

Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight

Public Health and Health Integration Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 4/11/2025

Lead director/officer: Rob Howard

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 1

1. Summary

Maintaining a healthy weight is important for overall health and wellbeing. People who have excess weight, compared to those with a healthy weight, are at increased risk for many serious diseases and health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory disease, as well as mental health conditions. In addition, excess weight is known to contribute to factors such as poorer sleep, self-esteem and body image. Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of these adverse impacts. A balanced weight also supports better energy levels, mental health, and helps people to stay active and enjoy a higher quality of life.

Leicester City Council's Whole System Approach (WSA) to Healthy Weight supports collaborative action across a variety of areas to support the promotion of healthy weight, moving away from individual blame of weight status to an approach that focuses on the power and cumulative effect of systems changes. If every single player made a positive change of 2 or 3%, rolled out across the entire system, we would see improvements in healthy weight in Leicester. This incremental gain made collectively adds up to sustained and system wide change.

The below report outlines the complexities of weight and the comprehensive approach being taken within Leicester to promote healthy weight across the system.

2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny:

Public Health and Health Integration Scrutiny Commission are invited to:

- Read and comment on the current position regarding the approach to healthy weight in Leicester.
- Offer suggestions on the planned and future work of the approach, suggesting opportunities for engagement with system partners.

3. Detailed report

Language used when communicating about weight

Obesity is a complex issue that can be attributed to a combination of environmental and medical factors. The sensitive nature of the topic, and stigma that those living with obesity can face, has supported widespread work to neutralise the language used when referring to individuals whose weight is above or below what is clinically healthy. Terminology relating to clinical definitions of weight outside of healthier parameters is used within this report, but communication relating to weight will be compassionate and person-first.

4.1. Healthy weight in Leicester

Maintaining a healthy weight is important for overall health and wellbeing. People who have excess weight, compared to those with a healthy weight, are at increased risk for many serious diseases and health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory disease, as well as mental health conditions. In addition, excess weight is known to contribute to factors such as poorer sleep, self-esteem and body image. Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of these adverse impacts. A balanced weight also supports better energy levels, mental health, and helps people to stay active and enjoy a higher quality of life.

People living with excess weight are more likely to develop a range of conditions including diabetes, cancer, hypertension, and stroke. Leicester has a significantly higher prevalence of diabetes than England. Leicester's communities are diverse, and members of these communities, specifically those from South Asian backgrounds, are at an increased risk of experiencing life-limiting long-term conditions such as diabetes at a lower Body Mass Index (BMI).

62.8% of adults, 19.3% of Reception aged children and 39.1% of Year 6 age children in Leicester have excess weight. Higher prevalence exists in those aged 44-64 years, people living with disability, people with poor mental health, people with low level of education and people from Black communities.

However, the world we live in is not conducive to maintaining healthy weight and individuals cannot be blamed. Wider influences on health play a huge role in individual and community capability, opportunity, and motivation to maintain a healthy weight. The complexity of the many influences on healthy weight means the approach to try and improve healthy weight must be comprehensive and draw on the whole system.

A sample of influences on weight are summarised:

- Biological influences – genetics, hormone changes, slowing of metabolic rate across life course.
- Psychological influences – depression, sleep, eating disorders, anxiety, substance misuse, mental health treatments, body image and experience of abuse.
- Environmental influences – fast food outlet density, transport used, travel methods, marketing exposure, employment, air quality, access to services, access to green spaces and access to good food.
- Economic influences – high deprivation, low income, and cost of living crisis.

The complexity of the many influences on healthy weight means the approach to try and improve healthy weight must be comprehensive and consider the whole system, whilst acknowledging what is within and outside of our control as a Local Authority.

