

Date:	14 th July 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Tackling Childhood Obesity Together
Report of:	Eva Hrobonova, Deputy Director of Public Health
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Tackling childhood obesity is a key priority within Better City, Better Lives.
Financial Summary:	Overall cost of programme and services to tackle childhood obesity in Westminster is £1.2m per annum.
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 London has the highest rate of childhood obesity of any major global city. Obesity impairs lives and presents a major challenge to health and wellbeing as well as public services. It is associated with an increased risk of premature mortality in adults as well as poor health and development and poor educational attainment in children. The causes of obesity are multi-factorial - there is no single effective solution. The government's obesity strategy¹ recognises that local government "is uniquely well placed" to lead the drive to reduce obesity given that each community has different characteristics and problems that are best addressed at a local level.
- 1.2 The Tackling Childhood Obesity Together (TCOT) programme is a whole-council approach and cross-department commitment to tackle childhood obesity to deliver a healthier environment in Westminster. Obesity impairs lives and presents a major challenge to health and wellbeing. It is associated with an increased risk of premature mortality in adults as well as poor health and development and poor educational attainment in children.

¹ HM Government Department of Health Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England (2011)

1.3 The aim of this programme is to halt and reverse the rising trend in childhood obesity. A strong focus is on the development of a whole-council partnership prevention approach to reduce the obesogenic environment in Westminster. The attached report outlines the three strands of the programme:

- Family healthy weight services - the substantial investment into and implementation of new equitable and effective family healthy weight services for families and children including a care pathway, workforce training and referral toolkit for families and professionals.
- Westminster Council whole system approach - working with internal partners within Westminster City Council (WCC) and external partners across Westminster to change the environment so that healthy choices become easy choices for residents.
- Community healthy lifestyle pilot - a community-led healthy lifestyle pilot project focusing on the ward of Golborne in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

All of the above are underpinned by on-going research, evaluation and evidence.

2. Key Matters for the Board

2.1 The Board is asked to:

- Note the progress of the programme outlined in the paper and the attached report (Appendix B);
- Note the whole-Council approach and suggest opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration and commitment to delivering a healthier environment in Westminster; and
- Consider and agree the annual report included as Appendix B.

3. Background

3.1 Childhood obesity presents a major challenge to health and wellbeing and is associated with an increased risk of premature mortality in adults as well as poor health and development in children. Childhood obesity also impacts on mental wellbeing including increasing the risk of low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, bullying and poor educational attainment. Problems related to overweight and obesity tend to start in childhood and often disproportionately affect disadvantaged socio-economic groups.

3.2 Preventing and treating childhood obesity requires a comprehensive approach including:

- Early intervention/prevention services that support children and families to maintain a healthy weight (as assessed using body mass index (BMI) calculations);
- Targeted lifestyle weight management services for overweight and obese children, young people and families; and
- A coherent, community-wide, multi-agency approach that addresses the obesogenic environment and supports behaviour change, integrated within broader regeneration and environmental strategies as well as other health improvement work.

3.4 Our approach crosses the whole system of our society, its environment and its culture and involves a partnership between local government, the NHS and the science, business and community sectors. It encompasses all children and family public health services relevant to nutrition provided previously across the three boroughs such as Healthy Start and Healthier Catering. We work particularly closely with relevant partner services such as Healthy Schools, School Nursing and Health Visiting to maximise effect and avoid duplication of effort.

3.5 The “Tri-borough Childhood Obesity Programme on a page” is attached as Appendix B.

4. Options / Considerations

4.1 Effective action to tackle childhood obesity is vital to prevent harm and govern resources wisely. The council’s statutory responsibility for improving the health and wellbeing of residents is a collective responsibility. It requires a new way of working involving improved coordination and joint working across all departments.

4.2 Investment into family healthy lifestyle behaviour change services to support and motivate families to embrace change must be supported by wider societal and environmental changes to enable families to sustain the newly learned behaviours and to make healthy choices easy choices.

4.3 Commissioned services to reduce the prevalence of obesity in the City by helping children, young people and their families to eat healthier and be more active, have been in place since September 2016:

- **Prevention and weight management programmes for children and families:**

delivered in schools and various community settings including children’s centres and health care settings. These include:

- MEND Mini and MEND Mums - a universal tier-one parent and child obesity prevention course to assist children aged up to four to maintain a healthy BMI.

- MEND 5-7 and MEND 7-13 - an accessible tier-two family healthy lifestyle child weight management course to assist children and young people aged between five and 12, who are on or above the 91st BMI centile, to reach and maintain a healthier BMI.
- MEND in Schools - an intensive programme of activities for primary schools whose pupils have a higher risk of obesity involving all children in years one and four and their parents.
- **Policy and workforce development:**
To improve healthy choices in settings and empower the children's workforce and other relevant frontline staff to understand their role in and improve skills to address the obesity issue with clients. The majority of work is currently happening in schools and early years settings but the programme is also branching out into community settings.

