

Healthy Weight Scrutiny Review

**A report produced for the
Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny
Committee**

February 2020 Final Report

Contents

Working Group.....	2
Workshop Attendance	4
Workshop Findings	5
Key Actions Informed by the Workshops	10
Recommendations	12
Appendix 1. Supporting Documents - Workshop one.....	13
Appendix 2 – Supporting Documents – Workshop two	17
Appendix 3 – Supporting Documents - Workshop three.....	22
Appendix 4 - Scrutiny Review Scoping Document.....	27

Working Group

At the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting in February 2019, Members agreed to form a working group to identify priority actions to enable healthy weight among Wirral's children, young people and families. Three Members were selected from across the political groups to work in collaboration with a scrutiny officer and two members of the Public Health team to explore local drivers of unhealthy weight among children and families and identify priority areas for action.



Councillor Wendy Clements (Chair) – Conservative



Councillor Chris Carubia – Liberal Democrat



Councillor Chris Cooke – Green Party

In recognition of the complex causes of obesity, members of the working group resolved to engage multiagency stakeholders in three workshops during November and December 2019. This '[whole systems approach](#)' is consistent with national recommendations. The three workshop themes were selected to broadly capture the local drivers of obesity.

20th November 2019 - *Enabling Healthy Weight through Affordable, Accessible & Active Travel*

3rd December 2019 – *The Role of the Food System in Enabling Healthy Weight*

17th December 2019 – *Enabling Healthy Weight Through Environments*

Workshop Attendance

In total, over the three workshops we engaged a total 87 delegates from across 53 organisations. The following organisations were represented in at least one of the workshops: Wirral Council (Public Health, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Leisure, Sustainability, Transport, Planning, Early Years Services), Wirral Community NHS Trust (Infant Feeding, 0-19 Services, Diabetes and Dietetics), Magenta Housing, Merseyside Police, Weight Watchers, Nursery Providers, Cancook, Edsential School Caterers, the Department of Work and Pensions, Public Health England, Merseytravel, EcoSchools, Living Streets, Home Start Wirral, Food Active, Wirral Allotments Society, Merseyside Sport Partnership, Tranmere Rovers Football Club, Wirral Environmental Network, the Wirral Active Travel Forum, Community Action Wirral, Wirral Youth Parliament, Together All Are Able (community organisation run by and for disabled people in Wirral), and Rethink Now (local community organisation championing sustainability). Unfortunately, no representatives from major supermarket chains, Wirral Food Bank, or local primary/secondary schools were able to attend these workshops.

Workshop Findings

Key observations that emerged during the facilitated sessions included:

1. SILOED WORKING ACROSS THE SYSTEM

Delegates believed that local initiatives were fragmented with no central coordination or collaboration across organisations to join up approaches or learn from best practice. Delegates identified the need for a network to unite stakeholders with interest or influence in the healthy weight agenda. This network was seen as a means of strengthening and unifying collective action to promote healthy weight across the local system, to maximise shared resources and reduce duplication. The value of involving youth voices in this group was emphasised.

2. THE RELEVANCE OF THE WIDER DETERMINANTS OF HEALTHY WEIGHT

Delegates identified a need to ensure that local recommendations are sensitive to the wider determinants of healthy weight, rather than focused downstream on the individual. The key wider determinants identified during the workshops are described below:

- i) **FOOD POVERTY** (defined as the inability to obtain healthy, affordable food) can compromise achievement of healthy weight within deprived communities locally. Food poverty may be driven by a lack of accessible, affordable shops selling healthy food; lack of knowledge about what constitutes a healthy diet; or lack of skills to create healthy meals. Food sits at the heart of many social challenges: health inequalities, food poverty, carbon emissions - all of which have a direct or indirect negative impact on the wellbeing and sustainability of our communities.

Some delegates highlighted previous achievements made under the [Better Food Wirral](#) brand, initiated by the Public Health Team at Wirral Council. Better Food Wirral aimed to unite residents, food businesses, community organisations, local government and health institutions to work together to change the local food system. One of the key findings from related insight work was that food is not always the main priority for residents.

The use of the Wirral Foodbank has increased in recent years, however some delegates noted that the Foodbank does not routinely supply healthy food, or a range of ingredients sufficient to make a full meal. A number of delegates talked about strengthening links between food banks and social supermarkets by looking at a formal referral system to social supermarkets that includes a focus on education to ensure cookery classes etc. are provided for those who need it. Facilitating community events that promote cooking classes to make food education fun and accessible was also discussed alongside promoting healthy frozen meals over processed convenience foods.

Whilst free school meals are available across Wirral, uptake is inconsistent, and some delegates raised concerns about the stigma associated with accepting free school meals. There was some discussion on the variability on portion sizes across educational settings and the need for this to be consistent.

Some of the participants talked about how cooking facilities, such as school kitchens and ovens in takeaway establishments, could be used by local communities. However, there did appear to be challenges associated with this regarding health and safety.

Some participants discussed optimising social currency by introducing a 'Pride of the Borough' local loyalty card scheme. Delegates acknowledged the challenge of reaching large-scale national food providers and believed that local retailers may be more invested in optimising the health of our local community. Providing discounts/rewards through a local loyalty scheme may encourage people to shop locally.

- ii) **ACTIVE TRAVEL** was identified as a means of promoting healthy weight among children and families, and reducing emissions contributing to poor air quality and climate change. Lobbying and campaigning, targeting employers, the Local Authority and busy families, were explored through discussions.

Participants spoke of finding ways to make active travel the 'easy option' for families. Some of the barriers to active travel discussed were affordability and accessibility of public transport. Decreasing the cost of public transport for young people through the provision of free travel passes was suggested. There was

some discussion around how to make bikes more affordable and how to engage local agencies to re-introduce cycling proficiency training.