4.2 Whole system approaches overview

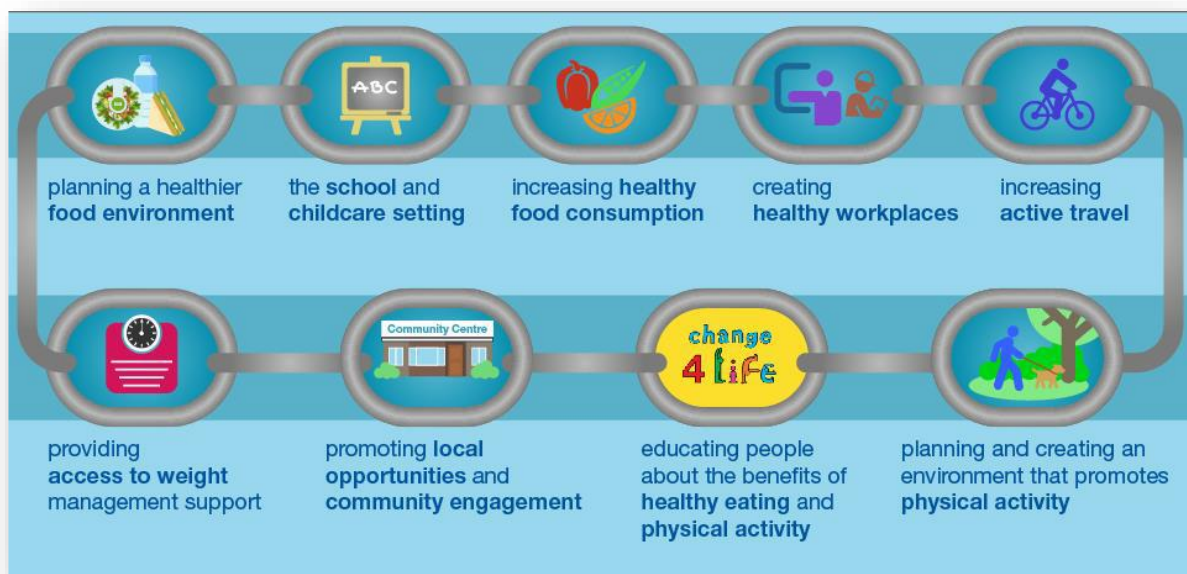
Approaches towards reducing excess weight remained unchanged and focused upon individual intervention and responsibility for years, whilst rates of excess weight have increased globally¹. Evidence of successful approaches to addressing complex public health challenges such as excess weight suggest that full engagement with relevant partners and the community, time to build relationships, trust and capacity, good governance, embedding within a broader policy context, evaluation and finance are important contributing factors².

A WSA works by allowing us to respond to a complex problem with a comprehensive approach that considers the many influences on weight. As a Local Authority, we play a guiding role, and the approach draws on the strengths in our relationships with organisations and learns from and builds on these. It provides the opportunity to foster new relationships through a shared agenda.

Wider influences on excess weight including living and working conditions, education, and policy must be considered when trying to promote healthy weight. If every single player and area made a positive change of 2 or 3%, rolled out across the entire system, we would see improvements in healthy weight in Leicester. Incremental gain made collectively adds up to sustained and system wide change.

The below figure outlines common areas of excess weight activity that can be identified and prioritised when implementing a WSA to healthy weight. Leicester's system actions broadly align with these main areas of activity and focus, as well as reflecting existing strategy operating within the City, without duplication.

Figure 1: Common areas of activity identified as part of a WSA to healthy weight.³



4.3. Adopting the Food Active Healthy Weight Declaration for Local Authorities

To support the implementation of the WSA, Leicester City Council adopted the Food Active Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight in December 2022, committing to action on healthy weight. Representatives from Local Authority attended the launch, with many Heads of Service and Officers pledging their support and making tailored commitments to their department. These pledges were followed up after 6 months, and were reviewed and renewed at an event in late 2024. The 16 commitments within the Declaration that are embedded within the WSA action plan are outlined in Appendix 1.

