

**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
30 JANUARY 2020**

DARLINGTON CHILDHOOD HEALTHY WEIGHT PLAN

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members and partners with an overview of the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan, the partnership launch event and the next steps in relation to taking this work forward.

Summary

2. The ambition of the Childhood Healthy Weight Plan is to ensure that more children leave primary school a healthy weight. It sets out a whole system approach to tackling obesity. A multi-agency session was held in September 2019 to launch the plan and to develop an action plan to take the work forward.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Members :-
 - a. Accept the update on the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan
 - b. Support the actions set out in the report to implement a whole systems approach to tackling obesity.

**Miriam Davidson
Director of Public Health**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report
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S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Well Being	The report has recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families in the borough.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report.
Diversity	There are no implications arising from this report.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	This impacts on all children
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no implications arising from this report.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report contributes to the delivery of the objectives of the One Darlington: Perfectly Placed Sustainable Community Strategy in a number of ways through the contribution to the outcome 'better start in life'.
Efficiency	There are no implications arising from this report.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report impacts on all children across the borough.

MAIN REPORT

Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan Feedback from Partnership Event and Next Steps

Background

1. The scope and vision of the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan is to ensure that more children leave primary school aged 10-11 years with a healthy weight. It sets out a whole system approach recognising the complex relationship between the social, economic and physical environment coupled with individual factors that underpin the development of obesity.
2. In Darlington childhood obesity in Darlington is above the national average at both reception and year 6 age groups. The percentage of children at year 6 who are categorised as obese in Darlington is 21.2%.
3. Childhood obesity and excess weight are significant health issues for children. There can be serious implications for the physical and mental health of a child continuing into adulthood, as obese children are more likely to become obese adults and have a higher risk of morbidity and premature mortality. Obesity and overweight are linked to a range of diseases including type 2 diabetes, asthma, hypertension, cancer, heart disease and stroke.

Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan

4. The overall objectives of the Healthy Weight Plan are to:
 - a) Transform the environment so that it supports healthy lifestyles by increasing and maintaining use of green space for play and recreation;
 - b) Transform the environment so that healthier choices are available in the provision of food consumed out of the home;
 - c) Transform the environment by supporting the public sector to lead by example with healthier options;
 - d) Make healthier choices easier by providing information and support on active travel
 - e) Deliver consistent messages to increase awareness around healthy lifestyles and maximise the use of Making Every Contact Count (MECC)
 - f) Support services needed to tackle excess weight by increasing breastfeeding rates

Partnership Event

5. A multi-agency session was held on 24 September 2019 to officially launch the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan and to gain partner ownership and support to develop an action plan. 48 people attended the session from a range of organisations including schools, NHS, internal local authority departments and the voluntary and community sector. Presentations to set the context and a series of participatory workshops were held.

6. Attendees were asked to contribute to the following discussion questions:
- We want children to leave primary school a healthy weight
 - How do we work better to achieve this?
 - What are the challenges?
 - What does success look like and how do we measure it?
 - Themed workshop (physical activity, business engagement, schools, maternal health and early years)
 - What is happening already to contribute to this agenda?
 - How can we work better together?
 - Where is the added value – what can we do more of?
 - What are the challenges?
7. A wealth of feedback was gathered from these discussions and captured to inform an action plan going forward. Three themes across the discussions included:
- a) **Consistent messaging across the system and with families is required**
 - b) **Engagement of parents and families is key**
 - c) **The link to poverty is apparent – obesity cannot be seen or tackled as a single issue**
8. Attendees were asked what will make the biggest difference to tackling childhood obesity in Darlington. The word cloud below summarises the responses given:



Headline Actions and Next Steps

9. Based on the feedback from the partnership event, the following actions have been proposed to align with the priorities of the plan and to achieve a population approach to tackling the issue.

Cross Cutting Actions:

- 9.1 Develop and implement the 'Darlington Standard', engaging businesses to look at their children's food offer as the first step. This will include:
- No meal on the menu to go over the Recommended Daily Allowance for Children (calories, fat, sugar, salt)
 - Reducing portion sizes
 - Sugar content in drinks
 - Vending machine offer

This standard would be applied to private sector businesses, schools, local authority buildings and any premises serving food.

- 9.2 Implement a settings-based approach with commitment from all partners to take forward the actions of the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan:
- LEADERSHIP – commitment to the vision of the Plan
 - AWARENESS – consistency and promotion of key messages
 - MAKING EVERY CONTACT COUNT – across all services and key access points
 - ACTIVITIES – that support the promotion of positive health and wellbeing
- 9.3 Development of a strong and robust communications plan to deliver public facing consistent messages across organisations to support the objectives of the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan

Intelligence Gathering:

- 9.4 Map out contact points in Darlington from pre-birth throughout childhood to show opportunities for MECC, which partners need to be involved and current provision and gaps

Utilising the NCMP data to interrogate trends, map school location to demonstrate local picture and to better inform schools in their plans to tackle obesity

Food mapping – availability of hot food takeaways, food deserts and food swamps

Schools:

- 9.5 Work with schools to champion and develop a consistent approach with an ambition to embed the following across all schools:
- Daily Mile

- Healthy Catering – roll out of Healthy Point system and adoption of Darlington Standard as set out above
- Active Travel – adopt standard approach to promoting active travel to and from school

Partnership Working

- 9.6 Work with partners in regulatory services to explore options around takeaway restrictions, advertising, promoting active travel etc
10. An Engagement Group has been established with the first meeting held in December 2019. A core group of partners have agreed to take forward this work. The initial meeting reviewed the proposed actions and formally agreed next steps.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee:
- a. Note the update on the Darlington Childhood Healthy Weight Plan
 - b. Support the actions set out in the report to implement a whole systems approach to tackling obesity

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Date: 30.01.20