

Special Joint Children & Young People's and Adults, Wellbeing & Health Overview and Scrutiny Meeting



5th February 2018

Obesity - A presentation outlining the work of County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance

Report of Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Adult and Health Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide a contextual overview for the presentation focussing upon obesity to be delivered by Durham County Council Public Health team and County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance partners at the Special Joint Scrutiny Meeting on 5th February 2018.

Background

Obesity – the national and local context

- 2 The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave statutory duties for local authorities to take appropriate steps to improve the health of the population. This included developing interventions focused on healthy weight.
- 3 Obesity impacts upon people's lives. Across generations it affects our physical and mental health, our quality of life and our risk of developing chronic diseases. Obesity levels are rising nationally and locally, without action, the health of individuals will continue to suffer, health inequalities will remain and economic and social costs will increase to unsustainable levels. This will have profound long term consequences for the health and wellbeing of communities in County Durham.
- 4 The World Health Organisation regard childhood obesity as one of the most serious global health challenges of the 21st century. Whilst rates of excess weight and obesity in children in County Durham largely follow national trends our starting point was higher and our rates remain significantly worse than those of England. There is concern about the level of childhood obesity and the implications of such persisting into adulthood. Levels of overweight and obesity within child and adult populations across County Durham remain unacceptably high - doing nothing is not an option.
- 5 Obesity is a strategic priority for County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board. The Healthy Weight Alliance is accountable to the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board, and is County Durham's main partnership that is taking forward work around obesity. The overarching purpose of the Healthy Weight Alliance is to develop and improve strategic system wide partnerships that are committed to reducing the prevalence of obesity in County Durham.
- 6 Every year, as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), schoolchildren in reception (4-5 years) and year 6 (10-11 years) are weighed and measured to inform the planning and delivery of local services for children. Each



year around 11,000 County Durham children are included in the programme. Whilst in County Durham, rates of excess weight and obesity in children largely follow national trends, our starting point was higher and our rates remain significantly worse than those for England.



Figure 1: Excess weight in children, age 4-5 and 10-11, County Durham, 2016/17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.

Figure 2: Prevalence of excess weight and obesity in children aged 4-5 years and 10-11 years, County Durham and England, 2016/17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.

	4-5 years				10-11 years			
	excess weight	excess weight	Number obese	% obese	Number excess weight	% excess weight	Number obese	% obese
England		22.6%		9.6%		34.2%		20.0%
County Durham	1,381	24.1%	590	10.3%	2,024	37.7%	1,214	22.6%

	Significantly worse than England
	Not significantly different to England

Children aged 4-5

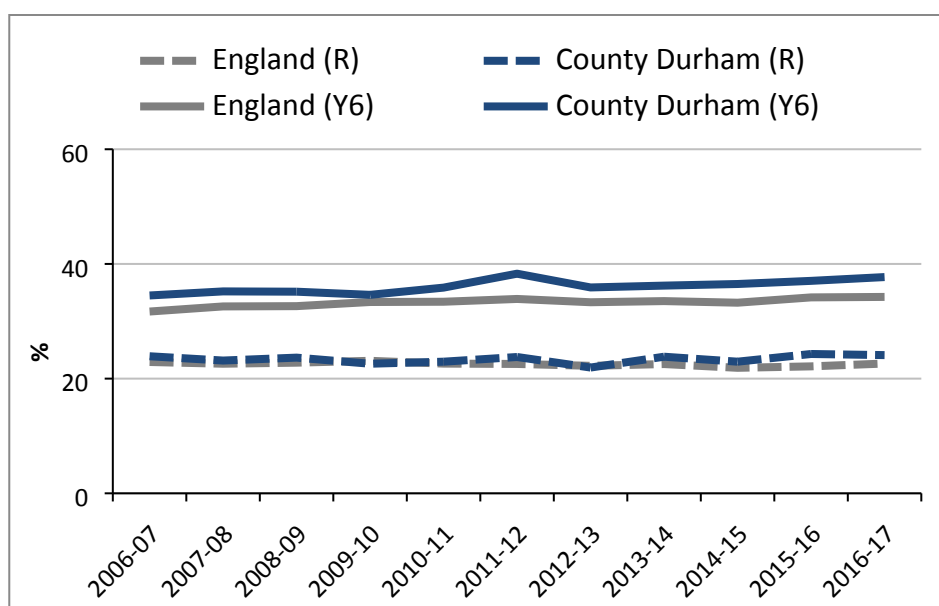
- Almost a quarter of children in County Durham aged 4-5 (24.1%) were measured as having excess weight in 2016/17 (figure 1 and 2). That is almost 1,400 children or 46 classrooms. Over 10% were measured as obese. That is almost 600 children or 20 classrooms (figure 2).
- Excess weight in children of reception age in County Durham is statistically significantly higher than England (figure 2).
- There has been little change in excess weight for 4-5 year olds over time locally (0.8%) compared to a slight decline nationally (-1.2%) (figure 3).

