

# North Tyneside Health & Wellbeing Board Report Date: 12 September 2019

## ITEM 7

Title: Tackling Obesity  
across the Life Course –  
Progress Report

**Report from :** North Tyneside Council: Public Health Team  
**Report Author:** Heidi Douglas (Tel: 0191 643 2120)  
**Relevant Partnership Board:** North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance

### 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress in relation to the Health and Wellbeing Board's priority to tackle obesity across the life course in North Tyneside.

### 2. Recommendation(s):

The Board is recommended to:

- a) note the content of the report;
- b) acknowledge the trends and current data on obesity in North Tyneside; and
- c) approve the North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Action Plan.

### 3. Policy Framework

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-23 has a priority to address premature mortality and reduce the life expectancy gap. Obesity as an independent risk factor is associated with cancer, cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes; reducing the prevalence of obesity in North Tyneside will contribute to reducing the gap in life expectancy and addressing premature mortality.

This item also relates to objective 3 in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board work plan, with specific reference to Tackling Obesity across the Life Course.

Key national policy to address obesity includes:

- Childhood Obesity Plan Chapter 1 and Chapter 2: A Plan for Action
- Making obesity everybody's business – a whole systems approach to obesity

These policy documents provide the context and describe the local action to be taken by Local Authorities.

## 4. Information:

### 4.1 Introduction

The issue of obesity is challenging; its causes are complex and include behaviour, environment, biology and physiology as well as culture. Obesity is a major determinant of premature mortality and avoidable ill health. The impact of obesity; socially, economically and physically are pervasive and need to be understood from a breadth of perspectives in order to be adequately addressed. Obesogenic environments, poor diet combined with sedentary lifestyles have resulted in a high prevalence of adults who are overweight and obese. It's estimated that the NHS spent £6.1 billion on overweight and obesity-related ill-health in 2014 to 2015<sup>1</sup>.

It is now well understood that the food we eat plays a significant contribution to the national and global obesity epidemic. Decades of change to the global food system along with bad dietary habits is now acknowledged to contribute to the obesity epidemic however this represents the tip of the iceberg in relation to adverse health consequences of a poor diet<sup>2</sup>.

Childhood obesity is a good indicator of adult obesity. Children who are obese or overweight are more likely to experience bullying, low-esteem and a lower quality of life and they are highly likely to go on to become overweight adults at risk of cancer, heart and liver disease<sup>3</sup>. It is estimated that 70% - 80% of obese children will remain obese throughout their adulthood<sup>4</sup>.

At a national level there is a strong recognition that it will be a considerable number of years before the current trend for increasing levels of obesity across the life course will be reversed and this is reflected in the national ambition to halve childhood obesity and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030<sup>5</sup>.

The pattern of childhood obesity is strongly associated with deprivation; however the association between obesity and deprivation in adults is not as strong.

Approximately two thirds of all adults aged over 16 are either overweight or obese; this means that the majority of adults are either overweight or obese. Prevalence increases with age in 2017 in England 78% of men aged 45-74 years were obese or overweight, compared to 33% of men aged 16-24, this pattern is replicated for women however women tend to have lower rates compared to men; this is illustrated in figure 1 below<sup>6</sup>.

The scale of the challenge should not be underestimated in 2017 the majority of adults in England were overweight or obese (64.3%), with only 34% having a healthy weight<sup>6</sup>. The proportion of adults by weight classification is presented in figure 2 below.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2017/03/31/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment/>

<sup>2</sup> It is time to bust the myth of physical inactivity and obesity: you cannot outrun a bad diet – British Journal of Sports Medicine <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/49/15/967>

