

Pennine Lancashire's Healthy Place, Healthy Future Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme

Background

More than one in five children are already overweight or obese on entering Reception. This rises to one in three in Year 6. There is a 'deprivation gap' with children from the most deprived areas more than twice as likely to be obese and more than four times as likely to be severely obese than children from the least deprived areas. The Government published the **second chapter of the Childhood Obesity: Plan for action** in June 2018, setting out the ambition to halve childhood obesity and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030.

The Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme seeks innovative action to tackle childhood obesity at local level. The programme is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care and managed by the Local Government Association. It is intended to test the limits of existing powers and developing solutions to local obstacles aiming to enable ambitious local action and to achieve change at scale.

The three year Trailblazer programme commenced in June 2019, with five sites selected to lead projects to implement their plans. Over the three years, Trailblazer authorities will develop, deliver, review and expand their plans. Each Trailblazer authority will receive £100,000 worth of funding and project support each year to progress their project. This will include government expert support, subject matter expertise, support from the Delivery Support Partner, FutureGov. Some support will also be provided to trailblazer authorities to develop their local evaluation plans in the early stages of the three-year programme.

Pennine Lancashire's vision for 'Healthy Place Healthy Future' is a coordinated approach to childhood obesity, linking four levers for change to achieve the best outcomes:

1. Local Planning/Policy Impact

- Explore innovative approaches to strengthen BwD's Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document with a framework for Districts to embed health in planning policies and support them to adopt a Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document.
- Develop positive policies to encourage healthier options for A3 (cafes) /A5 (Hot Food Takeaways) outlets and restrict/regulate where establishments do not comply.

2. System Leadership

- Develop a network of informed and empowered Elected Members to advocate for healthy weight locally and influence Primary Care Neighbourhoods to ensure a whole system approach
- Develop an embedded support programme, with a network of Elected Member Champions aware of the impact of wider determinants of obesity and empowered to challenge the system.
- Work with 'Food Power' to adapt and embed #Darwengetshangry in localities, led by Pennine Lancashire's Youth MPs/Deputies/school councils to raise the profile of food for health, support food establishments engaged with Recipe 4 Health and drive demand for healthy affordable food.

3. Business Growth and Development Programme

- Support existing A3/A5 businesses to provide healthier, affordable food and recognise with the closely scrutinised Recipe 4 Health award
- Work with A3/A5 establishments to develop incentives for healthier food, including procurement, advertising, menu development, inter-borough mentoring/sharing good practice, masterclasses with a local celebrity chef and links to local producers.
- Develop consistent business support.

4. Social Movements for a Healthier Food Offer

- Support communities to drive demand for healthier takeaway food through the development of the 'Great Big Junk Food Debate'.
- Link communities with existing/developing social movements including 'Keep XXX Tidy' 'Breast Intentions' and #darwengetshangry to support this drive for healthier food.

What is the potential impact on Hyndburn Council and Residents?

- A commitment to review A3/A5 policy and contribute to the development of a consistent planning policy approach across Pennine Lancashire
- Empowered and informed Elected Members who are able to influence health and wellbeing in Hyndburn and in particular the healthy weight agenda
- Engaged communities who are co-producing the 'Great Big Junk Food Debate' as a forum to talk about food in its widest sense
- Informed and engaged local food businesses who are incentivised to provide a healthier food offer

Key Issues

It is recognised that economic regeneration is a key priority for all Councils and this work will call for compromise in order to tackle childhood obesity. Having the support of elected members and the chief executive is vital to creating the right mind set and to for the success of this approach. It sends a clear signal that tackling obesity is a priority not just for public health but for the whole council and its wider stakeholders, thereby facilitating cooperation across departments and with local communities and partners.

It is widely recognised that capacity across Pennine Lancashire is an issue. Support for the programme will be provided by Food Active who will support the development of the evidence base for the Supplementary Planning Documents, lead the community development lever and support the district leads with the Elected Member Development. Having qualified nutritionists as part of the project team, they will also work closely with identified businesses to improve their food offer.

The programme also benefits from an Expert Panel (Appendix B) who will be responsible for providing academic, policy development and business oversight to the programme. The national Trailblazer steering group will monitor the progress of the Trailblazers and provides the forum to raise challenges and barriers experienced with policy makers in Government.

