

## Healthy Weight Strategy Scrutiny Review

Present:

Councillors Hunter, Bamborough, Critchley, Roe, Thomas and Hoyle

In attendance:

Councillor Galley, Scrutiny Lead Member

Councillor Mark Smith, on behalf of Cabinet Member for Levelling Up (People)

Liz Petch, Nicky Dennison and Sharon Davis

There were no declarations of interest.

Nicky Dennison, Consultant in Public Health advised that worked had slowed on healthy weight due to the pandemic and the existing strategy was currently out of date. Obesity remained a key concern and was still prevalent in Blackpool and therefore required continued focus. It was noted that the strategy would link to a number of other strategies and a large amount of consultation had been undertaken in order to develop the strategy.

The priorities of the strategy were highlighted as:

- Supporting our children and young people develop, grow and to be a healthy weight
- Promoting healthier food and exercise choices across the town
- Help to provide food security for all Blackpool residents and enable them to manage and prepare food to provide nutritious meals cost-effectively
- Ensuring people have access to the right information and resources to make healthy choices that support effective weight management
- Promote and support active lifestyles, encourage the population to move more, including the use of public transport, cycling and walking
- Building healthier workplaces that support employees to move more, and to make healthier choices including active travel to support employees making healthier choices.

With the main outcomes identified as:

- Reduction in health inequalities that arise from being overweight and obesity
- Reduction on demand on health and social care arising from conditions/issues related to being overweight or obese
- Fewer people with longer term conditions as a result of excess weight
- Changes in the local activity and food related environment such as changes to travel, town planning etc. to address the obesogenic environment
- Improved offer of healthy food provision/options in public sector settings
- Expand the number of local businesses achieving the Healthier Catering Award
- Reduce the number of children arriving at primary school overweight or obese
- Reduce the increase of overweight and obese children from Reception to Year 6
- Increased breastfeeding rates, initiation and duration
- Increased number of babies receiving social foods at the recommended six months of age.

A number of the key actions of the strategy were discussed with the referrals to Slimming World highlighted and the uptake of the healthy start programme. It was important to shape and influence what people were eating, reduce intake of fizzy drinks and increase intake of water and milk, encourage walking to school and cycling more. Also to create healthier workplaces.

Members considered how work could be undertaken with local supermarkets to engage with them to support healthy eating, how to encourage people to cook for themselves and reduce reliance on convenience foods and educate people of all ages on the importance of healthy living. The costs of some fruits and vegetables in comparison to unhealthy snacks such as crisps and biscuits was highlighted.

The importance of ensuring people could own the strategy for themselves and ensure each service was responsible for progressing their own area of responsibility and it was noted that a Healthy Weight Strategy Group chaired by Councillor Farrell would receive regular progress updates. The strategy would also be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board with partners energized to make an impact.

In reference to marketing, it was noted that the Government had delayed the implementation of new restrictions until at least 2025 and that marketing had a large impact on people's buying habits. Ms Dennison advised that there were local actions that could be taken such as the restriction of advertising on Council owned spaces.

Breastfeeding was also discussed as a key issue and ensuring the town was breastfeeding friendly. It was noted that data on breastfeeding rates was collected and could therefore be monitored. All partners worked together to promote breastfeeding as the best start if possible.

It was agreed that the final strategy be circulated to Members once approved and that the Levelling Up Scrutiny Committee consider the implementation of the strategy and measure its success in due course.