

CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR HEALTHIER WEIGHT IN DEVON FOCUS ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Report of the Director of Public Health

Recommendation: that the Health and Wellbeing Board note and endorse the ongoing work to support a whole system approach to healthier weight for children, young people and families in Devon and support the formation of a partnership board/alliance to steer the work from January 2023.

1. Introduction

Obesity is a complex problem with multiple causes and significant implications for health and beyond. Whilst the majority of children and young people in Devon have a body weight within a healthy range, it is not the case for many and particularly so for those living in our more deprived areas.

The causes of obesity exist in the places where we live, work and play, where the food and built environment often makes it difficult to make healthier lifestyle choices. Poverty, mental health challenges and the current cost of living crisis, act to compound the issue. The pandemic brought the issue into even sharper focus. Those living with obesity were much more likely to experience severe illness, hospitalisation and death.

National and local action is needed, but there is no one solution. Uncoordinated, short-term and disparate efforts have failed to make impact in the past. Tackling such an ingrained problem requires a coordinated, collaborative and most importantly, sustained approach; one that makes obesity everybody's business, is tailored to local needs and works across the life course.

Local authorities are in a uniquely influential position to lead their communities and local partners to tackle excess weight through working with local NHS organisations through integrated care systems.

The attached presentation seeks to explain what work is happening to develop a system-wide response, working with partners in the three local authorities and the NHS to begin a long-term approach to creating the conditions children and young people need to live happy and healthy lives.

Steve Brown – Director of Public Health

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Health: Councillor James McInnes

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Background Paper: Nil