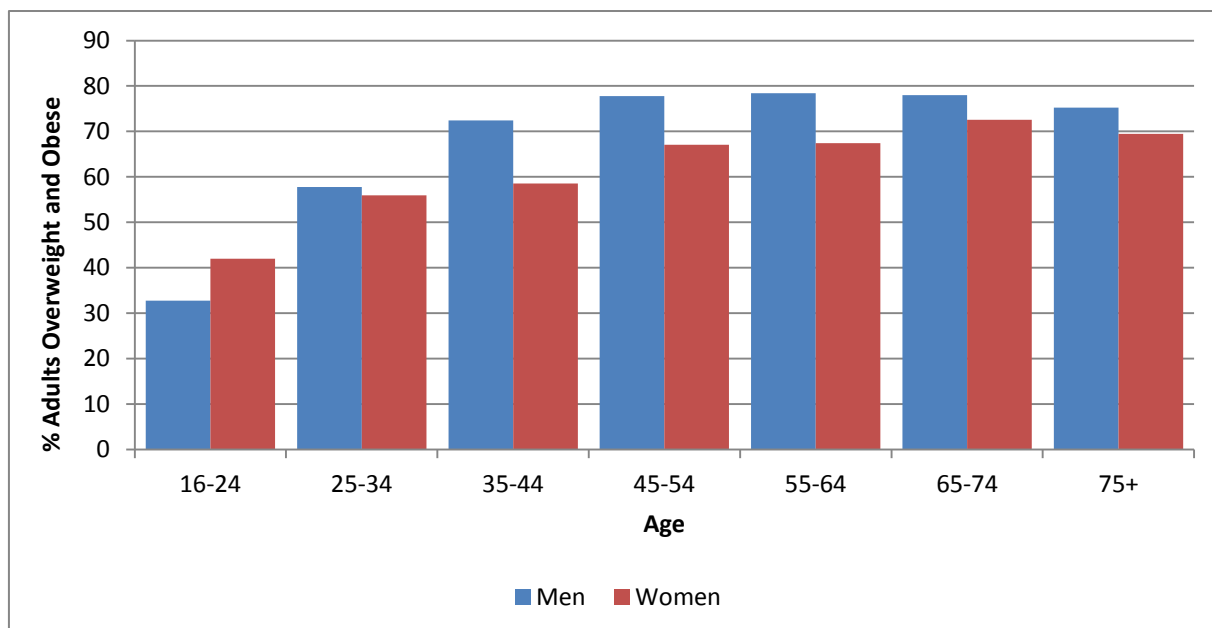
<sup>3</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/94942/1/Simmonds\\_et\\_al\\_2015\\_Obesity\\_Reviews.pdf](http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/94942/1/Simmonds_et_al_2015_Obesity_Reviews.pdf)

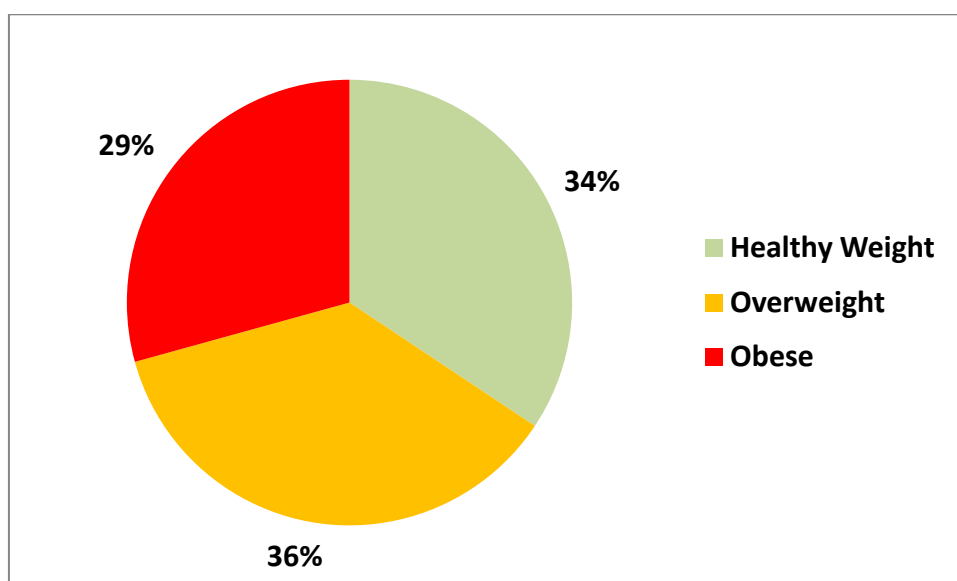
<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718903/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action-chapter-2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Health Survey for England 2017 available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-survey-for-england/2017>

**Figure 1: Prevalence - Adults Obese and Overweight by Age Group - England 2017**



**Figure 2: Adult (aged 16+) classification of weight 2017<sup>6</sup>**



#### 4.2 How are we doing in North Tyneside

Given that North Tyneside has similar overweight and obesity prevalence rates to England it is estimated that in North Tyneside each year around **400** young people will start their adulthood as an obese adult and **300** of these will remain obese through adulthood. There are **61,500** adults that are overweight and a further **49,500** that are obese<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Based upon ONS 2019 population estimates available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

The trend data for the National Child Measurement Programme in North Tyneside shows that there has been a reduction in the prevalence of excess weight (overweight and obese) for children in both reception and year 6. However the prevalence of obesity in year 6 pupils has not reduced. North Tyneside has similar rates of obesity as England and lower rates than many other authorities in the North East.

