

## Annual Report of the Director of Public Health

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### Report of Gill O'Neill, Interim Director of Public Health, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council

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#### Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report asks the Health and Wellbeing Board to receive the 2015 annual report of the Director of Public Health for County Durham attached as Appendix 3.
- 2 It should be noted that this is the report of Anna Lynch who has now retired as Director of Public Health County Durham.

#### Background

- 3 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, one of the statutory requirements of each Director of Public Health is to produce an annual report about the health of the local population. The relevant local authority has a duty to publish the report. The government has not specified what the annual report might contain and has made it clear that this is a decision for individual Directors of Public Health to determine.
- 4 It is important to note that most data and information on the health status of the communities in County Durham is detailed in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment available on the Council's website. Further information on public health programmes can also be found in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Detailed information on health protection issues for County Durham residents is contained in a Public Health England report – Protecting the population of the North East from communicable diseases and other hazards – Annual Report 2014/15. This is available on request.
- 5 The 2015 Director of Public Health annual report focuses on tackling obesity and the action that needs to be taken by a range of organisations to reduce the impact on the health and wellbeing of communities. County Durham needs to work together to prevent the continuing rise in overweight and obesity, to understand the barriers our residents face and focus on how to support and enable them to live healthy and fulfilling lives. This report aims to develop an understanding of the issues and help create the collective action that is needed.
- 6 The annual report will be uploaded onto the council website and hard copies provided to a range of organisations and individuals including the County Durham clinical commissioning groups, NHS England, third sector organisations, foundation trusts, Public Health England, North of England Commissioning service etc. In addition, copies will be made available to the members library, to individual members (where requested), Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and officers.

7 The annual report recommendations are found in Appendix 2.

### **Recommendations**

8 The Health and Wellbeing Board is requested to:

- Receive the 2015 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, County Durham.
- Note that the report is used to inform commissioning plans, service developments and assessment of need to support a range of funding bids, particularly by third sector organisations.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

The publication of the report is funded by the ring fenced public health grant.

### **Staffing**

No impact

### **Risk**

No impact

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Universal approach with targeted interventions where required.

### **Accommodation**

No impact

### **Crime and Disorder**

No impact

### **Human Rights**

No impact

### **Consultation**

This is the independent report of the Director of Public Health and is not subject to consultation

### **Procurement**

No impact but should inform council commissioning plans in relation to services that impact on the health of the population

### **Disability Issues**

No impact

### **Legal Implications**

No impact

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## **Appendix 2 – Recommendations**

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### **Elected members**

Elected members have an influential role and could:

- Support the inclusion of changes that impact on obesity in appropriate strategies and plans. These plans may not always be directly about obesity but may still have an impact.
- Consider lobbying government over issues such as a sugar tax, or advertising restrictions on unhealthy foods and drinks aimed at children
- Think about championing a healthy diet and a more active lifestyle in your community. Does the local neighbourhood make it easy for everyone to be active? Are there plenty of places for children to play?

### **Employers**

Initiatives aimed at our workplaces may help to create a healthy and productive workforce.

Employers could:

- Promote physical activity in the workplace especially those aimed at every day activity e.g., use stairs not lifts.
- How healthy is your canteen? Is having a healthy choice enough or should the majority of the food provision be healthy? Do you promote healthy options?
- Is water readily available to drink? Are unhealthy drinks heavily promoted?
- Do all policies consider the impact upon the health of your workforce, customers or your community?
- Review your vending machine procurement.

### **Workplace canteens**

- Consider using the Government Buying Standard for Food and Catering, to improve quality and sustainability.
- How appropriate are the food portion sizes?
- Could you reduce the sugar content in the food and drinks you serve?
- How healthy or appropriate are your vending machines? Do they provide healthy alternatives?
- Is nutritional information available so that your colleagues can make informed choices about that they eat or drink?
- Can you promote healthier choices or initiatives such as the Change4life sugar swap or snack swap initiatives?

### **Health professionals**

All health professionals have a role in helping their patients to improve their health related behaviour.

- Midwives, GPs, health visitors, school nurses and their teams should provide information and advice to pregnant women and parents of young children about nutrition and physical activity for the whole family.
- Consider closer working with the public health team to explore all opportunities to tackle obesity.
- Health professionals should look at every contact with a patient as a health promoting opportunity and use this opportunity to provide guidance around healthier lifestyles and specifically around obesity.

## **Takeaways, cafes and local shops**

There is no reason why this sector cannot consider healthier options.

- Consider healthy catering standards and provide food labelling.
- Could you join with your local community in their efforts to make the healthy choice easier?
- Promote healthy options in partnership with local schools or workplaces
- Contact the public health team to explore opportunities to provide greater choice to your customers.

## **Child care settings**

All settings where children spend time such as schools, child-care settings, children's sports facilities and events should have healthy food environments.

- Ensure only healthy foods, beverages and snacks are consumed on the premises. Use water not juice.
- Champion being physically active and explore all opportunities for active play and learning.
- Use Change4Life and capitalise on the national approach to tackling obesity
- Involve parents and the wider community in healthy eating projects.

## **Social care and carers**

- Provide clear guidance and support to carers and service users around healthier nutrition.
- Ensure that staff have basic and current nutrition training.
- Promote all opportunities to be active.

## **Planning**

Planners have an important role in creating an environment that makes the healthy behaviour easier.

- New developments should create opportunities for physical activity.
- Ensure there are always opportunities for active travel such as cycling and walking routes.
- Explore how regulations and bye laws may help to make the healthy choice the easiest choice?

## **Procurement**

Procurement often influences and determines the choices people make.

- All establishments that provide food should consider healthy and sustainable food procurement.
- Consider the impact of policies that inadvertently promote unhealthy choices and make the healthy option difficult.

### **Area Action Partnerships, parents and communities**

There are many examples of communities that are making a real effort to improve health and wellbeing.

- Consider what you could champion in your local area.
- Could allotments or green places be used as a community garden to share skills and produce?
- Could you support your local school or community organisation in their efforts to make their environment healthier?
- Join Change4Life, the fun and friendly way to make the healthy choice.
- Work with local retailers to promote healthy options.
- Organised community events can promote healthier choices and options.