4.4. Leicester's mission, guiding principles and key themes

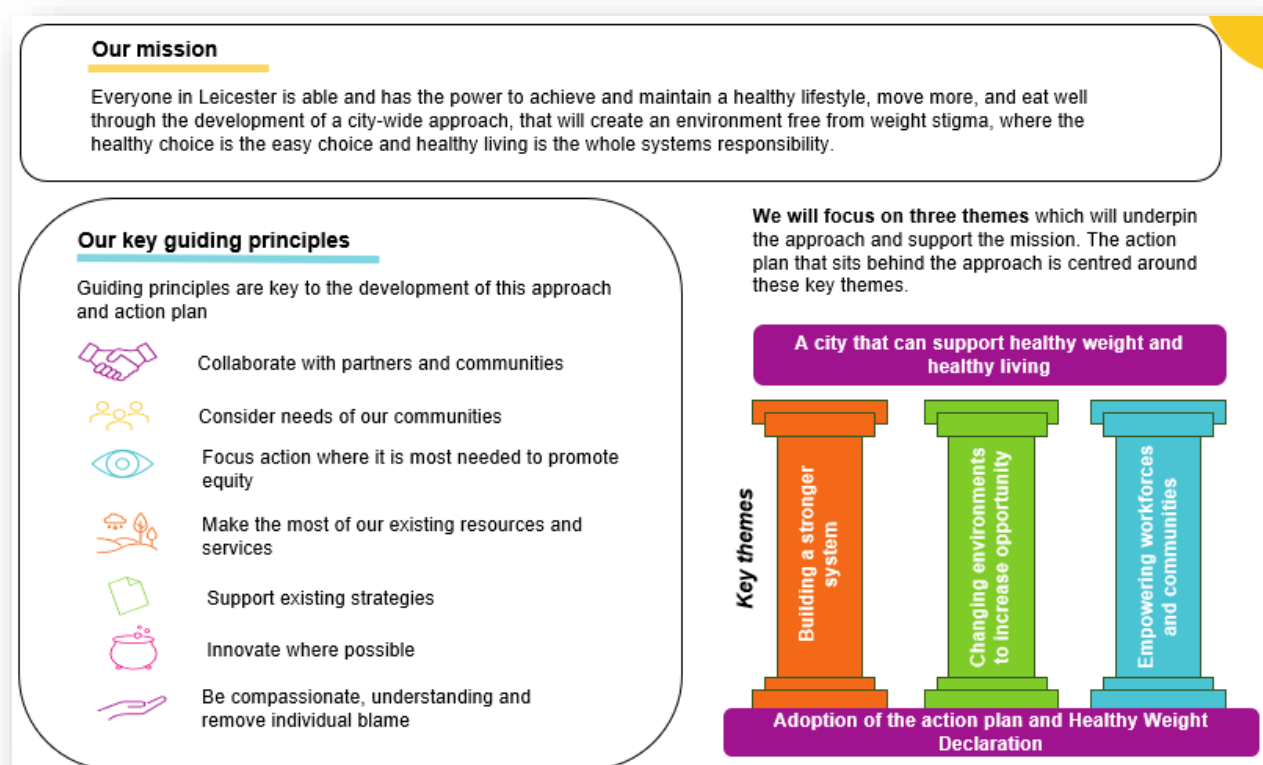
As a long-term approach aiming to influence generational change, qualitative and quantitative outcomes and outputs are not the focus but are monitored through an action plan and yearly reports.

To support long term action, short term aims, and smaller projects sit as part of the approach. Long term systems change and a long-term vision of reducing excess weight across Leicester is the focus. We must continue to do what we can upstream, and we must acknowledge that doing nothing to reduce excess weight is not an option. The approach aims to contribute towards the development of a city where healthy weight can be maintained, and good health is the systems responsibility.

The work of numerous Public Health activities is supported and interwoven within the approach including; Leicester's Food Plan, Healthy Conversation Skills (Making Every Contact Count approach), health in all policies, mental health, social isolation, and physical activity. Wider departments such as SEND and Education, Children's Social Work and Early Help, Adult Social Care and Commissioning, Housing, Transport, Planning, Public Safety and Organisational Development all play a role within the approach and have benefits to obtain.

The approaches existing mission, guiding principles and key themes are outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Leicester City Council WSA to Healthy Weight mission, guiding principles and key themes.



