



**HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 11
NOVEMBER 2020**

**DEVELOPMENT OF A HEALTHY WEIGHT STRATEGY FOR
LEICESTERSHIRE**

**REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH.**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek views of the committee on the new proposed healthy weight strategy for Leicestershire. This forms part of the consultation process.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment chapter on Obesity: Physical Activity, Healthy Weight and Nutrition was published in September 2019. One of the recommendations was to develop a healthy weight strategy for Leicestershire that adopts a whole systems approach across the life-course.
3. The healthy weight strategy also forms part of the Leicestershire Food Plan which was endorsed by Cabinet on the 18 December 2018.
4. A draft framework for the healthy weight strategy was presented to Cabinet on the 20th October 2020. Cabinet approved the draft for consultation.

Background

5. More than half (61%) of adults and a third (30%) of year 6 primary school children living in Leicestershire are overweight or obese. Overweight and obesity is more common in socio-economically disadvantaged communities and is associated with many long-term conditions. There is emerging evidence that people with a high body mass index are more at risk of developing complications of Covid-19.
6. The economic burden of overweight/obesity is significant across England. The NHS spends £6.1bn per year on obesity-related ill health,

local government spends and estimated £0.35bn in social care costs and the cost to the wider UK economy is around £27bn.

7. There is considerable evidence that obesity is a complex issue that requires a complex system response, where all sectors work together, with the public, to address it. The draft strategy outlines an approach that brings together responsibilities of the private and public sectors and the general public, to tackle obesity and help people maintain a healthy weight. This is Leicestershire's 'whole systems approach'.

Structure of the strategy

8. The Leicestershire-wide strategy is divided into three themes and 5 objectives and will run over a 5-year period.
9. Theme 1 addresses action that tackles the obesogenic environment that we live in

Strategic Objective 1: to improve the awareness and the availability of healthy and sustainable food and drink in all sectors. For example, promoting the accreditation of food and catering business through 'Food For Life Served Here';

Strategic Objective 2: to support settings to prevent obesity and increase healthy weight in adults, children and families. For example, through the Leicestershire Healthy Schools programme;

10. Theme 2 addresses action that focuses on providing individuals with the information and support they need to manage their own weight and that of their families

Strategic Objective 3: to co-ordinate a healthy weight pathway which includes prevention, self-management and weight management support. For example, increasing uptake of the Leicestershire Weight Management Service;

11. Theme 3 addresses leadership by partner organisations (e.g. NHS, districts) to ensure that the wider workforce is equipped to promote healthy weight and that policies are conducive to healthy weight

Strategic Objective 4: develop workforces that are confident and competent talking about and promoting healthy weight. For example training more professionals in Making Every Contact Count;

Strategic Objective 5: Working with partners and stakeholders to support the development of a whole systems approach to healthy weight, using for example the Leicestershire Food plan partnership work.

Consultation

12. An 8-week public consultation will take place from 2 November to 27 December 2020. This will include a series of targeted online focus groups with weight management service users and members of the equalities challenge group and an online questionnaire-based consultation.
13. Findings from the consultation will be used to inform the final strategy that will be taken to Cabinet in Spring 2021.

Background Papers

14. Cabinet 20th October 2020
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/leListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5998&Ver=4>
15. Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018-22
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/about-the-council/council-plans/the-strategic-plan>
16. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2018:21 Obesity: physical activity, healthy weight and nutrition.
<https://www.lsr-online.org/uploads/obesity-physical-activity-healthy-weight-and-nutrition.pdf?v=1568369427>
17. Leicestershire Good Food Plan and Good Food Leicestershire Charter
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s143186/LCC%20Cabinet%20report%20Leicestershire%20Food%20Charter.pdf>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

18. None

Officer to Contact

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List of Appendices

21. Appendix A Draft healthy weight strategy

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

22. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Group has been established and will run alongside the development of the Strategy. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) screening was undertaken and concluded that there are several positive impacts on protected characteristic groups including age, pregnancy and maternity, community cohesion and deprived communities.
23. However, there were three protected characteristics groups identified as having possible barriers to benefits from the Strategy:
 - i. Disability: people with disabilities (including those with learning disabilities, dementia and cognitive impairment) may have additional communication needs. Adaptations may be needed to enable these groups to access services outlined in this strategy. This is particularly relevant given the high levels of obesity in those with learning disabilities. Physical disabilities may also limit people engaging in active travel.
 - ii. Race and also religion or belief: people will be supported in this strategy regardless of race and religion or belief. However, culture/ethnicity-specific diets need to be considered. Barriers to accessing support and services may include language/communication difficulties and cultural acceptability. Some groups e.g. South Asian communities have a higher risk of diabetes and these additional needs require consideration. Additional interventions and considerations may be needed when engaging with some of our communities.
24. These are key areas of development for the Strategy and consultation will enable a better understanding of any potential barriers/disadvantages in these groups, help to identify ways to mitigate these, and strengthen support for these groups in the Strategy. A full EHRIA will also be completed during the development of the final Strategy.