4.4 109 families have participated in MEND courses across the three boroughs in the first four months of the service running (September - December 2015). Nine schools in Westminster (reaching 538 children) have been engaged to participate in MEND to date. This should increase to 1,100 children being reached through Westminster schools by September 2016. Up to the end of January 2016 workforce training has been delivered to 228 people across the three boroughs and MyTime Active has worked with 24 schools, supporting them to improve the health of their food offering. All services are being closely monitored and evaluated.

4.5 The whole council approach to tackling an obesogenic environment aims to work gradually with every council department to consolidate and strengthen activities that contribute to the prevention of childhood obesity by:

- Understanding work already underway across the Council that contributes to preventing childhood obesity;
- Identifying actions to be included in departmental business plans to deliver the corporate strategy;
- Understanding the areas where the council currently has limited control or opportunity to influence; and
- Identifying opportunity areas for further development.

4.6 The approach described below has been developed initially in Westminster before it is taken forward elsewhere. The approach includes:

- Food growing and education - pilot food growing projects in two schools and a housing estate in a regeneration area;

- Increasing physical activity - working with priority schools to engage with the school sports development team; and
- The Healthier Catering Commitment - working with food premises to improve the nutritional content and quality of their food.

Food growing

Three different food growing schemes have taken place in Westminster. They aim to develop sustainable and well-utilised garden resources to grow fresh produce and improve skills as well as knowledge and confidence in food growing, with a particular focus on children and families. Building on the success of these school and estate-based projects, options are currently being considered to develop a City-wide food growing programme.

Physical activity

The Public Health department, in collaboration with WCC's Sports, Leisure and Wellbeing team, has worked to maximise physical activity opportunities for children, with a particular focus on areas in the borough with higher levels of deprivation and obesity. This includes:

- Ensuring children have access to at least one hour of physical activity a day (part of the Active Westminster Strategy (2015-2020)).
- A range of competitive opportunities have been made available to primary and secondary schools, including festivals and multi-skill fun days that promote engagement and participation in physical activity.

Future plans include the strengthening of links to the Healthy Schools Partnership programme to develop individual school physical action plans, engagement with partners within the council and its external networks to scope the possibility of developing a 'Westminster Standard' for participation in PE and school sport and further development of the Active Westminster passport scheme to engage more children from target areas.

Healthy Catering Commitment

The Healthier Catering Commitment aims to support food businesses to make straightforward changes to ingredients and preparation techniques in order to offer healthier food to customers.

To date, 19 businesses have successfully achieved Healthier Catering Commitment status and their efforts to serve healthier food were recognised at an awards ceremony at Westminster City Hall on 23rd February 2016.

Support will continue to be offered to all businesses signed up to the scheme with a target of awarding a further 20 businesses with the Healthier Catering Commitment award in 2016/2017. Monitoring reviews will also be incorporated

into future food hygiene inspections for those businesses that have been awarded to ensure they are maintaining their commitment. The introduction of a tiered scheme will be explored to encourage businesses to achieve the highest standard.

- 4.7 It is our intention that the TCOT programme is, where possible, evidence-based and that when evidence is lacking, the programme will generate evidence locally. With this in mind, we are piloting different approaches in different boroughs and using our learning to inform practice as the programme progresses.
- 4.8 To this effect and in addition to the above mentioned commissioned services and the whole council approach a bespoke pilot project has been initiated in the Golborne ward of RBKC to test a system-wide multi-strategy approach to tackling childhood obesity with the view of establishing a transferrable model of effective community-based intervention.
- 4.9 To ensure quality assurance of our innovative programme we have applied for and become the first local authority in England to gain membership of the prestigious EPODE European network of cities and places that systematically address childhood obesity. This membership offers learning and networking opportunities that enrich our programme and establishes our reputation as a City that systematically addresses one of the most pressing global public health issues.

5. Legal Implications

N/A

6. Financial Implications

An annual budget of £1.2million has been assigned by WCC Public Health to the programme to finance the behaviour change commissioned services, to temporarily support other council departments in extending/initiating their work on tackling childhood obesity and to ensure appropriate evaluation and dissemination of the programme results.

