1. Summary of report

The purpose of this report is to present a renewed focus on healthy weight across the life course as a public health priority.

Background:

Over 75% of children in Barnsley are a healthy weight when they start school however, throughout the life course, development of excess weight (overweight and obesity) increases to an extent that around 28% of Barnsley adults are a healthy weight. The proportion of underweight children remains around 1%, however there is insufficient information for estimates in adults. Interventions to promote healthy weight will therefore have to be targeted more at reducing excess weight and reducing the inequality gap across the life course through proportionate distribution of resources. In 2013/14 approximately 900 Barnsley residents (all ages) were admitted to hospital with either a primary or secondary diagnosis of obesity¹, most of which could have been prevented.

The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health² provided recommendations for the promotion of healthy weight and prevention of non-communicable diseases. In 2011, the government published Healthy Lives; Healthy People A Call to Action on Obesity in England³ proposed that a new way of looking at the issue was needed to make a step-change towards a healthier weight for everyone. Two new national ambitions were set:

- Achieve a sustained downward trend in the level of excess weight in children by 2020 and
- Achieve a downward trend in the level of excess weight averaged across all adults by 2020.

¹ HSICIC (2015) Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet, England  
² WHO (2004) Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health  
³ HM Government (2011) Healthy Lives, Healthy People A Call to Action on Obesity in England  
The Barnsley Public Health Strategy identifies that obesity in adults and children remains a challenge, and lies at the root of many causes of avoidable ill-health and needs to be addressed.

**National update:**

To support local work on childhood obesity, Public Health England will be launching two new resources later this year: a child obesity framework and prioritisation tool to provide practical support to help development of local needs assessments, and obesity strategies locally. In addition this Summer Change4Life with Disney returns with 10 Minute Shake Up activities. The campaign encourages children to ‘Just Keep Moving’ to help reach the 60 minutes of exercise they need each day through 10 minute bursts of moderate to vigorous activity.

The Government's strategy for tackling childhood obesity in England was expected to be published in the summer, however this has been delayed further now with an unknown publication date. It is understood that the strategy will be a key step forward in helping our children live healthier lives, with a key focus on the obesogenic environment and a whole systems approach to tackling the issue.

**The scale of the challenge:**

High obesity levels are usually linked to poverty, deprivation, unhealthy diets and a lack of exercise. A whole system approach to tackling obesity is critical — from production and promotion of healthy diets to redesigning the built environment to promote walking, together with wider cultural changes to shift society values around food and activity.

Data from the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) shows that in Barnsley very few children (0.7% at reception and 1.2% at year 6) are underweight, compared with those who are either overweight or obese (20% at reception and 31.6% at year 6).

Public Health England estimates that around 35.1% of adults aged 16 years and over are obese in Barnsley and 71.6% are classified as overweight or obese.

Obesity in pregnancy increases risks to health for the mother and child during and after pregnancy. In Barnsley the level of obesity is estimated to be around 10.1% based on booking data from local maternity services.

The Foresight Report Tackling Obesities: Future Choices, states that by 2050 modelling indicates that 60% of adult men, 50% of adult women and about 25% of all children under 16 could be obese. Obesity increases the risk of a range of chronic diseases, particularly type 2 diabetes, stroke and coronary heart disease and also cancer and arthritis. The NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to double to £10 billion per year by 2050. The wider costs to society and business are estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year.

**What we will do?**

Tackling obesity requires the work of many organisations and partners. There is a need for local government, NHS, communities, businesses and the third sector to work together, with a shared ambition and long-term commitment to promoting a healthy weight. Although there has been some good progress over the last few years, we acknowledge that we need to...
develop a multi-faceted approach that involves both individual and environmental approaches.

In response to this it is proposed that we adopt the wider determinants of obesity approach in tackling the issue of overweight and obesity in Barnsley. This approach is in line with the guiding principles of the published ‘Healthy lives, healthy people: a call to action on obesity in England (DoH 2011)³, and in line with the public health NICE guideline – PH 42 Obesity: working with local communities⁷

To progress this scoping work the following steps will be undertaken initially:

- Mapping of current Barnsley weight management interventions across the life course.
- Healthy weight needs assessment to be carried out.
- A self-assessment to be undertaken against the recommendations from the NICE guidance PH42 Obesity: working with local communities⁸
- Consultation with key stakeholders.

It is intended that as a result of this work a series of high level strategic actions will be developed into a framework to be delivered by a new multi-agency Healthy Weight Alliance.

Through the Alliance there will be a renewed focus on prevention whilst also providing support to those children and adults who are above the healthy weight range. This will be achieved by delivering evidence based programmes across the life course to prevent overweight and obesity, and improving the management provided for those children and adults who are above the healthy weight range. In particular, there is a need to support population groups who are at greater risk of developing obesity.

The Alliance will develop links with other existing groups, services, programmes or organisations that are progressing healthy weight activities to ensure there is a coordinated approach across the borough and a shared responsibility for promoting healthy weight.

2. Proposals/ Recommendations/ Action required

- To note the scale of the challenge and potential impact if action to tackle obesity is not progressed.
- To agree the wider determinants of obesity approach and the above outlined steps to progress the scoping work.
- To note the need for collaborative working with all relevant partners required for implementation of a Healthy Weight Alliance and development of high level strategic actions.

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