

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Health & Wellbeing Board
Date:	12/03/2024
Subject:	Outputs from Slough Healthy Weight summit
Chief Officer:	Tessa Lindfield, Director of Public Health
Contact Officer:	Dr David Davies, Public Health Registrar
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	Appendix A – Healthy Weight in Slough Large Group Event Report Appendix B – Healthy Weight Health Needs Assessment Report

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out:
- (a) the health needs relating to healthy weight in Slough;
 - (b) the findings of the Slough Healthy Weight summit on 5th February 2024 and;
 - (c) ways of meeting these needs.

Recommendations:

- 1.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
- (a) note the findings and actions from Slough Healthy Weight summit;
 - (b) note the findings and endorse the recommendations within the healthy weight needs assessment and;
 - (c) support and contribute, on behalf of your organisations represented on the Board, future work to develop a system wide action plan to address healthy weight.

Reason:

- 1.3 The above recommendations are based on:
- (a) the work completed as part of the Healthy Weight summit and needs assessment including epidemiology and evidence around actions and;
 - (b) close collaboration with all key partners and stakeholders involved in developing the needs assessment, Healthy Weight summit and action plan.

2. Report

- 2.1 This report supports the Council's vision and priorities, aligning with the Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 by focusing on improving health and reducing inequalities, particularly in young and diverse populations. It contributes to the Corporate Plan 2023-2027 by prioritising children's health and addressing social determinants of wellbeing. Additionally, it complements the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024, enhancing support for children with special needs, thereby fostering a more inclusive and healthy community for all Slough residents.

- 2.2 This report also aligns closely with key NHS policies, supporting Core20PLUS5's focus on reducing healthcare inequalities and targeting at-risk populations. It contributes to the NHS Long Term Plan by enhancing early life care and managing chronic health issues through weight management, directly impacting overall health outcomes. Additionally, it complements the Major Conditions Strategy by addressing obesity, a major driver of ill health, thereby supporting the strategy's emphasis on prevention, early diagnosis, and long-term condition management within an integrated care framework.

Background

- 2.2 Excess weight (overweight and obesity) is a critical health issue, with significant impacts on individuals and society. In adults, it is linked to diseases like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers. For example, adults with obesity are five times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. The economic impact is substantial, with obesity-related healthcare costs in the UK amounting to £51 billion annually. In children, excess weight affects both immediate and long-term health, leading to conditions like type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The lifestyle and environmental factors contributing to excess weight include diet, physical inactivity, and socioeconomic status, underscoring the need for comprehensive public health strategies.

Current situation and findings from the health needs assessment

- 2.3 Adult excess weight and obesity figures present a significant public health challenge. In Slough, around 66% of adults are living with excess weight, and approximately 23.8% are obese, based on the standard BMI cut-off of 25. This prevalence is slightly higher than the South East region average, but considering Slough's ethnically diverse population, the actual extent of excess weight could be underestimated. The local data also reveals stark inequalities in health. Hospital admissions where obesity is a factor are notably high in Slough, at 2623 per 100,000, almost double the regional average. Furthermore, conditions like ischemic heart disease and diabetes, closely linked to excess weight, are prevalent, with Slough recording the highest diabetes prevalence among local authorities in England.
- 2.4 The situation for children and young people in Slough is equally concerning. In the Reception year, the prevalence of excess weight is around the average for the South East region. But by Year 6, Slough records the highest prevalence in the region, with 42.5% of children experiencing excess weight and 27.4% obesity. These figures not only surpass regional averages but also show an upward trend over time. Variations in excess weight and obesity are evident across different wards, with some wards, like Farnham, having a higher prevalence.
- 2.5 Determinants such as physical inactivity and dietary patterns further compound the issue. In Slough, 33.7% of adults are physically inactive, ranking as the fourth highest in England, while 24.8% meet the recommended '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable intake, the lowest in the region. For children, 42% are physically active, below the regional average. These determinants, alongside the high prevalence of conditions like dental decay in children, underscore the complex interplay of lifestyle, environment, and socioeconomic factors influencing healthy weight in Slough.