Some participants described local transport links as poor, with bus services late, inconsistent and expensive. For some, the fact that local transport inadequately serviced the leisure centres perpetuated accessibility issues, especially for those who were elderly or disabled. Some delegates suggested that the parking levy should be invested into developing local transport options, especially for children and families.

A number of participants talked about the benefits of incentivised active travel programmes for employers, and how this could be sustained through the borough and reflected in the 2025 Wirral Council plan. A council employee incentivised programme was discussed to reward the use of active travel, for example refunding mileage at increased rate or providing allowances/benefits. Flexible working was proposed as a way to encourage 'smarter' travel for families. However, it was noted that flexible working is inconsistent both within and across local organisations.

Council enforced initiatives were described by some participants as a behaviour change enabler. Some examples that were given included no parking zones outside schools, anti-idling enforcement, and promoting the clean air campaign to encourage families to walk, bike and scoot to school.

Understanding the local leisure offer and how it fits with local need was debated. Health walks and cycling projects are now delivered as a leisure offer but further exploration into the success of these initiatives with local people is required.

- iii) **EMPLOYMENT** - Employers have considerable influence on maintaining healthy communities. Delegates acknowledged the benefits of employer-initiated health and wellbeing initiatives, such as flexible working to assist with active travel (as discussed under active travel section) and access to healthy food and fitness programmes in the workplace. Removing vending machines from all council settings was suggested by some delegates. However, this was also seen as a thorny issue given the income generating capacity.

The importance of employment standards to promote healthy weight was discussed, with some delegates reporting that suboptimal pay and career opportunities, or short-term or zero hours work contracts may negatively impact productivity and mental health of employees.

Challenges of maintaining a healthy weight may disproportionately impact unemployed families, due to competing life stresses and affordability of healthy food. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) offer education on budgeting and food waste as part of their budgeting support for Universal Credit Recipients.

- iv) **HOUSING** – Housing location influences access to healthy food choices, and access to green spaces and public transport to enable active travel. Housing providers also play a key role in supporting healthy weight locally. Locally, Magenta Housing run food poverty initiatives and are supportive active lives through promotions such as the pedometer challenge.

- v) **ENVIRONMENT** - Wirral benefits from numerous parks, beaches, green spaces and allotments, which may encourage families to be active in the local environment. However, delegates noted that these spaces are not universally accessible, affordable or acceptable to all. For example, there is currently a long waiting list to access Wirral allotments, with a cost involved in renting the space. Similarly, poor street lighting or high levels of crime may represent barriers to spending time outdoors in certain neighbourhoods.

Some delegates felt that more could be done to promote physical activity and healthy eating, and the role of local businesses to create environments supportive of healthy weight was discussed (for example, through adopting breastfeeding friendly status).

Delegates acknowledged that local action on healthy weight should be sensitive to the wider climate emergency, in terms of food waste and sustainable practice. Delegates specifically highlighted a need to:

- a. Talk to supermarkets about food waste and encourage donations to food banks.
- b. Reduce stigma around free food services to reduce waste.
- c. Promotion of simple message, such as sugar swaps (Change 4 Life national campaign).
- d. Educate children and families about links between food choices and recycling, waste, air miles and single use plastics in the context of the climate emergency.

3. THE VALUE OF THE WORKSHOP FOR DELEGATES

All delegates who completed an evaluation form following the workshops reported that the workshops were beneficial, particularly in highlighting current healthy weight initiatives underway locally and to establish connections across organisations. Delegates identified the value of initiating a network for sharing local initiatives and success and driving collective action forward.

Key Actions Informed by the Workshops

Collectively, the three workshops identified the following action points to take forward:

1. INFORM, EDUCATE AND EMPOWER

- Work in partnership with local schools to implement [Healthy Schools rating scheme](#) to standardise healthy food provision and cookery education, with emphasis on budgeting, waste, and meal planning.
- Lobby for food labelling to clearly state the nutritional value.
- Implement a borough wide vending machine policy to increase healthy content.
- Facilitate peer to peer support to enable cookery, budgeting, waste and meal planning.
- Enable 'Edible Playgrounds' (allotments) in all primary and secondary schools.
- Actively engage children, young people and families through both existing forums and reaching out into communities/settings.
- Build the confidence and knowledge of health care professionals to deliver patient-centred care and support to overweight and obese residents.

2. SHAPE THE LOCAL PLAN to encourage healthy weight within the local environments. As the council moves forward with key regeneration projects, access to green space, leisure facilities, active travel and healthy food choices should be a key consideration. Specific recommendations include:

- Undertaking an accessibility audit for cycle/ foot paths to ensure they are accessible and safe for children and families.
- Lobbying for improved local infrastructure, especially in terms of better and cheaper bus routes.
- Ensuring adequate street lighting to encourage families to make the most of their local neighbourhoods.
- Prioritising the delivery of pedestrianised high streets and urban areas to encourage safe active travel.

- Remove barriers to accessing green spaces for young people and families.
- Ensure leisure facilities promote a 'family first' approach, incorporating health and wellbeing considerations into family activities based on community needs, and prioritising healthy food options.
- Ensure play areas are well maintained, safe, well-lit and accessible for children and families.
- Work with local businesses and retailers to offer free drinking water across the borough.
- Make Wirral a breastfeeding friendly borough and provide stigma-free support to new mothers.
- Reduce barriers to developing community growing areas such as allotments for children and families.
- Restrict/remove unhealthy food advertising within the council property and assets.

