



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Health and Wellbeing Board

Thursday 21 March 2024

Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Strategy 2024-2029

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Kelly Middleton - Cabinet Member: Healthy, Safer & Stronger Communities & Partnerships	
Lead Director:	Liz Noakes - Director: Health & Wellbeing	
Service Area:	Health & Wellbeing	
Report Author:	Becky Procter – Senior Public Health Practitioner Louise Mills – Service Delivery Manager Health Improvement	
Officer Contact Details:	Tel: 01952 383108	Email: becky.procter@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards	
Key Decision:	Key Decision	
Forward Plan:	Yes	
Report considered by:	SMT - 20 February 2024 Health and Wellbeing Board - 21 March 2024	

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

The Board is asked to:

- 1.1 Approve the Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Strategy 2024-2029.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 This report introduces the new Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Strategy 2024-2029 (Appendix A)

3.0 Background

- 3.1 There are above average levels of people who are overweight or living with obesity across Telford and Wrekin. 1 in 4 children are overweight by the time they start school, which rises to 2 in 5 children before they leave primary school. The rate of 'severe obesity' in reception aged children in Telford and Wrekin is within

the top 10 highest rates across the whole country. Children who are overweight or living with obesity are likely to be overweight in their adult life, which is represented as over 70% of adults across the borough are overweight.

- 3.2 Being overweight or living with obesity negatively impacts an individual's physical and mental health. It is a risk factor for many illnesses such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. People who are overweight are more likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety. Residents living within our most deprived areas or already experiencing health inequalities are more likely to be overweight.
- 3.3 As well as negatively impacting individual's lives, the cost of obesity is a significant burden to our health and social care systems – costs for housing adaptations, specialised equipment and carer provision will continue to increase as levels of obesity increase and our population ages.
- 3.4 Tackling obesity is a key priority within Telford and Wrekin's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Development and delivery of a local strategy solely dedicated to healthy weight will drive forward this priority. Healthy weight also contributes to other priorities, including mental health and wellbeing; prevent, protect and detect; green and sustainable borough; and integrated neighbourhood health and care.
- 3.5 The Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Strategy takes a whole systems approach to tackling obesity where system partners take joined up action to improving outcomes for our residents. As the causes of obesity are complex and varied, there is no single quick solution. This five-year strategy looks at medium to long term solutions that contribute to this vision.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

- 4.1 The strategy was developed through needs assessment and engagement with the public and professionals. The Healthy Weight Needs Assessment (Appendix B) includes a collection of key indicators that allows us to identify priority groups and wards to target. Views of members of the public and stakeholders were sought through a survey of over 1000 people and 25 focus groups. The views were representative of the borough's population.
- 4.2 A number of themes were identified through the needs assessment and engagement, and four key priorities have emerged.
- 4.3 *Supporting our children to grow into a healthy weight* – Parents have stated that they would like our children to have the opportunity to take part in regular physical activity as well as trying new healthy foods and learning simple cooking skills. Outside of the home, children spend most of their time at school, making the role of schools vitally important.

- 4.4 *Promoting a healthier food environment including healthy settings* – Many people find it challenging to eat healthily because we are living in environments where unhealthy foods, with high amounts of sugar, salt and fat are readily available. Engagement with professionals identified a ‘food as reward’ culture amongst our public settings, schools, across the services we deliver and our workplaces. Organisations should work together to create healthier food environments, particularly in settings where residents spend a lot of their time.
- 4.5 *Creating opportunities for all* – There are groups and communities who face barriers to accessing services to support healthy weight. From engagement with our residents, we know that many people lack motivation, and perceive time and cost as main challenges to becoming a healthy weight. Ensuring that our services are fit for purpose and accessible to all groups, will help to address this, along with targeted support for our under-represented populations.
- 4.6 *Empowering system partners* – Working as a whole system is recognised to collectively address health challenges such as obesity. Only two thirds of professionals working with residents feel confident to support others with their weight, and many feel that their own weight impacts their ability to support others. System partners should collectively adopt messages and language to support healthy weight and reduce conflicting information.
- 4.7 These four priorities are underpinned by a *Whole Systems Approach*. Using Public Health England methodology and framework, the strategy will focus on ensuring all system partners are working in an aligned way to promote healthy weight across our residents and workforce. Tackling obesity is everyone’s business – there is no single individual, group or organisation that can do this alone.
- 4.8 The Strategy document includes a series of 31 commitments across the four priorities. A detailed action plan and a set of key performance indicators are being developed to monitor the implementation and progress of the strategy over the next five years.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 None