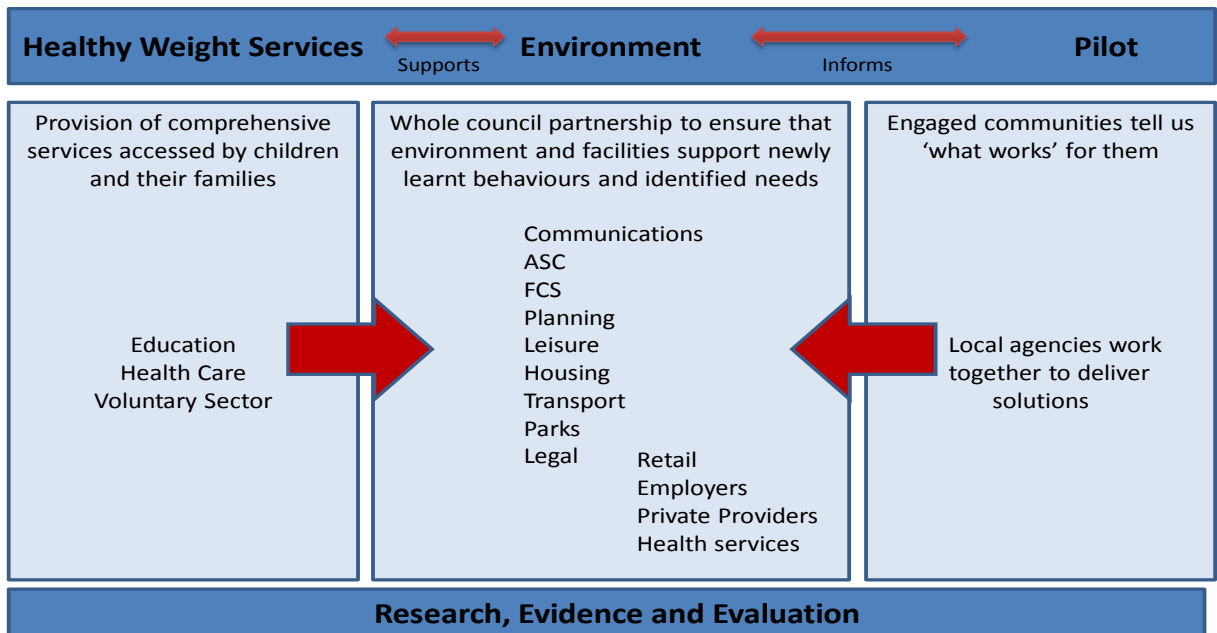
If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:

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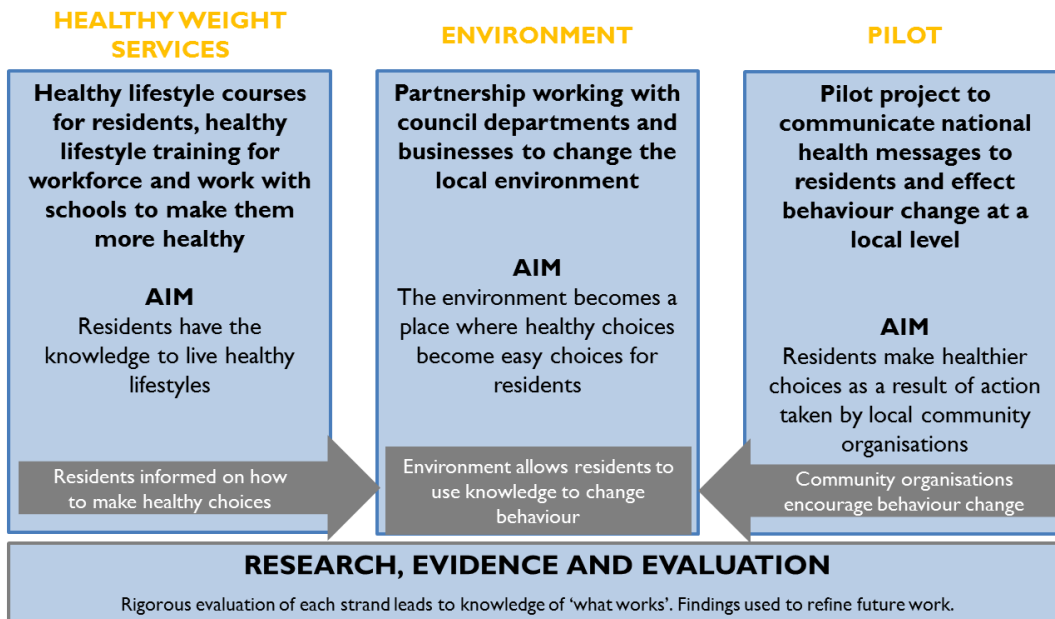
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Appendix A: Tackling Childhood Obesity Together Programme - design for the integrated whole council approach



Appendix B: Tackling Childhood Obesity in the Tri-borough Programme – the three strands of TCOT

THE THREE STRANDS OF TCOT



AIM: REDUCE THE RISING TREND IN CHILDHOOD OBESITY

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix C - One year on, TCOT annual report 2015/16