Case for change

- 2.6 The high prevalence of excess weight and obesity in both adults and children in Slough, coupled with related health inequalities and the rising trend of obesity-related hospital admissions, highlights an urgent need for change in the healthy weight landscape. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive and tailored approach, considering Slough's unique demographic and socioeconomic factors.

Slough Healthy Weight summit

- 2.7 The Healthy Weight Summit on 5th February 2024 at Wexham Court School Barn marked a significant step in Slough's approach to healthy weight management. This event, attended by over 60 key community and sector stakeholders, aimed to ignite a collaborative movement towards creating a healthier Slough. Discussions focused on exploring current evidence, developing a unified vision, and identifying actionable steps. This summit was a crucial platform for fostering commitment and understanding the necessity for change, setting the groundwork for impactful community-wide actions towards better health outcomes.
- 2.8 Stakeholders delved into local data from the health needs assessment and current evidence base, focusing on a whole-system approach to understand how various factors intricately contribute to excess weight.
- 2.9 Slough CVS presented findings from a recent study conducted within the community, focusing on barriers to healthy weight behaviours. This qualitative study, involving diverse community groups, revealed key insights: a preference for home-cooked meals due to cost and cultural factors, a high purchase rate of fast food among teenagers, and a general lack of understanding about nutritious cooking methods and quantities. Additionally, the study highlighted challenges such as limited access to varied and free physical activities, safety concerns in public spaces, and the need for culturally sensitive health interventions.
- 2.10 The next item was Tricordant Consultancy's presentation on their Healthy Weight Survey for Professionals, involving feedback from 78 Slough-based professionals from diverse sectors. Key findings highlighted the critical importance of access to nutritious and affordable food, and the impact of individual dietary choices on community health. The survey also revealed the necessity for accessible physical activities and safe public spaces, with a significant emphasis on enhancing lifestyle choices to manage healthy weight effectively.
- 2.11 Attendees at the Healthy Weight Summit identified key challenges in Slough such as easy access to unhealthy food, the impact of mental health on lifestyle choices, and the influence of families and education on health behaviours. They envisioned a future where schools lead health promotion, cultural and social factors are sensitively managed, and mental health, nutritious food access, and physical activity are prioritised for all age groups.
- 2.12 Discussions emphasised the need to embed health considerations in policies, focusing on physical activity and nutrition, and to develop common frameworks across agencies. Key enablers identified for achieving healthy weight included consistent health messaging, cultural competence, and a collaborative health and wellbeing approach, pivotal for shaping a supportive health environment in Slough.

Next steps

- 2.13 Tricordant Consultancy will prepare a concise summary report detailing the summit outcomes for the Slough Health and Care Partnership. Additionally, a vlog will be created to widely disseminate the key findings and recommendations across various communication channels, including the Council, VCS, and NHS.
- 2.14 Focused task and finish groups will be established to drive actions forward, with alignment to wider stakeholder interests. These groups should concentrate on key areas including:
- (a) Children and Young People (CYP)
 - (b) Pathway Development
 - (c) Physical Activity and Active Travel
 - (d) Creating a Healthy Eating Environment
- 2.15 Building on the summit's outcomes, it is important to progress with the health needs assessment's recommendations. This includes enhancing data collection for more accurate BMI assessments, intensifying focus on adult and child excess weight, particularly in areas with higher prevalence, and strengthening collaborations for diabetes prevention and management. Additionally, the development of culturally sensitive, community-focused health interventions and the consideration of innovative approaches to physical activity and healthy eating are crucial.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.3 Risk management implications

- 3.3.1 The risk of not reviewing the current healthy weight strategy and provision will likely lead to an increased prevalence of excess weight in adults and CYP which does not align with the Wellbeing Strategy or Corporate Plan.

3.4 Environmental implications

- 3.4.1 Promoting a healthy weight is anticipated to yield substantial environmental benefits. Increased physical activity and a shift towards active travel, for instance, are likely to lead to decreased reliance on light vehicles. Furthermore, a reduction in the consumption of takeaway food could contribute to less litter and a decrease in single-use packaging.

3.5 Equality implications

- 3.5.1 The needs assessment and Healthy Weight summit were grounded in an understanding of inequalities. The recommendations are tailored to further explore these inequalities and address them.

4. Background Papers

- 4.1 None