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 Contribution in terms of time and resource from system partners is key for the delivery of a whole systems approach. Conflicting priorities from partners may risk the delivery of the Healthy Weight Strategy commitments and action plan. The risk will be monitored through regular reporting to the Telford and Wrekin Integrated Place Partnership (TWIPP) and Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 6.2 Through engagement with members of the public, we recognise that motivation is the main challenge for people to achieve a healthy weight. Regular communications and campaigns will be delivered throughout the course of the strategy to support behaviour change of individuals, groups and organisations.
- 6.3 Easy access to unhealthy foods is also a challenge for people to achieve a healthy weight. Fast food outlets are more densely populated within areas of deprivation, where levels of overweight and obesity are highest. Creating healthier food environments within these areas where less healthier environments are existing may present difficulties.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The Healthy Weight Strategy will make a significant contribution to all of the Council Priorities:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
- Our natural environment is protected, and the Council is taking a leading role in tackling the climate emergency
- A community-focused, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The actions and recommendations proposed in the report require the input of system partners and multiple funding sources. For the Council the recommendations proposed will be delivered from existing Council budgets and known sources of funding. Where there is cause to source additional funding for initiatives this will be proposed through the appropriate governance route for each organisation.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 Section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 places a duty on local authorities to improve the health of people in its area, this includes providing services or facilities designed to promote healthy living.
- 9.2 The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) is a mandated annual programme delivered by local authorities to all school children in reception and year 6. Delivering the NCMP programme provides the local authority with vital information on the health needs of the local area, to support planning of key services to tackle obesity.
- 9.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes it clear that local planning authorities have a responsibility to promote healthy communities. Local authorities

are required by law to publish an annual monitoring report. This is an opportunity for planning and public health colleagues to work together to ensure appropriate and important information is recorded.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 The Healthy Weight Needs Assessment provides better understanding of priority ward areas for obesity and wider determinants, which will support a data driven approach for interventions.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 Healthy Weight is a specific priority in the Telford & Wrekin Council Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

11.2 Healthy Weight also factors in other priorities identified in the Health & Wellbeing strategy, especially mental health and wellbeing; prevent, protect and detect; green and sustainable borough; integrated neighbourhood health and care.

11.3 Obesity related health problems including asthma, musculoskeletal problems and type 2 diabetes can start within children and worsen as they move through their life course and become adults. People living with obesity are more at risk of developing illnesses such as cancer and heart disease and are likely to live fewer years than people who are a healthy weight.

11.4 The cost of treating ill health and conditions relating to obesity have place a significant cost burden on our economy, particularly within health and social care.

11.5 Healthy Weight features in The NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System Joint Forward Plan. The NHS long term plan has a strong focus on prevention and health inequalities, with obesity featuring as a key programme area.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 Individuals and groups living within our most deprived areas and experiencing inequalities including health inequalities are more likely to be overweight or living with obesity. A number of priority population groups to support with healthy weight initiatives have been identified to help close the inequalities gap. Equality impact assessments (including the Health Equality Assessment Tool) will be utilised within the strategy's commitments and appropriate actions will be incorporated to address any equality and diversity issues.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 The Healthy Weight Strategy will positively impact our environment and climate change, for example, active travel initiatives reduce fuel emissions.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 PHE Whole Systems Approach to Obesity: [Whole systems approach to obesity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whole-systems-approach-to-obesity)

15.0 Appendices

- A Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Strategy Draft 2024 – 2029
- B Telford and Wrekin Healthy Weight Needs Assessment 2023

16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Legal	15/02/2024	29/02/2024	KF/RP
Finance	15/02/2024	05/03/2024	RP
Director	19/01/2024	13/02/2024	LN