3. EMBED HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES. Delegates believed that the health of children and families should be central to the Council's 2025 strategic vision and should be considered in all key local policy decisions, reflecting the wider determinants of health across our local system. Delegates identified need for a clear buy-in, endorsed by Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team and Wirral Partnership Board on any actions resulting from this work.

4. MOBILISE A COLLABORATIVE, WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH. Local healthy weight action should be embedded within all major workstreams and strategies across each of the major local partnerships, including the Children and Young People's Partnership, Healthy Wirral, and Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Board. These actions should be coordinated and collaborative across the local system (including council, NHS trust, community and voluntary organisations) to ensure delivery of a comprehensive and sustainable whole systems approach. Forming a healthy weight network could encourage partners and community to work together to advance this work.

Suggested recommendations

The workshop findings informed ten recommendations to challenge our local system and define our commitment to enabling healthy weight among children and families in Wirral:

1. **Become a breastfeeding friendly borough, garnering support and commitment from all businesses and organisations.**
2. **Encourage all nurseries and schools to appreciate their role in enabling healthy weight through mandatory implementation and reporting of the Healthy Schools Rating Scheme.**
3. **Implement the School Streets initiative across Wirral, imposing a temporary restriction on all motorised traffic on roads adjacent to nurseries/schools at drop-off/pick up times to enable safe active travel.**
4. **Subsidise/remove public transport costs for children and families.**
5. **Reduce barriers to developing and accessing community growing areas for children and families, with a focus on repurposing land in deprived areas.**
6. **Restrict unhealthy food advertising on council property and assets.**
7. **Adopt a [Healthy High Streets](#) approach (which views the high street as an asset to improve community health) by supporting local 'home grown' providers through a local loyalty scheme, and releasing empty properties to host healthy pop-up shops.**
8. **Consider reducing business rates for businesses who commit to providing affordable healthy foods and incentivise planning permission in favour of local healthy food outlets, with a focus on deprived areas.**
9. **Launch a Healthy Weight Network to strengthen and unify collective action to promote healthy weight across the local system, engaging Local Authority, NHS, businesses and cross-generational community members through a celebration event in Summer 2020.**
10. **Monitor and evaluate progress under the healthy weight agenda through annual reports of the Healthy Weight Network presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board?**

Appendix 1: Supporting Documents – Workshop 1

A. Healthy Weight Workshop Evidence Pack - Enabling Healthy Weight through Affordable, Accessible and Active Travel

Thank you for agreeing to attend the Healthy Weight Workshop on 20th November. These notes have been written to provide some background information in advance of the workshop. If you have any questions, please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk.

Why are we holding healthy weight workshops?

Creating environments that enable children and families across Wirral to achieve and maintain a healthy weight is everyone's business. These workshops will bring together a diverse group of people to identify how we can find the most effective solutions for children and families by working together.

Where should we focus our efforts?

Maintaining a healthy weight is not simply down to individual choices made in isolation. Wider environments, policies and infrastructures can influence our choices related to food and activity (see Figure 1). We have identified three key areas where we can collectively intervene to influence healthy weight among children and families in Wirral, which have inspired the workshop themes:

1. **ACTIVE TRAVEL**
2. **THE FOOD SYSTEM**
3. **REGULATORY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS**



Figure 1: Influencing healthy weight, Public Health England

“**ACTIVE TRAVEL** means walking or cycling as an alternative to motorised travel (notably cars, motorbikes/mopeds...) for the purpose of making everyday journeys.” Public Health England, 2016

Local Snapshot:

- 28% of households in Wirral don't have a car
- In Wirral, walking accounts for 21% of all journeys
- Cycling increased in Wirral by 43% between 2008/09 and 2016/17
- 50% of journeys <5 kilometres in Liverpool City Region are undertaken by car

Source: *This is Wirral Transport*, 2019

What has been tried in Wirral before?

School Travel Team – advisors work intensively with schools to develop travel plans and initiatives to encourage safe active travel to school.

Free bikes or trial travel passes to support access to employment or training – previously issued ~350 bikes per year to people with an offer of employment/training when located within cycling distance.

Travel training – one to one support for people to assist people public transport and journey plan. Useful where confidence is a barrier.

Business Travel Support Team – advisers support safe and sustainable travel to work, providing journey plans, trial bus passes, Dr Bike sessions, pedometer challenges etc. Raising awareness and interest in cycling through National Bike Week/Annual Car Free Day and other promotion event days.

Dr Bike Events – employees/public bring old/unused bikes to be repaired.

Lunchtime walks with businesses and accompanied bike rides.

Calorie maps – detail walking routes and calories burned on each walk.



What is currently on offer in Wirral to promote active travel?

Wirral Council maintains ~100 miles public footpaths/bridleway/cycle paths.

New cycling/walking infrastructure e.g. A41 Corridor, Duke Street, North Bank, Rendell Street



Active Travel Forum - quarterly public forum with Elected Members and local residents, Merseyside Police, Merseytravel, Merseyside Cycle Campaign, Cycling Projects, Living Streets, Sustrans and many others.

Go Cycle offered at 22 Wirral stations, providing bike racks and secure storage.

New public bike pumps installed at 3 locations.

Cycle parking – 67 new stands installed in locations boroughwide in 2019

Wheels For All – engages children and adults with disabilities in cycling.

Learn to Ride – teaches children to learn how to ride a bike.

Bike Right cycle training in schools.

#ArriveHappy campaign encourages Liverpool City Region residents to incorporate active travel into their daily routines (<https://www.arrivehappy.org/>)



10 local schools involved in Living Streets WOW Walk to School project – encourages children to walk, scoot or cycle to school.

Dropped kerbs route programme - improved accessibility for disabled community and prams.