4.5. Life course approach to healthy weight

Addressing excess weight takes a life course approach that spans a variety of organisations and embeds healthy living as the responsibility of all. Leicester's approach reflects the life course perspective, whilst prioritising work around maternal weight, children and families, and promoting equity within areas of deprivation and those with disability. Work in recent years and plans for work across the life course are provided.

4.5.1. Preconception, pregnancy and post-partum

Data from 2018 showed that 23.8% of pregnant women/ people* in Leicester at booking appointment were defined by BMI as living with obesity. Pregnancy alone can be a significant factor in developing obesity. A high BMI during pregnancy can also have negative health impacts on the mother, foetus and child as they grow⁴. Children born to women of a higher weight are likely to experience overweight as a child and into adulthood.

**transgender and non-binary people also give birth*

Existing local programmes and initiatives

A vast array of work is occurring to support the first 1001 critical days of life. The Healthy Pregnancy Birth and Babies Group works to reduce incidence of infant mortality and has maternal obesity as an identified priority. A new working group is being established to

support strategic development of focused actions surrounding maternal obesity across a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland footprint. The work of Family Hubs within Children Young People and Family Centres across the 0-19 age range around elements such as infant feeding, bonding, communication and family wellbeing contribute to healthier living.

Elements of WSA to highlight

- Bumps to Babies (Leicester City Council antenatal class provision) content on healthy living during pregnancy amended to include clearer messaging on healthy eating and physical activity during pregnancy, and myth dispelling.
- Focus groups carried out in 2023 with women from Leicester Mammias to support direction of maternal excess weight work which supported development of Live Well Walk More offering walks for families.
- Health Needs Assessment on maternal weight worked on throughout 2025 to support direction of work.
- Live Well Leicester integrated lifestyle physical activity instructors trained in Level 3 Pre and Post Natal Physical Activity Training to enable pregnant women/ people to access service.
- Live Well Leicester open to pregnant women/ people with long term conditions (as of September 2025).
- Active Leicester staff at Aylestone Leisure Centre trained in Level 3 Pre and Post Natal Physical Activity Training.
- Buggy Boot camp and Aqua-natal classes added to offer at Aylestone Leisure Centre for pre-and post-partum women for pilot period.
- Specific infant feeding space at Aylestone Leisure Centre set up (timescale to be confirmed) as a pilot alongside staff training on infant feeding to support a welcoming environment for infant feeding.
- A training needs analysis has been conducted with a small sample of Midwives (community and hospital based) to support the development of a new training package. This insight from Leicester based professionals has supported assumptions made from national research that practitioners are concerned about the response of individuals when raising the issue of weight, fear of damaging the relationship with the individual, and have a lack of time.

Planned work

- Focus groups for pregnant women/ people or who have had a baby in the past 2 years to support understanding of weight related experiences, eating well, staying active, how culture and religion affects choices during pregnancy and how health workers have spoken about these topics. These will inform the creation of new resources for healthy weight during and after pregnancy and inform staff training. Additional engagement sessions with a local organisation that supports migrant families around pregnancy, birth and parenting are also being explored.
- Training for Midwives, Health Visitors and other health care professionals engaging with women antenatally to support raising the issue of weight, nutrition and physical activity during and post pregnancy in a compassionate and informed manner.
- Work towards recommendations outlined in the Maternal Weight Health Needs Assessment once finalised, facilitating the development of a shared action plan through the Maternal Weight Working Group reporting into the Healthy Pregnancy Birth and Babies Strategy Group.

4.5.2. Early years (0-5 years)

Being overweight in childhood is associated with being overweight in adulthood and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and other non-communicable diseases. Childhood healthy weight has been approached in a variety of ways across Local Authorities that have seen downward trends in childhood obesity. The most common areas include a strong focus on early years nutrition and exercise⁵.

Existing local programmes and initiatives

A variety of organisations work towards promoting healthy weight by promoting healthy relationships with food and physical activity in the early years. Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic Service (LNDS) offer a variety of support to nurseries and childminders to improve their nutritional offer under the “Eat Better Start Better” Award for City Nurseries including; nutritional training sessions, nursery visits, network events and packed lunch engagement with parents/carers. The Big Cook Little Cook programme takes place in nurseries, community venues and offers weekly cooking and education sessions for parents/carers and their children. This train the trainer programme is well received by parents and highlights positive outcomes.