Healthy Place, Healthy Future Project Team Information

Healthy Place, Healthy Future is being led by Blackburn with Darwen's Public Health team and can be contacted as follows:

Beth Wolfenden Public Health Development Manager
beth.wolfenden@blackburn.gov.uk 01254 666960

The Programme Provider is Food Active and can be contacted as follows:

Alex Holt alex.holt@foodactive.org.uk 0151 237 2686
www.foodactive.org.uk @food_active

Appendices and Supporting Documents

Appendix A [Healthy Place, Healthy Future Trailblazer Plan](#)

Appendix B [Healthy Place, Healthy Future Expert Panel Bios](#)

Pennine Lancashire – Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Briefing

Elected Members – Hyndburn

Blackburn with Darwen has been shortlisted, on behalf of the Pennine Lancashire districts, for the Local Government Association's Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme. The vision is to engage with system leaders and policy heads to develop a consistent planning approach across Pennine Lancashire, understanding how local communities can be supported to create a social movement to demand healthier food and support businesses to provide it.

Why action is needed in Hyndburn

Childhood obesity and excess weight are significant health issues for children, young people, and their families. There is extensive evidence to suggest these issues can have serious implications for the physical and mental health of a child, which can then translate into adulthood.

- The prevalence of childhood obesity in Hyndburn is greater than the national average, with 22.8% of children aged 10-11 in the district classified as obese. This is the highest prevalence across Pennine Lancashire.
- Hyndburn is one of the 20% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, which is significantly associated with overweight and obesity. Furthermore, about 19% (3,300) of children live in low-income families which is also a risk factor for poor health outcomes.

Opportunities for action

Obesity is influenced by a complex range of factors, and therefore requires a multi-faceted approach from various stakeholders including national government, local government agencies, schools, businesses and the local community. One key identified area in the literature and targeted within the Pennine Lancashire trailblazer is the proliferation and frequent use of fast food takeaways and its relationship with the development and onset of overweight and obesity.

- Fast food and takeaway outlets play an increasingly important role in the UK population's dietary intake, as more and more of us purchase and consume foods outside the home daily.
- The proliferation of fast food outlets has been far greater in areas of higher levels of deprivation, when compared to more affluent areas.
- In Hyndburn, there are 1.56 takeaways per 1,000 residents. That's significantly more than in the average local authority. There's a total of 126 takeaways in the area. In addition, the number of takeaways in the area has increased by 14% within the last three years.
- At a ward level, this rises to as many as 4.23 takeaways per 1,000 residents in Netherton.

Engaging with local fast food takeaway business owners to help explore the ways in which they can improve their provision of food and drink to the local community is an important step in helping shape healthier food environments for residents in Hyndburn.

How Elected Members can help

Elected members can play a key role in 'championing' and promoting the importance of healthy weight in children at a local level – in effect giving high level visibility and leadership to this issue.

Pennine Lancashire – Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Briefing

Planning – Hyndburn

Blackburn with Darwen has been shortlisted, on behalf of the Pennine Lancashire districts, for the Local Government Association's Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme. The vision is to engage with system leaders and policy heads to develop a consistent planning approach across Pennine Lancashire, understanding how local communities can be supported to create a social movement to demand healthier food and support businesses to provide it.

Why action is needed in Hyndburn

Childhood obesity and excess weight are significant health issues for children, young people, and their families. There is extensive evidence to suggest these issues can have serious implications for the physical and mental health of a child, which can then translate into adulthood.

- The prevalence of childhood obesity in Hyndburn is greater than the national average, with 22.8% of children aged 10-11 in the district classified as obese. This is the highest prevalence across Pennine Lancashire.
- Hyndburn is one of the 20% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, which is significantly associated with overweight and obesity. Furthermore, about 19% (3,300) of children live in low-income families which is also a risk factor for poor health outcomes.

Opportunities for action

Where we live has a key role to play in tackling childhood obesity and local authorities clearly have a challenge in balancing healthier environments with the demand for thriving and vibrant high streets.

- The link between planning and health has been established and both the built and natural environment are key environmental determinants of health and wellbeing as referenced throughout the whole of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- One key identified area in the literature and targeted within the Pennine Lancashire trailblazer is the proliferation and frequent use of fast food takeaways and its relationship with the development and onset of overweight and obesity.
- Fast food is typically high in calories, saturated fat and salt and the proliferation of these outlets has been far greater in areas of higher levels of deprivation.
- In Hyndburn, there are 1.56 takeaways per 1,000 residents. That's significantly more than in the average local authority. There's a total of 126 takeaways in the area. In addition, the number of takeaways in the area has increased by 14% within the last three years.
- Whilst maintaining choice is important, shaping our food environments to support healthier choices and lifestyles is a crucial step in achieving this.

How Planners can help

The planning system is one area in which local authorities can take action. Planners have an enabling role to ensure facilities and infrastructures exist to give everyone the opportunity to live in a healthy-weight environment. It is important for Planners to work proactively with public health, economic development and regeneration, housing, leisure, sport and culture and parks and green space to ensure this can be achieved in Hyndburn.