addressing how to increase activity in open spaces, such as development of a 'Merton mile', linking schools and parks.
- e) *H&W Board champions*
- H&W Board members are encouraged to identify opportunities to raise the issue of childhood obesity and embed this within service plans and support links across strategic priorities and approaches, such as the prevention framework, think family approach, CYP and Family Wellbeing model and MECC (making every contact count).
- f) *London level*
- H&W Board members are asked to promote better food and physical environments through responding to the Mayor of London's Inequalities strategy refresh and other pan-London opportunities which may arise in their roles.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

N/A

5 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

The development of the Action Plan has included communication and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and this will be further supported by commissioned local engagement work.

6 TIMETABLE

Child Healthy Weight Action Plan for 2016-18 defines the actions and timescales for work.

7 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the Child Healthy Weight Action Plan is based on delivery within existing resources by embedding it within main business of the Council and partners. Delivery will be linked primarily to related plans and existing commissioning investments (including opportunities provided by regeneration developments and east Merton model of health and wellbeing/Wilson campus). We will also work with partners to lever in additional funding from other sources which will enable us to enhance the Action Plan.

8 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

9 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

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).

10 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

N/A

11 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

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

Appendix 1: Merton Findings from the Pan London childhood obesity peer review, 2016

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Annual Public Health Report (APHR) 2016/17 ‘Tackling Childhood Obesity Together’
http://www.merton.gov.uk/annual_public_health_report_2016.17.pdf
- Merton Child Healthy Weight Action Plan 2016-2018
Summary available on the following link:
http://www.merton.gov.uk/childhood_healthy_weight_action_plan_summary_for_web.pdf

Appendix 1: Pan London Thematic peer review on childhood obesity: Merton Findings

The Pan London Sector Lead Improvement (SLI) programme focusing on carrying out a thematic peer review on childhood obesity was conducted earlier in 2016. The aim of the thematic peer review was to improve childhood obesity outcomes by supporting boroughs to identify local improvement actions and to identify where collaboration could be taken on common issues. The peer review required boroughs to complete a childhood obesity assessment against an evidence framework and culminated in peer review workshops (Merton attended on 24th February 2016) with groups of other boroughs.

The assessment process was undertaken in partnership with other council departments and external partners input to provide a comprehensive response. The workshops provided opportunities for reflective learning discussion, challenge questions and sharing best practice and Merton was represented by colleagues from Public Health, Children, Schools and Families (CSF) and Future Merton. Following on from the review, each borough drafted an action plan which included learning and reflection from the day.

The peer review was a mapping and assessment process to benchmark boroughs' progress against an evidence framework of components that could help prevent and reduce childhood obesity. The assessment highlighted the following (See also figure 1 below):

Merton is doing relatively well on:

- *Public and Community setting* (promoting healthy choices)
- *Schools* (support schools to promote healthy eating, physical activity and health and well-being)

Merton is making progress on:

- *Physical environment* (physical environment and how it can enable and support people to achieve and maintain a healthy weight)
- *Health services* (health services and settings promoting healthy choices)
- *Evaluation* (consider how delivery can be supported by evaluation and on-going review)
- *Journey's by foot or bike* (increasing proportion of journeys made on foot or bicycle)
- *Workplaces* (increase proportion of employers and workplaces that promote healthy choices)

Merton can make improvements on:

- *Engagement and commitment* (increase engagement and commitment to tackle childhood obesity amongst partners in all sectors)
- *Accessibility of healthy food* (increasing the range and accessibility of healthier meals, snacks and drinks that are available to buy locally)
- *Weaning* (supporting parents and carers to establish a healthy diet for their children from an early age)
- *Breastfeeding* (Increasing the number of babies who are breastfeeding)
- *Supporting people to be active* (work towards supporting and enabling people to be more active and less sedentary in their lives)
- *Knowledge* (Improve children and families' understanding of, and feeling of control over, their own health and wellbeing)

Figure 1 Summary of Merton childhood obesity peer review findings