Travel concessions on public transport for disabled, older adults, and young people.



Bikes can be carried free on Merseyrail network

Innovative diagonal crossings on road junctions, shifting priority to pedestrians at crossings.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POHU65xw1U4>. Moreton Road/Old Greasby Road/Ford Road/Arrowe Park Road and Balls Road/Oxton Road/Woodchurch Road junction.

Pedestrianised areas (Cherry Tree Shopping centre; Birkenhead/Pyramids)

Free school transport for children age 5 to 16 under certain conditions.

What is coming on the horizon?

Plans to develop walking and cycling infrastructure around the dock estates (Wallasey and Birkenhead), Birkenhead Town Centre and key corridors eg. Tower Rd providing wider pavements giving more space to pedestrians and cyclists and reducing carriageway widths and speeds of motor vehicles.



Plans to build a Birkenhead to New Brighton protected cycle corridor with segregated cycle lanes (consultation in early 2020). This is one of the first of the corridors to deliver the 600km Local Cycling and Walking Network across the LCR.

Study to explore strategy for supporting active travel in local neighbourhoods

Plans to pilot School Streets project for six local schools in 2020, using a combination of controlled parking zone schemes and behavioural change initiatives.



Pedestrian movement study to improve pedestrian access in Liscard/New Brighton.

New Merseyrail trains – step free access and improved cycle storage areas

Diagonal crossings on road junctions, shifting priority to pedestrians at crossings.

B. Facilitator notes: Healthy Weight Workshop 1

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate at Wirral's Healthy Weight Workshops. These notes have been written to support you in your role by explaining the purpose of the workshop, each activity and what we need from the day. If after reading them you have any questions please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk for further assistance.

What is the purpose of the workshop?

The aim of this workshop is for stakeholders to propose actions to implement across the local system that may provide the greatest opportunity to enable healthy weight among children and families across Wirral. At this workshop we will invite stakeholders to identify actions that they could influence to improve outcomes for children and families. These proposed actions, alongside existing actions, will be used to inspire collective action to promote healthy weight locally, and will contribute to a report presented to Scrutiny Committee.

What is my role?

As a facilitator, your role will be to build connections between the people on your table so they can work together effectively during the workshop. You should help to support and direct the conversations to ensure that the information gathered is as valuable as possible and that everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

How will it work?

- There will be one facilitator per table.
- You should delegate another group member to support with scribing and timekeeping.
- Encourage delegates to introduce themselves to your group.
- Your table will have about ten stakeholders (in addition to yourselves) with different expertise.
- You will facilitate a table of stakeholders through answering a series of questions.
- For each activity, participants should record their responses on post it notes, which will be displayed on whiteboards.
- You will be given a 5 to 10 minute warning towards the end of the activity session.
- Activity two will be briefly fed back to the room and a member of your group should be encouraged to do this.
- Public Health staff, who will make themselves known to you, will be available if you should need support during the session.

Activity 1 – Exploring stakeholders' motivation for attending the workshop

You will have 15 minutes for this session. In this activity session facilitators need to guide participants in:

- Describing their motivation for attending the session.
- Describing anything they or their organisation are currently doing to support healthy weight among children and families through active travel.

Keep it brief and keep participants on task.

Ask participants to record their responses on post it notes.

Once individual responses are recorded on post it notes, they will then be discussed in pairs before sharing with the wider group.

Activity 2 – Collectively select priority opportunities for influence, define actions and formulate plans.

You will have about 1 hour 15 minutes to conduct this activity, with a short comfort break at 4.00pm

Step 1: Identify priority opportunities for intervention (individual/collective) [40 minutes]

Looking across the theme of active travel, identify where you could intervene in, or influence to enable healthy weight among children and families.

Participants should come up with potential interventions individually, then in pairs, then work to collectively identify key priority actions.

Facilitators should get the group to:

- Consider the key questions (see slide)
- Consider the potential impact on health inequalities
- Consider how we can motivate collaborative and sustained action
- Consider how we capitalise on existing technologies and infrastructure

Step 2: fill in the action register [40 minutes]

- Write down your selected priority actions in more detail using the action template, using the following question:
 - How can you intervene?
 - What are the possible barriers?
 - Necessary supporting actions?
 - How will we measure success?
 - Who will lead this action?
- Ask participants if they or their organisation could support taking this action forward and can they also identify other stakeholders who might be best placed to help take the action/s forward (i.e. those not in the workshop).

Step 3: How do we keep momentum going? [10 minutes]

To conclude ask participants to suggest ways to keep the momentum going such as:

- Group meetings?
- Twitter/Instagram page?
- Celebration event?

Example Wirral action register (A3 blank copies will be on your table)

Theme: <i>Creating neighbourhoods that enable healthy weight through optimising active travel opportunities</i>					
#	How can you intervene?	What are the possible barriers?	Necessary supporting actions/resources?	How will we measure success?	Lead
1.	<i>Annual car free day</i>	<i>Accessibility of disabled residents or those with reduced mobility must be maintained</i>	<i>Support from local community and businesses Promotion of the event - social media/Wirral View/Wirral Globe Ensure local public transport companies can cope with increased demand for services</i>	<i>Consistent uptake of the event in all neighbourhoods Number of #WirralCarFree tweets</i>	<i>Wirral Active Travel Forum Support from Public Health</i>

Appendix 2: Supporting Documents - Workshop 2

A. Healthy Weight Workshop Evidence Pack - The Role of Food Providers

Thank you for agreeing to attend the Healthy Weight Workshop on 3rd December. These notes have been written to provide some background information in advance of the workshop. If you have any questions, please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk.

Why are we holding healthy weight workshops?