The Healthy Teeth, Happy Smiles! Oral Health service aims to improve the oral health of children and adults in Leicester and reduce tooth decay and associated health issues. The service provides support and resources for Supervised Toothbrushing in schools and nurseries, free resources including educational packs, free training, a resource catalogue and links to local accredited dentists.

The national Healthy Start programme supports women who are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under the age of 4 who meet a qualifying criterion based on income to get help to buy healthy food and milk. The Oral Health team offer regular training sessions for professionals, and support promotion of the scheme.

Elements of WSA to highlight

- HENRY (Health, Exercise and Nutrition in the Really Young) Healthy Families Right from the Start courses and workshops are now delivered in Leicester in a partnership between Family Hubs and Public Health and are contracted to be delivered until 2027. The courses and workshops are suitable for families with children aged 0-5 years of age. The nine-week courses aim to support families to create a healthier, happier lifestyle covering topics including; wellbeing, family routines, healthy eating and mealtimes, physical activity, screen time, sleep, behaviour management and positive parenting strategies. The standalone two-hour workshops cover; fussy eaters, let's get active, starting solids, taking care of teeth, understanding children's behaviour.
- Live Well Leicester Family Walks (previously Buggy Walks) are offered on the first Saturday of each month.

Planned work

- Support exploration of embedding HENRY as a recommended referral based on family needs into Health Visiting core contacts and wider referral mechanisms (i.e. 1 year contact, and 2-2.5-year contact).
- Explore feasibility of expanding Live Well Family Walks to other areas of the city.
- Work in partnership with Family Hubs to explore opportunities to embed HENRY Core nutrition messages within day-to-day operations through HENRY Champions.

4.5.3. Primary school age (5-11 years)

Between the ages of 5-11 most children spend a significant amount of time within school. Despite guidance such as the National School Food Standards and Government Buying Standards, opportunities to engage in food that is nutritionally balanced varies by school dependant on catering format and provider. All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 classes automatically receive universal infant free school meals. For other primary school age children, eligibility for free school meals depends on qualifying benefits.

Physical activity provision differs across schools, with physical activity requirements of the national curriculum aiming to support children to take part in sustained periods of physical activity and to lead healthy, active lives. Schools do not however bare the full responsibility of influences on children aged 5-11 years of age. Children living in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to be living with overweight or obesity⁶. These children are also more likely to live in areas with high density of fast-food outlets and be exposed to higher quantity of advertising by companies promoting foods high in saturated fat, sugar and salt⁷.

Existing local programmes and initiatives

- Inspire Together (formerly known as Leicester City School Sports Partnership Activity Network) aims to provide health, wellbeing and physical activity opportunities to inspire the young people of Leicester and give them the knowledge they need to lead a healthier, happier future.
- The Daily Mile is a daily run, jog or wheel for 15 minutes in the fresh air with friends. It supports children's physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing – regardless of age, ability or personal circumstances. Schools can engage with this or other programmes to support increases in physical activity.
- The “Mealbarrow” competition is a great way to encourage food growing in the school community. Schools participate by creating a ‘mealbarrow’ (growing a meal in a wheelbarrow), so even if a school does not have a designated growing area, they can still enter. The competition is open to any Leicester school and can be done with an individual class or gardening club and links to the offer of food growing support for schools.
- The Public Health Nurse (School Nurse) Team are responsible for looking after the health of children whilst they are in school from 5-19. They offer growth measurements in Reception and Year 6 as part of the National Child Measurement Programme. School Nurses can also help children with issues including behaviour, continence, physical health, emotional health, parenting advice and healthy lifestyles.
- LNDs provide the Family Lifestyle Club (FLiC) for children living with overweight aged 8-13 years. Children and their parents/carers attend 2-hour sessions over 6-8

weeks to play games, learn about healthy eating, snacking, portion sizes, screentime and lots more.

