



Report To: Health and Environmental Services
Portfolio Holder

Lead Officer: Mike Hill

22 December 2016

Proposal to Participate in the Healthier Options Partnership

Purpose

1. To update the portfolio holder on an opportunity to work with partners on the Healthier Options programme; an intervention engaging with local food businesses to provide healthier food and drink options
2. This is not a key decision but has potential to impact on healthy eating options for residents choosing to eat out and thereby improve health and well-being. It will also require officer time to deliver the programme and a redirection of priorities as it is not identified in the 2016/17 work plan.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the portfolio holder agrees to the signing of the memorandum of understanding to participate in the Healthier Options initiative to engage and support local businesses to promote healthier menu options and food preparation techniques and indicate whether there is support for
 - (i) Option 1 – officers coordinate promotion with their regulatory intervention programme
 - (ii) Option 2 – evidenced based targeted approach to those businesses located in areas of high incidence of adult obesity who supply fast-food traditionally of a high calorific content
 - (iii) Option 3 – hard launch with promotional campaign led approach
 - (iv) Option 4 – strategic mix of options 1 and 2.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Excess weight increases the risk of many serious long term conditions. There is increasing prevalence of obesity within the population and more people than ever living in ill health. In order to ensure that South Cambs. keeps its position as a healthy place to live it would be sensible to promote the provision of healthier food choices in those businesses that we regulate. With respect to the evidence which indicates adults in South Cambs. are more likely to eat healthily than the national average, food outlets may find delivering healthier food will be a profitable business decision. The benefits will also lead to improved access to healthier food, support for local business and reduced health inequalities.
5. Participation in this collaborative programme has additional benefits for staff development, with opportunity for funding for officers to undertake the Royal Society for Public Health Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets. Signing the memorandum of understanding will access direct funding support and campaign materials for an intervention which has been developed by Cambridgeshire County Council Public Health Directorate and independently evaluated by the University of Hertfordshire.

Background

6. The Public Health Responsibility Deal (PHRD) (2011) aims to utilize the potential for businesses and other organisations to contribute to improving public health through a supportive environment. The PHRD encourages voluntary action from businesses and organisations to commit to addressing; alcohol; food; health at work and physical activity to reduce health inequalities.
7. Local businesses are recognised for their potential to contribute to the aims of the PHRD too. Engagement with small local businesses is thought to be best led through local authorities at a local level. Local schemes can encourage small businesses to make their products healthier, including by reducing salt, using healthier oils and increasing fruit and vegetables.
8. Healthier Options in Cambridgeshire was developed using the Department of Health Responsibility Deal toolkit for Local Authorities. It aims to see healthier food and drink options for people to choose from when eating out and about. Small and medium sized food businesses are supported by Environmental Health Officers to participate in this free membership award scheme. Business pledge their unique intentions for changes to food preparation techniques and menus around key areas to;
 - (i) Reduce portion sizes
 - (ii) “change the default” making the standard option the healthier option
 - (iii) Reduce sugar, fat and salt
 - (iv) Increase fruit and vegetables
9. The PHRD and Healthier Options are included in the evidence base of the Cambridgeshire Healthy Weight Strategy around the food environment. The typical adult diet exceeds recommended dietary levels of sugar and fat. Less than a third of adults currently meet the five a day target and around one in five children aged five to 15 meets the target, with the average being just three portions a day. Appendix 1 shows the average number of people reporting that they eat a healthy diet in South Cambridgeshire. Healthy eating is associated with a reduced risk of being overweight or obese. Those areas least likely to be eating healthily are in the south west of the district plus Bar Hill, Sawston, Waterbeach, Willingham and Over.
10. Unhealthy weight has significant cost implications for health, social care and the economy. Children who are overweight or obese have higher risk of physical and mental ill health. Additionally being overweight or obese as a child often continues into adulthood. Excess weight increases the risk of developing serious diseases including; diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some cancers. Overall excess weight reduces life expectancy by 3 years and by 10 years if obese.
11. In Cambridgeshire,
 - (i) the majority of adults are overweight/obese (63.6% similar to the national average of 64.6%)
 - (ii) Over 1 in 5 Cambridgeshire adults are obese (22.4%)
12. In South Cambridgeshire, nearly 2 in 3 adults (63.6%) are overweight or obese. Appendix 2 shows the percentage of population classed as obese by parish across the district. Those that have a percentage closer to the national average are in the south west of the district plus Sawston, Waterbeach, Willingham and Over.