Creating environments that enable children and families across Wirral to achieve and maintain a healthy weight is everyone's business. These workshops will bring together a diverse group of people to identify how we can find the most effective solutions for children and families by working together.

Where should we focus our efforts?

Maintaining a healthy weight is not simply down to individual choices made in isolation. Wider environments, policies and infrastructures can influence our choices related to food and activity (see Figure 1). We have identified three key areas where we can collectively intervene to influence healthy weight among children and families in Wirral, which have inspired the workshop themes:

4. ACTIVE TRAVEL
5. **FOOD PROVIDERS**
6. PLANNED ENVIRONMENTS



Figure 1: Influencing healthy weight, Public Health England¹

What are food providers?

Food Providers supply ingredients, snacks, drinks or meals to children and families. They include commercial eating establishments (restaurants and cafes), caterers within organisations (school/nursery/work), commercial vendors (supermarkets, farmers markets, local shops) and other providers (food banks).

Did you know?

The out of home (OOH) sector plays an increasingly important role in the UK population's diet, as more and more of us regularly purchase and consume foods outside the home. The UK has seen a 53% increase in the number of places to eat OOH between 2005-2015² and the National Diet and Nutrition Survey suggests that between 2008/09 and 2012/13, one quarter of adults and one fifth of children ate food from OOH outlets at least once a week³. As such, the OOH sector is expected to contribute to around one quarter (20-25%) of our daily intake of calories^{4,5}. Alongside increased availability of OOH retailers, factors such as lack of time, practical skills, resource, accessibility (i.e. JustEat and Deliveroo Apps) and the marketing and advertising of the OOH offer also contribute to the increase in consumption of OOH foods

Local Snapshot:

- In 2017/18 in Wirral, 25% of reception age children and 36% of year 6 age children were overweight or obese (greater than the national average of 22% and 34%, respectively)⁶
- In 2018, breastfeeding prevalence in Wirral 6-8 weeks after birth was 36% (lower than the national average of 46%)⁶.

- In Wirral, the percentage of 15-year-olds eating at least 5 portions of fruit and veg daily was 49% in 2014/15 (less than the national average of 52%)⁶
- There are 1.22 takeaways per 1,000 residents in Wirral, according to the Food Environment Assessment Tool⁷. The density of hot food takeaways is greater in more deprived regions of the borough.
- Among school age pupils in Wirral in 2018, the uptake of free school meals in 2018 was 16.9% (greater than national average of 13.5%)⁶.
- Wirral Foodbank reports that between April 2018 and March 2019, 16,429 three-day emergency food parcels were provided to Wirral residents, with 5,228 going to children. This represented a 35% increase from the previous year⁸.

What has been tried in Wirral before to engage the food system in healthy weight?



Better Food Wirral – This engagement event in 2014 united residents, food businesses, community organisations and the Council to debate how to build a better food plan for the borough. Subsequent attempts were made to mobilise community engagement through social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter).

Healthy Vending Guidelines were shared with leisure centres detailing changes that they could voluntarily implement, such as limiting pack sizes, prominently positioning snacks of lower calorific value, and ensuring water is always available to purchase.

Take Away for a Change – this healthy eating programme centred around a community with high obesity prevalence among children and families. Outreach with local food providers promoted incorporation of healthy options into menus, and workshops were held with local families to educate and encourage them to make healthier food choices. Families were also given healthy food vouchers to encourage them to try a healthier take away meal from local food providers.

What is currently being done by food providers to enable healthy weight?



Some Wirral schools participate in **Food For Life**. This programme offers a three-tiered school reward system to acknowledge food quality, food education, food leadership and culture, and community participation (<https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/>)

Wirral-born chef Paul Askew delivered three **live cookery demonstrations** in Birkenhead Market in November 2019, focused on how to make festive feasts on a budget.

He was joined by Adopt a School - an organisation which sends chefs and hospitality professionals into schools to teach children about food, healthy eating and the importance of eating together.



The **Eat Well Wirral** scheme encourages and supports local takeaways in promoting healthier food choices to their customers. Incentives in the form of tiered awards are offered, based on degree of healthy changes made to menu, such as improved cooking methods and healthy ingredients used.



Can Cook offers cookery training across the Liverpool City Region. They also offer healthy, affordable catering for schools, nurseries and care homes (<http://www.cancook.co.uk/cancook-cic/>)

Food served in maintained schools must meet the **National School Food Standards** to enable children have healthy, balanced diets. These standards are currently being updated by the government to reflect current dietary recommendations.



Healthy Start Vouchers are available for low income families to exchange for milk, fruit and vegetables at participating food vendors (<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>)

Free fruit for children is offered in some supermarkets in Wirral.

National implementation of the **soft drinks industry levy** (sugar tax), is resulting in sugar reduction in many sweetened drinks available for purchase by children and families. The revenue has been reinvested into solutions to prevent childhood obesity, e.g., breakfast clubs and sports activities. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sugar-tax-revenue-helps-tackle-childhood-obesity>)

What is being considered?



Some work is underway in Wirral to scope the benefits of coordinating a **Veg Cities** campaign. This encourages collaboration between organisations/groups to increase access to and availability of vegetables on a local level. Joining the Veg Cities campaign offers access to a national network of resources and shared learning (<https://www.vegcities.org/>).

Other authorities (including Liverpool City Council, Cheshire West, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens) have adopted a **Healthy Weight Declaration**, stating their commitments to developing and implementing healthy weight policies on a local level

(<http://www.foodactive.org.uk/projects/local-authority-declaration/>).

The government are considering introducing mandatory calorie labelling in outlets with >250 employees.



What do we want from you?