Elements of WSA to highlight

- In 2024 LNDS commenced through Leicester City Council commission a new offer to schools termed the 'Whole School Food Policy' work. Schools are engaged and supported to undertake a tailored review of food and hydration within their setting and identify opportunity for change that include policy and process changes. This work builds on an 8-year programme (Food for Life) where over 30 Leicester schools achieved awards for their whole school approach to healthy and sustainable food.
- LNDS are also creating training for schools to support healthier provision within the wraparound provision of Department for Education Breakfast Club offer.

Planned work

- Continue to work to increase the number of schools doing The Daily Mile.
- Develop a local social marketing campaign to increase awareness of healthy and sustainable food (encouraging the reduced consumption of meat and dairy and increased consumption of plant-based foods and helping parents to deal with food aversion).
- Develop appropriate resources for low-cost healthy recipes and lunch box resources and promote through a targeted campaign including support tools for parents around picky eating.

4.5.4. Secondary school

Moving from primary to secondary school is a huge transitional period where young people have greater autonomy over the choices they make, including around food that they consume. The academisation of schools and limitations to the School Food Standards means there can be variation in the food provided during the school day. Children who are eligible can access free school meals into secondary school, but stigma around this may prevent children who are eligible from utilising their entitlement.

Although an area of importance, currently no work is being done within the approach to influence the food on offer in secondary schools. However, many previously mentioned partners such as Inspire Together, school nurses, sports clubs and LNDS provide support to secondary schools or secondary school age children via services that are available. Interaction with physical activity as part of the National Curriculum and sports clubs contribute to secondary school age children's relationships with food and physical activity.

4.5.5. Adults

When we define adults, adults are often part of families so there may be crossover into other areas of work and opportunities for children to positively influence their families and vice versa. Nationally and globally the percentage of adults living with excess weight has and continues to increase. In Leicester adults aged 44-64 experience higher levels of excess weight, and in women weight often increases with age.

Existing local programmes and initiatives

National campaigns such as 'Better Health' aim to support adults to make small, simple changes to what and how much people eat and drink. Legislation changes (see section 4.5.6) aim to support the health of the population, including adults. Work of various organisations promoting a reduction in social isolation, improving mental health, helping people with substance use, getting people into physical activity and supporting nutrition all contribute to positive changes towards healthier living.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Learning Disabilities and Autism Collaborative has developed a Healthy Living Toolkit to help support people with learning disabilities to lead healthier and happier lives. This toolkit aims to address longstanding health inequalities and improve outcomes for people with learning disabilities through better nutrition, hydration and physical activity.

Weight management

Weight management services support people who are eligible to lose weight and improve their health. When considering weight loss drugs, within Leicester people can buy weight loss medication privately, or can access the Tier 3 weight management service run by UHL. However, this service is currently closed to new patients. A narrow group of people will be able to get weight loss medication through the NHS from approximately November 2025. This includes people who have a BMI of 40+ (or 37.5+ for people from some ethnic groups) and have at least four of the five following: Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, abnormal blood fats and sleep apnoea.

National programmes including the National Diabetes Prevention Programme and NHS Digital Weight Management Programme support eligible persons to access weight related support. Tier 4 (bariatric surgery) is available locally for eligible persons. Local pilots and projects relating to weight management are being led by the Integrated Care Board. Exploratory conversations are occurring within Leicester City Council to re-commission a Tier 2 Adult Weight Management Service.

Elements of WSA to highlight

- Throughout October-December 2025 focus groups are planned within community members across Leicester to understand barriers and facilitators to healthy weight, experiences of weight stigma, what messaging resonates with them and how we can best support people to maintain a healthy weight. These focus groups are informing the development of a communication and language toolkit that will be disseminated across Leicester workforces, media and other avenues to support consistent messaging and contribute to reducing weight stigma.
- Multiple fast-food outlets have been in place in Leicester for many years and cannot be impacted on by Supplementary Planning Documents. Challenging new applications can however be impacted on by such documentation and there is opportunity to work with businesses. A new Food Business Award is currently being developed to help businesses offer healthier options through changes to the food that they offer to support actions within Leicester's Food Plan. During engagement a total of 14 food businesses including community venues, cafes and restaurants have signed up to a pilot phase.