13. Nationally, 1 in 5 Reception children is overweight or obese (21.9%), increasing to 1 in 3 Year 6 children (33.2%). In Cambridgeshire the number of children who are overweight or obese is similar to England averages (19.6% Reception children and 27.2% Year 6 children).
14. In South Cambridgeshire, the percentage of overweight and obese children is also similar to the County and to the rest of England. 18.8% of Reception children are overweight or obese, increasing to 24.5% of Year 6 children. Appendix 3 shows Bassingbourn, The Mordens, Fulbourn and Teversham to have the higher percentage of children classed as overweight or obese in Year 6..

Considerations

15. CCC Public Health Directorate is offering funded support until March 2017 to local authorities participating in the scheme. The memorandum of understanding (appendix 4) outlines the commitment expected to promote Healthier Options to small and medium-sized food business. Local authorities are expected to
 - (i) Support interested businesses to make a healthier options pledge
 - (ii) Complete a return visit after the agreed implementation period to validate their achievement.
 - (iii) Award businesses with membership and a certificate
 - (iv) Promote successful businesses on the Healthier Options website
 - (v) Ensure at least one officer receives training and cascades an awareness of the scheme to the team
 - (vi) Provide a progress report and data to CCC Public Health Team
16. CCC Public Health team will provide
 - (i) Training
 - (ii) Support from Public Health Nutritionist
 - (iii) Marketing and promotional materials
 - (iv) Campaign website www.healthier-options.org.uk
 - (v) A one-off payment of £860 (including £110 for initial engagement with businesses; £630 to support 7 businesses in making and achieving their pledge and £120 towards management costs).
 - (vi) An additional payment of £100 per business to achieve pledge and be awarded membership (up to maximum of 7 businesses)

Options

17. If there is agreement to accept the offer to participate in this funded intervention programme there are a number of ways which we could facilitate this.
18. Option 1
Officers will promote the scheme as part of their programmed food hygiene inspection visits, distributing literature and discussing the pledge with the food business operator. The benefits of this approach include officers already present for engagement with business, they can answer questions and assess the suitability of the business and enthusiasm at the same time; there will be a reduction in mileage and it will be an additional benefit of an inspection. Difficulties could be encountered as inspections tend to be unannounced and the relevant person may not be available to make any decisions.

19. Option 2

Consideration of public health data at the parish level (Appendix 2 and 3) shows those areas where there is a larger percentage of individuals who are overweight or obese. A bigger impact may be attained if outlets in those areas were targeted, particularly if they were to be persuaded to pledge to healthier food preparation techniques. This would lend itself to a locality approach in villages such as Sawston, Teversham, Bassingbourn, Gamlingay, Waterbeach, Willingham and Over where there is a correlation with the numbers of people less likely to eat healthily (Appendix 1). Whilst this has the benefit of a valid evidence based approach there is a risk that it will be more difficult to find businesses willing to engage and would not support the aim of improving easy access to healthy food across the district.

20. Option 3

A scatter gun promotional campaign using all traditional South Cambridgeshire's communication channels including social media and provision of support to those businesses following up by requesting more information. This has the potential to create greater demand than capacity and would need to be managed carefully.

21. Option 4

A strategic mix of option 1 and option 2 where the initiative is introduced to businesses during an inspection within the areas identified. This has the benefit of controlling demand and targeting officer resources effectively whilst promoting healthier options both in the those areas with higher average weight and directly to those outlets serving food higher in sugar and fat in the rest of the district.

Implications

22. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

23. Participation in the scheme will attract funding support as outlined within the report.

Legal

24. By entering into a memorandum of understanding there will be an obligation to fulfil our commitment to promote the healthier options pledge.

Staffing

25. All activity will be carried out within existing staffing allocation.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 – Supporting communities to remain in good health

26. By promoting healthy eating and improving access to healthier options.

Aim 2 – Supporting Businesses to improve health of employees

27. By increasing awareness of healthy eating within the food outlet employees will become more aware of healthier options.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Healthier Options website: <http://www.healthier-options.org.uk>

Cambridgeshire Insights website: <http://opendata.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk>

Public Health England Local Health Data: <http://www.localhealth.org.uk>

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