Trend data for adults shows that North Tyneside has similar rates of obesity as England.

A detailed analysis of local data for North Tyneside on obesity for children and adults is presented in appendix 1.

### **4.3 What action are we taking in North Tyneside?**

It is important to highlight that high prevalence of obesity is a reflection of, and is an entirely normal response to the environment (social, economic, commercial) that many people find themselves in and not about individuals who "lack willpower"<sup>8</sup>. However the evidence base and available interventions have traditionally focussed on changing individual behaviour. The scale of the challenge in tackling both childhood and adult obesity requires the whole system to work together.

Tackling obesity across the life course is a key priority for the North Tyneside Joint Health and Wellbeing Board and a Healthy Weight Alliance has been established to develop a whole systems approach to addressing obesity and develop shared programmes of work. A key objective of the programme is to identify synergies and win-wins across local authority departments, with the contribution of other partner organisations.

Embedded in the whole systems approach in North Tyneside is the learning from the discovery phase of the National Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme. Although North Tyneside was not successful in the second round, the learning from the work undertaken has informed the local delivery plan and has also raised issues at a national level regarding the school food environment. As a result of participation in the National Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme in North Tyneside we identified two key policy areas for further work:

- Developing a North Tyneside School Food Environment Policy
- Optimising the closure of schools streets to cars as a means to increase active transport

The Healthy Weight Alliance has developed a whole system map that captures the root causes, drivers and influences on obesity; from this a delivery plan for the alliance has been developed (appendix 2). This plan describes the actions, measures and anticipated outcomes required to reduce the prevalence of childhood and adult obesity as well as preventing obesity.

The Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery Plan has seven priority areas which are:

1. Pregnancy and Early Years
2. School Aged Children and the Whole School Environment
3. Improving Access to Services for Target Groups
4. Providing Support for Healthy Weight in the NHS

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<sup>8</sup> Greg Fell: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018: <https://twitter.com/felly500/status/1050854961607831552>

5. Promoting Healthy Weight Environments
6. Building Capacity and Engaging Communities
7. Marketing and Public Health Campaigns

The plan has been informed by evidence of what works, national guidance and includes the collective actions from a range of partners across North Tyneside. The plan incorporates and builds upon the work of Active North Tyneside, which provides targeted interventions to improve healthy weight and increase access to physical activity. A summary of activity from 2018-19 is detailed in appendix 3.

## **5. Decision options:**

There are two recommendations for the Board to consider:

- Acknowledge the trends and current data on obesity in North Tyneside
- Approve the North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance action plan

Option 1: The Board accepts both recommendations.

Option 2: Alternatively, the Board may not accept the recommendations and ask Officers to review the information further and represent at a later date.

Option 1 is the preferred option.

## **6. Reasons for recommended option:**

This will allow Officers from the Authority and other partner Organisations to progress the North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery plan and address the priorities that the Health and Wellbeing Board has set for 2018/20.

## **7. Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Childhood and Adult Obesity Data Set: North Tyneside

Appendix 2: North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery Plan 2019 – 2021

Appendix 3: Active North Tyneside Annual Report: Executive Summary 2018-19

## **8. Contact officers:**

Heidi Douglas: Consultant in Public Health, North Tyneside Council (0191 643 2120)

## **9. Background information:**

The following background documents have been used in the compilation of this report and are available from the author:-

[National Childhood Measurement Programme and Childhood Obesity Profiles Health Survey for England 2017](#)

[PHE Fingertips](#)

[Whole System's Approach to Obesity](#)

[National Childhood Obesity Action Plan \(Chapter 1\)](#)

[National Childhood Obesity Action Plan \(Chapter 2\)](#)

## COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

### 10 Finance and other resources

The North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery Plan should not have any expected financial implications as any actions identified will be managed within current budgets.

### 11 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising report.

### 12 Consultation/community engagement

The discovery phase of the National Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme involved consultation with key stakeholders and engagement of children, young people and families. The results from this informed the second phase application and have also informed the North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery Plan.

### 13 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

### 14 Equalities and diversity

There are no equalities and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

### 15 Risk management

Each partner organisation will be required to undertake its own risk assessment relating to any actions delivered as outlined in the North Tyneside Healthy Weight Alliance Delivery Plan.

### 16 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

## SIGN OFF

Chair/Deputy Chair of the Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Public Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Children's and Adult Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CCG Chief Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chief Finance Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head of Law & Governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>