- The Social Care Healthy Weight working group supports action relating to improving healthy weight in working age adults. As part of this work, specific training has been developed and is being rolled out within Leicester City Council social care teams initially. So far, a small sample of Occupational Therapists, Enablement Officers and Care Navigators have been trained.
- LNDS were commissioned to deliver 'Nutrition and Healthy Living training for a variety of workforces' that is offered on a quarterly basis. To date two training sessions have been provided to a variety of staff including social prescribers, food bank staff, staff helping women fleeing domestic violence, charity staff for mental health and substance use and staff supporting vulnerable tenants. Early evaluation has seen positive increases in knowledge and confidence around nutrition.
- Cooking sessions including 'cooking on a budget' and 'cooking with company' have been offered in Leicester utilising funding from the Household Support Fund and in partnership between Public Health and Leicester Adult Education. These sessions provided an opportunity for people attending to learn core cooking skills, receive important nutrition messages, meet other people in the local area, and learn how to budget. Further sessions are planned, and it is hoped that cooking sessions will form part of the ongoing offer within Adult Education.
- University Hospitals Leicester and Leicestershire Partnership Trust have expressed interest and intent to sign up to the NHS Healthy Weight Declaration where organisations commit to focus on a variety of commitments that promote healthy weight across organisations. As local anchor organisations, the opportunity for the NHS to influence workforces, patients and visitors' health and wellbeing is vast.
- To complement the work of the NHS Healthy Weight Declaration, there are plans to pilot 'Why Weight to Talk training' with local primary care staff to enable conversations about weight within this workforce.

4.5.6. Policy changes supporting local action

Nesta provide a toolkit 'A blueprint to halve obesity in the UK – Comparing over 30 policies to help reduce the prevalence of obesity'⁸. A national policy perspective that was created through ranking policies based on impact, strength of evidence, cost to governments and benefits. The resource provides three areas that would have the highest impact on obesity, have the highest evidence quality and the lowest cost to government. These are: large scale roll-out of pharmacological interventions; ban on all high, fat, sugar, salt (HFSS) price promotions in food retail businesses; and introduce healthiness targets for large retailers.

