

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 30 JANUARY 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

EAT OUT EAT WELL HEALTHY EATING AWARD

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategic Framework identifies six priorities to help us build communities that promote good physical and mental health. One of those priorities is the long term vision that Welwyn Hatfield will become a "Healthy Food" borough. This means that we will have a clear approach to healthy and safe food provision across the borough, taking into account food safety, supply, support to businesses together with enforcement when necessary, thereby enabling people to make informed healthy choices
- 1.2 This report sets out information regarding the "Eat Out, Eat Well" initiative which is a healthy eating award that the Public Health & Protection Team are planning to deliver with our compliant food businesses. This award will help to promote healthier food choices.
- 1.2 This intervention will support the public in being able to make informed lifestyles choices with the ultimate aim of improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For members to:
- note the introduction of this healthy eating award for our food businesses and
 - to support the scheme by promoting and working towards the award in all our Council owned facilities.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 Obesity has a huge economic cost to society. It currently costs 5.1 billion for the NHS and 70 billion to society as a whole nationally (2014/15).
- 3.2 Public Health England Health Profiles 2015 have identified that 52.7% of adults and 28.6% of children in Year 6 (as measured as part of the national measurement programme) were overweight in Welwyn Hatfield.
- 3.3 Obesity has now become a national epidemic. There is no simple or isolated resolution to this as the causes are a complex combination of issues including significant changes in food culture. In fact one in every six meals is now eaten out of the home.

- 3.4 The introduction of a healthy food award will aim to reduce obesity while respecting consumer choice, economic realities and ultimately the need to eat.
- 3.5 Eat Out, Eat Well was originally developed in Surrey and first piloted in June 2009. The award is now operational across eight counties in southern England; Welwyn Hatfield will be the first authority in Hertfordshire to join this scheme.
- 3.6 The award works on a three tier system, bronze, silver and gold. Awards are based upon a scoring system that takes into account the food on offer, cooking methods and how the caterer promotes it to their customers. It focuses on keeping fat, sugar and salt to a minimum; making fruit and vegetables widely available; basing main meals on starchy carbohydrates and marketing and promoting healthier options.
- 3.7 The award will only be targeted towards food businesses that cater for the general public and are compliant with food hygiene and food standards legislation.
- 3.8 Businesses taking part have the option to receive free nutrition training, building the skills and knowledge base of employees. Businesses will be listed on the Eat Out Eat Well website, can use the branding associated with the award and will receive a certificate and window sticker. All of the branding can incorporate the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council logo.
- 3.9 Public Health & Protection will feature the award in Council publications, social media communications and engage local newspapers in the promotion of these participating businesses. The award may provide a competitive edge and increase customer satisfaction as demand for healthier choices continues to grow.
- 3.10 It is our intention that the project will initially start in Council owned facilities. This will demonstrate a commitment from the Council to take bold and brave action to address obesity. It also recognising the important role that the Council can play in improving the future health and wellbeing of residents.

4 Legal Implication(s)

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report. However, it is important to note that this project supports the government's Childhood Obesity Plan for action published in August 2016 and links into the Councils Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

5 Financial Implication(s)

- 5.1 There is a budget allocated for this project. This has been funded through Hertfordshire County Councils Public Health Partnership Fund "The District Offer" and the project plan has been agreed with the County Council.
- 5.2 It is difficult to measure the cost saving to society achieved by this intervention, but there are cost calculator tools available which we may be able to use as part of the evaluation process.

6 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 The main risks related to this proposal are:
- 6.2 The Council is at risk from criticism from central government if it does not design food environments within public sector buildings, services and spaces that makes a healthy food choice an option as specified in the Childhood Obesity Plan.
- 6.3 The public are at risk if the council does not take any action to intervene in reducing obesity in the resident population.
- 6.4 Our work with local business, especially small and medium sized enterprises helps the local economy and business growth, thereby mitigating associated risks.

7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 Food security is a recognised risk¹ and environmental health work and the council's role as a category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act can assist with the mitigation of this risk.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

- 8.1 There are no procurement implications.

Climate Change Implication(s)

- 8.2 None directly arising from this report.

9 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 9.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities "maintain a safe and healthy community", "protect and enhance the environment", "help build a strong local economy", "engage with our communities and provide value for money".

10 Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not yet been carried out in connection with this initiative.

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Date	December 2016

¹ See for example <http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pas96-2014-food-drink-protection-guide.pdf> accessed 10/03/2016