1. Consider how the food environment impacts weight of children and families.
2. Consider your individual and collective roles in promoting healthy weight among children and families through food provision.
3. Consider how we can mobilise sustained collective local action to enable healthy weight among children and families.

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B. Facilitator notes: Healthy Weight Workshop 2

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate at Wirral's Healthy Weight Workshops. These notes have been written to support you in your role by explaining the purpose of the workshop, each activity and what we need from the day. If after reading them you have any questions please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk for further assistance.

What is the purpose of the workshop?

The aim of this workshop is for stakeholders to propose actions to implement across the local system that may provide the greatest opportunity to enable healthy weight among children and families across Wirral. At this workshop we will invite stakeholders to identify areas of the system that they could influence, and propose actions that positively alter the functioning of the system. These proposed actions, alongside existing actions, will be used to inspire collective action to promote healthy weight locally, and will contribute to a report presented to cabinet.

What is my role?

As a facilitator, your role will be to build connections between the people on your table so they can work together effectively during the workshop. You should help to support and direct the conversations to ensure that the information gathered is as valuable as possible.

How will it work?

- There will be one facilitator per table
- You should delegate another group member to support with scribing and timekeeping.
- You will facilitate a table of stakeholders through answering a series of questions
- Encourage delegates to introduce themselves to your group.
- Your table will have about ten stakeholders (in addition to yourselves) with different expertise
- For each activity, participants should record their responses on post it notes, which will be displayed on whiteboards.
- You will be given a 5 to 10 minute warning towards the end of the activity session.
- Activity four will be briefly fed back to the room.
- Public Health staff will be available if you should need support during the session.
- Refreshments will be available during the facilitated session, and there will be 5 minute comfort break at 4pm.

Activity 1. [5 minutes] INTRODUCTIONS: Introductions and motivation for attending the workshop [3:05-3:10]

Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Introducing themselves
- Describing their motivation for attending the workshop

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

Activity 2. [20 minutes] CURRENT STATE: Where are we now? [3:10-3:30]

Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Describing what they/their organisation are doing to support healthy weight among children and families through the role of food.

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

Activity 3. [30 minutes] FUTURE STATE: What do we want to do? [3:30-4:00]

Using one key question per group, Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Discussing ideas around priority actions to enable healthy weight among children and families through the role of food/food providers.

Facilitators should get the group to consider:

- the potential impact on different groups in society?
- how we make the most of existing infrastructure and technologies?

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

ACTION: Priority actions agreed by group consensus should be recorded in more detail in the action template, considering the following questions:

- How can you intervene?
- What are the possible barriers?
- Necessary supporting actions, and from whom?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- Who will lead this action?

Activity 4. [10 minutes]: What do we need to do to maintain momentum? [4:00-4:10]

Facilitators should get the group to consider:

- Who needs to be involved?
- What events/platforms could be used to maintain momentum?

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

Activity 5: Workshop summary: [4:10-4:25]

ACTION: Facilitator from each group to briefly feed back to workshop attendees on three key priority actions (activity 3) and one action to maintain momentum (activity 4).

Example Wirral action register

Theme: <i>Creating neighbourhoods that enable healthy weight through optimising food provision</i>					
#	How can you intervene?	What are the possible barriers?	Necessary supporting actions/resources?	How will we measure success?	Lead
1.	<i>veg cities network</i>	<i>It may be challenging reaching out to larger organisations to mobilise action. Passive adoption of pledges will not be sufficient to create sustained change in the system.</i>	<i>Support from local community, schools and businesses. Promotion of collective action through social media/Wirral View/Wirral Globe Mentoring by another local area that has successfully established veg cities programme.</i>	<i>Number of organisations signed up to network Will depend on individual pledges adopted</i>	<i>Community lead - Support from public health Climate change team</i>

Appendix 3: Supporting Documents - Workshop 3

A. Healthy Weight Workshop Evidence Pack: Environments

Thank you for agreeing to attend the Healthy Weight Workshop on 17th December. These notes have been written to provide some background information in advance of the workshop. If you have any questions, please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk.

Why are we holding healthy weight workshops?

Creating environments that enable children and families across Wirral to achieve and maintain a healthy weight is everyone's business. These workshops will bring together a diverse group of people to identify how we can find the most effective solutions for children and families by working together.

Where should we focus our efforts?

Maintaining a healthy weight is not simply down to individual choices made in isolation. Wider environments, policies and infrastructures can influence our choices related to food and activity (see Figure 1). We have identified three key areas where we can collectively intervene to influence healthy weight among children and families in Wirral, which have inspired the workshop themes:

7. ACTIVE TRAVEL
8. FOOD PROVIDERS
9. ENVIRONMENTS



Figure 1: Influencing healthy weight, Public Health England

How does our environment influence healthy weight?

- Our environment can impact healthy weight both positively and negatively by influencing opportunities for activity (through transport links, walkability, proximity to parks and playgrounds) and access to affordable, healthy food options.
- Access to green space is associated with lower rates of childhood obesity¹. Data collected between 2018 and 2019 by the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment Survey found that increased deprivation negatively impacted children's frequency of engagement with the natural environment².
- Neighbourhoods that have poor access to affordable and nutritious food choices are termed 'Food Deserts', which are driven by poverty and suboptimal transportation links³. Increased rates of childhood obesity are associated with increased density of unhealthy food outlets⁴.

¹ <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/improving-publics-health/access-green-and-open-spaces-and-role-leisure-services>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/828838/Monitor_of_Engagement_with_the_Natural_Environment__MENE__Childrens_Report_2018-2019_rev.pdf

³ Social Market Foundation (2018). What are the barriers to eating healthily in the UK? [online]. Available at: <http://www.smf.co.uk/publications/barriers-eating-healthily-uk/>

⁴ <https://www.rsph.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/b6f04bb8-013a-45d6-9bf3d7e201a59a5b.pdf>

- Regulatory powers can be used to influence our local environment (e.g. use of planning powers to limit hot food takeaways, or to introduce advertising regulation), and can refer to either national or local policy.