Children aged 10-11

- Over a third of children in County Durham aged 10-11 (37.7%) were measured as having excess weight (figure 1 and 2). That is over 2,000 children or 67 classrooms. Over 22% were measured as obese (figure 2). That is over 1,200 children, or 40 classrooms.

- Excess weight in children aged 10-11 in County Durham is statistically significantly worse than the England (figure 2).
- There has been a gradual increase in excess weight over time in County Durham (8.0%) and England (9.3%) (figure 3).

Figure 3: Prevalence of excess weight in children at reception and year 6, County Durham and England, 2006-07 to 2016-17. Source: NHS Digital, NCMP.



- Significantly worse than England
- Similar to England

As we know, there are many factors that contribute towards overweight and obesity. Other key indicators highlight the challenge of preventing this issue within County Durham.

Figure 4: Selected indicators related to excess weight in children. Source: Child Health Profiles, Fingertips, PHE.

		County Durham	North East	England
Low birth weight of term babies	2015	2.8	2.8	2.8
Breastfeeding initiation	2014/15	57.6	60.1	74.3
Breastfeeding prevalence 6/8 weeks	2015/16	28.1	31.4	43.2
Children in poverty (under 16s)	2014	23.9	24.9	20.1
Children with one or more decayed, missing or filled teeth	2014/15	35.1	28.0	24.8

●	Significantly worse than England
○	Not significantly different to England

A whole system approach to addressing obesity nationally and locally

- 7 The Government has stated its commitment to tackle obesity and is introducing a range of levers including a soft drinks industry levy and reducing the sugar content in foods. Locally the challenge is how we build upon national guidance, best practice and national developments to bring about real change within our local communities. In County Durham, the Healthy Weight Alliance is using national plans and guidance to influence from community and public sector levels to ensure we address this challenge together.
- 8 Obesity is not just a public health or health service challenge; it is underpinned by a large number of very different but often interlinked causes. Our work so far makes it clear that unhealthy weight impacts on every aspect of the work of the council and our stakeholders – on the environment, on local business, on how people use our public spaces, on individuals, their families and their communities.
- 9 The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence suggest that obesity needs to be tackled as a whole system - this is the overall strategic focus for County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance. Durham County Council was selected as one of only four pilot local authorities in England to take part in a major national programme, funded by Public Health England and delivered by Leeds Beckett University, which aims to create a whole system approach to obesity.
- 10 In County Durham work on this programme began at the end of 2015 and is continuing until autumn 2018. This programme focuses on working with the 4 Local Authorities within the pilot programme to explore their experiences and create a route map that is meaningful and feasible for Local Authorities, and which is workable for the specific circumstances of obesity. To maximise the use of good practice and share this learning more widely Leeds Beckett University are now beginning work with a further 6 Local Authorities to share the draft route map to gain more feedback and test out feasibility nationally.
- 11 In County Durham, work with Leeds Beckett University has identified a need for strategic actions that require multiple partners in order to encourage a system wide response. As a mechanism to progress this work, four strategic themes have been developed around; leading by example, give every child the best start in life, improving play and engaging the system.

The vision for County Durham

- 12 Our long term vision is that: ***in implementing and embedding this work we will halt the rise in obesity in County Durham by 2022 and, by focussing resources upon addressing inequalities, see a sustained decline in obesity rates locally to below England national average by 2025.***

The Healthy Weight Alliance presentation

13 Our presentation today will:

- a) highlight work that has been carried out and work that is planned across different age ranges and within a variety of different settings to address obesity at an individual behaviour change level and at environmental, structural and strategic levels.
- b) provide an insight into some of the challenges faced across County Durham in relation to obesity.
- c) set out our longer term and short & medium term goals going forward to achieve our County Durham vision
- d) provide members with '*Working towards a healthy weight in County Durham 2018*' This report is a follow up report to the 2015 Director of Public Health Report - '*Obesity - An issue too big to ignore... or too big to mention?*'

Recommendations and reasons

14 Members of the Children & Young People's and Adults, Wellbeing & Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees are requested to:

- (a) receive this report and continue to provide commitment to and support for the on-going work to address obesity across County Durham

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – N/A

Staffing – N/A.

Risk – N/A.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Our presentation today outlines work to date and work currently planned to address obesity within County Durham, undertaken by Durham County Council Public Health team and partners within County Durham Healthy Weight Alliance. This work aims to promote equality and diversity and seeks to reduce inequality and target resources in accordance with need.

Accommodation – N/A.

Crime and Disorder – N/A.

Human Rights – N/A.

Consultation – N/A.

Procurement – N/A.

Disability Issues – N/A.

Legal Implications – Legal advice will be sought if required