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**HEALTHY COMMUNITY CHALLENGE FUND: INVITATION TO LOCAL AREAS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Andrew Scott  
Responsible Director – Lorraine O’Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek the support of Cabinet for the submission of an expression of interest to the Healthy Community Challenge Fund.

**Summary**

2. The selection process requires the Council and Primary Care Trust to submit a joint application including a short description of the key interventions and a statement of how the following criteria would be met:
  - (a) Evidence that tackling obesity is a shared priority
  - (b) Evidence of senior level commitment in PCT and Council (political and officer)
  - (c) Evidence of existing interventions e.g. Cycling Demonstration Towns
  - (d) Evidence of links locally between obesity and other policy priorities

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that :-
  - (a) Cabinet endorse the submission of an expression of interest as Stage One of the application.
  - (b) Cabinet support preparation for Stage Two of the application on the basis that Darlington can demonstrate a strong case against the criteria.
  - (c) A further report be presented to Cabinet following the preparation of a detailed plan, including financial implications.

**Reasons**

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

- (a) Levels of obesity in Darlington are among the worst in England. To reduce health inequalities a reduction must be made in inequalities in lifestyle choices around physical activity and food
- (b) In order to secure additional resources to prevent and help reduce rates of overweight and obesity in our population

**Miriam Davidson  
Director of Public Health**

**Background Papers**

*Healthy Community Challenge Fund: Invitation to Local Areas* – Department for Children, Schools and Families – Department of Health 2008

*Healthy Weight Healthy Lives: A Cross Government Strategy for England (2008)*

*Tackling Obesities: Future Choices* – Foresight (2007)

*Narrowing the Gap in Coronary Heart Disease and Cancers Annual Report of the Director of Public Health County Durham and Darlington 2007/08*

Miriam Davidson/Owen Wilson: Extension 2463/2444  
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S17 Crime and Disorder	It is considered that a “Healthy Town” would contribute to the reduction of crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	Work required to become a “Healthy Town” would contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people in the Borough.
Sustainability	A “Healthy Town” will build on achievements via the sustainable travel town and Cycling Demonstration Town.
Diversity	Actions to become a “Healthy Town” would contribute to tackling disparities in health.
Wards Affected	A Borough wide approach within the overarching priority of “One Darlington” i.e. narrowing the gap.
Groups Affected	The whole area would be covered within the SCS commitment to tackling disadvantage.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This report does not require an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Narrowing the gap in life expectancy between Darlington and England and within Darlington requires targeted programmes as well as a whole

	Darlington population approach.
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## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. On 9 June on behalf of the Department for Health, Dawn Primarolo announced that every town in England has the opportunity to bid for up to £5 million to make their inhabitants more healthy and active.

6. In the press announcement, Health Minister Ben Bradshaw went on to state that:

Every area in England can now bid to become a healthy town. "I want to see some really innovative ideas which will help tackle our nation's weight problem. "

"I hope that local authorities and PCTs will take ownership of the challenge of obesity in their areas and work towards making their communities healthier places for everyone.

"Tackling obesity is the most significant public and personal health challenge facing our society. The core of the problem is simple - we eat too much and we do too little exercise. The solution is more complex. From the nature of the food that we eat to the built environment through to the way our children lead their lives, it is harder to avoid obesity in the modern world."

Successful applicants will be designated 'Healthy Towns' to acknowledge their commitment and aspiration to promoting health in their communities. In the first stage of bidding towns will need to show evidence that they take this issue seriously by meeting a small number of criteria. These are:

- (a) Achieving a healthy weight for all is a local priority
  - (b) Commitment to creating a 'healthy town' -as shown through processes already in place such as: cycle demonstration towns, play pathfinders, local healthy food initiatives
  - (c) Senior level commitment - across the PCT and LA and a proven record of partnership working
  - (d) Links between obesity and other policy priorities - such as reducing health inequalities and reducing CO2 emissions
7. The Department for Health announcement stated that there would be up to £30 Million for the Healthy Towns initiative and that the Healthy Communities Challenge Fund can provide revenue funding of up to £5 million to each area over 3 financial years, 2008/09 to 2010/11.
  8. Localities will be expected to contribute additional funding to at least match the grant.
  9. Match funding can come from both revenue and capital programmes but cannot be from government funding which is ring fenced, for example the Sustainable Travel Town and Cycle Demonstration Town grants.

10. Potential match funding sources include the Local Transport Plan programme, the Primary Care Trust's investment in primary prevention of obesity via the Annual Operating Plan, and the existing Community Sports Coach programme within Cultural Services that is funded in partnership with Tees Valley Sport.
11. There is a two stage process for selecting the Healthy Towns.
  - (a) Stage one requires an expression of interest to be submitted to the Department of Health by the 11 July 2008. This will require an outline of proposed activities, rather than a detailed plan
  - (b) Applicants who are successful at stage one will then be asked to submit fully worked up plans by 30 September 2008
12. Guidance on the Healthy Community Challenge Fund indicates that the Department for Health are particularly interested in initiatives which aim to increase levels of physical activity and to encourage healthier eating.
13. The success of the Local Motion project in changing people's behaviour provides a strong track record of knowledge and achievement on which this bid can draw. Funding for Local Motion comes from a similar Government challenge fund.
14. The project would contribute strongly to the One Darlington Priority in One Darlington : Perfectly Placed, and to the long term outcomes in its Healthy Darlington Theme.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

15. Encouraging people to adopt healthy lifestyles, tackling the specific causes of ill health and taking a co-ordinated approach to tackling obesity are priorities identified from all the consultation that developed the Sustainable Community Strategy, *One Darlington: Perfectly Placed*. (OD : PP)
16. The Enquiry Group that supported the development of ODPP was positive about the opportunities to target activity on narrowing the gap in health outcomes. This project has potential to achieve this.