Local Snapshot:

- In 2017/18 in Wirral, 25% of reception age children and 36% of year 6 age children were overweight or obese (greater than the national average of 22% and 34%, respectively)⁵.
- In 2017/18, data from the Active Lives Adult Survey showed that over a quarter of Wirral's adults are physically inactive, which is above the national average⁶.
- In 2015/16, data from the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment Survey reported that only 23% of Wirral residents use outdoor space for exercise⁷.
- In Wirral, as the number of hot food takeaways in a ward increases, there is an increase in the percentage of overweight children⁸.
- Around a quarter of Wirral's hot food takeaways (24%) are located within 400 metres (approximately a five-minute walk) of secondary schools and further education institutes⁹.
- The Wirral Local Plan is currently being developed, which sets out land use in the borough to meet housing demands between 2020 and 2035.

What is currently being done in Wirral to enable healthy weight through local environments?



Wirral Council maintains 100 miles public footpaths and cycle paths, and there is access to green spaces, parks, beaches and coastal areas. In 2019, 27 parks were awarded Green Flag status (more than any other Local Authority in the North West) in recognition of being well run and maintained, an increasing number of awards in the borough¹⁰.

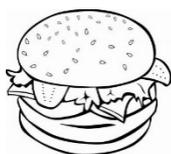


There are 12 free outdoor gyms across Wirral parks and Wirral's Parks and Countryside Service provides and maintains free to use playgrounds. Wirral has eight Leisure centres, which offer invigor8 membership, gym use and exercise classes.

Events are regularly held in Wirral to promote physical activity (Wirral Walking Festival 2018 and Tour of Britain 2019), and free park run events are held at weekends in Birkenhead Park and Wirral Country Park.



With specific focus on food there are 40 allotment sites in Wirral, where residents can grow their own produce. The Wirral Environmental Network (<https://wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk/>) is an example of a charity which promotes sustainable and self-grown food use.



There is a Supplementary Planning Document (2006) relevant to hot food takeaways in Wirral, which links conditions to planning approval for new takeaways (including a 400m exclusion zone around schools). SPDs may also have wider benefits in terms of reducing litter, noise, crime and traffic that may be associated with hot food takeaways.

What is being considered?

- A Health Impact Assessment is being conducted on the Local Plan, to ensure adverse health impacts on proposed land use development are considered and mitigated.
- Discussions are underway through the Local Plan to build on previous work (e.g. in Seacombe) where council members, residents and vendors were engaged and encouraged to embrace shift towards healthier high streets.

⁵ Public Health Outcomes Framework (2019). Public Health Profiles [online]. Available at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/>

⁶ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data#page/3/gid/1938132899/pat/6/par/E12000002/ati/202/are/E08000015/iid/93014/age/298/sex/4>

⁷ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/physical-activity/data#page/3/gid/1938132899/pat/6/par/E12000002/ati/202/are/E08000015/iid/11601/age/164/sex/4>

⁸ Wirral Intelligence Service. Evidence in Support of Policy. February 2018.

⁹ <https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50055110/Tackling%20Obesity%20Report.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.wirralglobe.co.uk/news/17787875.green-flag-awards-wirral---local-park-full-list-winners/>

- As the existing supplementary planning document does not include any aspect of health impact, some work is underway to support a modification to the policy in the new Local Plan, with a view to a replacement supplementary planning document.
- Plans for development of Birkenhead Town Centre and the dock estates (Wallasey and Birkenhead) will incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure.
- Pedestrian movement study planned to improve pedestrian access in Liscard/New Brighton.

What do we want from you?

1. Consider how the planned environment (considering both access to food and exercise) impacts weight of children and families.
2. Consider your individual and collective roles in promoting healthy weight among children and families through the planned environment.
3. Consider how we can mobilise sustained collective local action to enable healthy weight among children and families through action on the planned environment.

B. Facilitator notes: Healthy Weight Workshop 3

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate at Wirral's Healthy Weight Workshops. These notes have been written to support you in your role by explaining the purpose of the workshop, each activity and what we need from the day. If after reading them you have any questions please email sophiepatterson@wirral.gov.uk or rebeccamellor@wirral.gov.uk for further assistance.

What is the purpose of the workshop?

The aim of this workshop is for stakeholders to propose actions to implement across the local system that may provide the greatest opportunity to enable healthy weight among children and families across Wirral. At this workshop we will invite stakeholders to identify areas of the system that they could influence, and propose actions that positively alter the functioning of the system. These proposed actions, alongside existing actions, will be used to inspire collective action to promote healthy weight locally, and will contribute to a report presented to cabinet.

What is my role?

As a facilitator, your role will be to build connections between the people on your table so they can work together effectively during the workshop. You should help to support and direct the conversations to ensure that the information gathered is as valuable as possible.

How will it work?

- There will be one facilitator per table
- You should delegate another group member to support with scribing and timekeeping.
- You will facilitate a table of stakeholders through answering a series of questions
- Your table will have about ten stakeholders (in addition to yourselves) with different expertise
- For each activity, participants should record their responses on post it notes, which will be displayed on whiteboards.

Activity 1. [5 minutes] INTRODUCTIONS: Introductions

Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Introducing themselves

Activity 2. [25 minutes] CURRENT STATE: Where are we now?

Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Describing what they/their organisation are doing to support healthy weight among children and families through the role of built, natural and regulatory environments.

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

Activity 3. [45 minutes] FUTURE STATE: What do we want to do?

Using one key question per group, Facilitators should guide delegates in:

- Discussing ideas around priority actions to enable healthy weight among children and families through the role of built, natural and regulatory environments.

Facilitators should get the group to consider:

- the potential impact on different groups in society?
- how we make the most of existing infrastructure and technologies?

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

ACTION: Priority actions agreed by group consensus should be recorded in more detail in the action template, considering the following questions:

- How can you intervene?
- What are the possible barriers?
- Necessary supporting actions, and from whom?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- Who will lead this action?

Activity 4. [15 minutes]: What do we need to do to maintain momentum?

Facilitators should get the group to consider:

- Who needs to be involved?
- What events/platforms could be used to maintain momentum?

ACTION: Individual responses written on post its, which are stuck to the chart and shared with the group.

Activity 5: Workshop summary:

ACTION: Facilitator from each group to **briefly** feed back to workshop attendees on the (3) actions agreed for activity 3 & activity 4 (what do we need to do to maintain momentum?).

Example Wirral action register

#	How can you intervene?	What are the possible barriers?	Necessary supporting actions/resources?	How will we measure success?
1.	Breastfeeding policies	Lack of public support for breastfeeding in public spaces. Stigma directed towards (or perceived by) breastfeeding mothers. Ensuring mothers who choose not to/are unable to breastfeed are not overlooked or shamed.	Support from local community, organisations and businesses. Promotion of collective action through social media/Wirral View/Wirral Globe Best practice policies effective in other areas, for example breastfeeding friendly stickers on windows of commercial premises. Private family rooms/fridges provided by employers such that mothers returning to work can access facilities to continue breastfeeding.	Number of premises displaying breastfeeding friendly signage. Number of employers with facilities to support breastfeeding among mums returning to work

Appendix 4: Supporting Documents - Scrutiny Review Scoping Document

Scrutiny Review Scope

Review Title: Healthy Weight

Responsible Committee: Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5th September 2019

1. Contact Information:
Review Panel Members: Cllr Wendy Clements Cllr Chris Carubia Cllr Chris Cooke Cabinet Members Cllr Tom Usher Cllr Elizabeth Grey Key Officers: Julie Webster Rebecca Mellor Anna Perrett Other Contacts: Rachael Musgrave Sophie Patterson
2. Review Aims:
Review Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To focus on the wider determinants of health and the impact that multiple sectors can have on reducing obesity through a whole systems approach.• To explore the opportunities to improve health (reduce obesity) through the Local Plan and Licensing.• To advise on the adoption of a Healthy Weight Declaration for the borough Scrutiny Outcome: <p>To identify where the greatest opportunities are to support people to have a healthy weight and advise on action to be taken by the Council and partners.</p>
2. Risks and Implications

Potential Risks:

Almost two thirds of local people are either overweight or obese. The impact of this is far reaching and the causes multiple. There is no single effective solution. Without action across agencies, sectors and with local people the health of individuals will continue to suffer, health inequalities associated with obesity will remain and the economic and social costs will increase to unsustainable levels. The risk of inaction is manifold.

The review should recognise that individuals may need to find the right solution for them and should avoid promoting a one size fits all approach to weight loss and healthy weight. The panel should also be mindful in ensuring that policies are sustainable and focused on family-based solutions.

Other Implications:

Obesity in childhood can have wide reaching Implications. Stigma and discrimination are destructive to mental health and confidence. Childhood Obesity is also a precursor to obesity in adulthood and strong links to a range of associated health issues.

Public Health England¹¹ warns that Obese adults are more likely to be unemployed, suffer discrimination and stigmatisation. Obese adults also have an increased risk of Hospitalisation and obesity can reduce life expectancy by an average of 3 years (and by 8-10 years for severely obese adults). They are also more likely to suffer from discrimination and mental health problems.

Environmental Implications:

The promotion of a more healthy, active lifestyle is known to have significant health benefits, but also a positive impact on the environment. For example, choosing walking or cycling over car use. Town planning and design can also affect people's lifestyles and health by influencing behaviours and thought should be given to this for future developments.

Given the Local Authority has declared a climate change emergency, thought should be given to sustainability and reducing waste. Cooking from scratch and meal planning can help to reduce weight and decrease food or packaging waste, as does using re-usable water bottles.

3. Review Plan**Review Approach:**

The review will consist of 1 overview session and 3 stakeholder sessions, all themed around certain areas. For example, Education, Health, Transport/parks etc.

A final wrap up session with Panel Members and Key officers will be scheduled if required.

The review will be supplemented with supporting papers and documents.

Review Duration: September – January (5 Months)

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment--2>

Scheduled Committee Report Date: 28th January 2020

Scheduled Cabinet Report Date: March 2020

4. Sources of Evidence:

Key Witnesses:

Environment/Parks and Gardens
Edsential.
Merseyside Sports Partnership
Active Travel - Mersey Rail/Travel
Headteacher Advisory Board (Primary Schools)
Wirral Association of Headteachers (Secondary Schools)
Leisure
Wirral University Teaching Hospital
Wirral NHS Community Foundation Trust
Communication team/s

Supporting Papers / Documentation:

[Cumulative Impact Report 2016](#)

[Local Action to tackle obesity January 2019](#)

[Tackling Obesity Feb 2019](#)

[Healthy weight declaration](#)

[Healthy Weight Video](#)

Involvement of service users / public:

Members discussed the possibility of including young people in the review. This could involve a session with a School Council.

5. Key Communications and timings:

Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member to be informed of key findings and recommendations

Press Office:

Communications lead to be briefed on review findings as appropriate