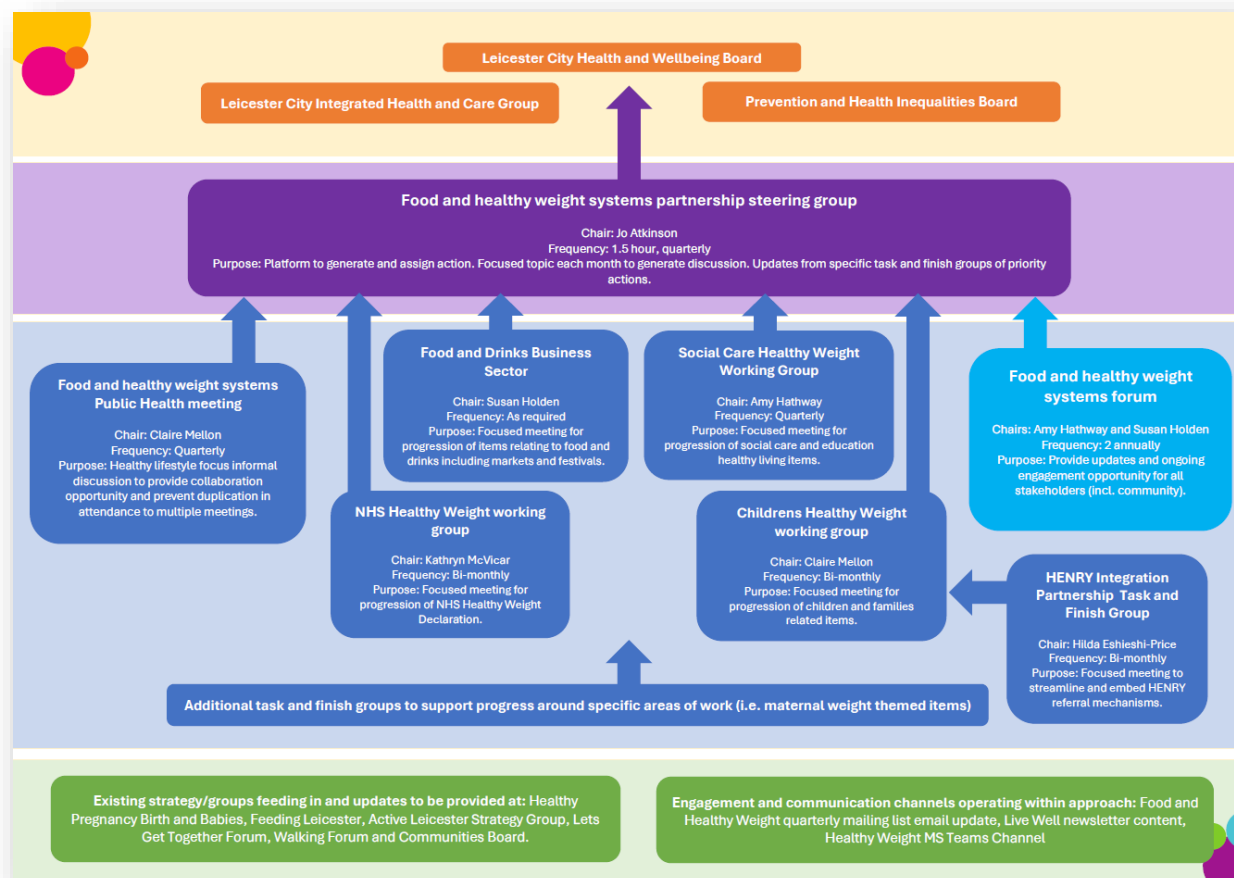
The system influencing choices of the public continues to change with opportunities to eat healthily reducing. Various governments have brought in over 600 policies and strategies to reduce obesity, yet the picture remains a steady increase in experience. However, new legislation supporting healthier choices⁹ has and continues to emerge, supporting the efforts locally. This includes the October 2022 restrictions on HFSS product location promotions in England introduced and the July 2025 Early Years Foundation Stage Framework released with greater emphasis on nutrition.

4.6. Governance

The vastness of the whole systems approach means a robust governance structure is required to monitor and support progression of action. The current structure is outlined

below. This structure will be amended when the Maternal Obesity working group and wider meetings relating to weight management are set up.

Figure 3: Overview of governance structure



4.7 Conclusions

The continual changes in the healthy weight landscape mean that work to reduce obesity must be flexible. Individuals cannot be held responsible for their weight status in a system where healthy choices are often the hardest to make. We must acknowledge that sustained changes across a variety of organisations is the only way to effectively contribute to the improvement of healthy weight in Leicester, and therefore the reduction in experience of non-communicable diseases and poor health.

4. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Signed: Rohit Rughani

Dated: 13/10/2025

4.2 Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty under Section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to take such steps as it deems appropriate to improve the health of people in its area.

There are no adverse implications identified however in relation to current and future approaches to service delivery appropriate legal and procurement advice should be sought as necessary.

Signed: Mannah Begum, Principal Lawyer, Commercial and Contracts Legal

Dated: 13 October 2025

4.3 Equalities Implications

When carrying out their functions the Council must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010) by paying due regard, to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

We need to be clear about any equalities implications of the course of action proposed. In doing so, we must consider the likely impact on those likely to be affected by the options in the report and, in particular, the proposed option; their protected characteristics; and (where negative impacts are anticipated) mitigating actions that can be taken to reduce or remove that negative impact.

Protected characteristics under the public sector equality duty are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The report outlines the comprehensive approach being taken within Leicester to promote healthy weight across the system. It highlights Leicester's city-wide strategy to encourage healthy weight while acknowledging that excess weight disproportionately affects certain groups within the city. Actions are targeted to address the needs of these vulnerable groups. It is important that any engagement is accessible. The initiatives should lead to positive impacts for people from across many protected characteristics.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 16 October 2025

4.4 Climate Emergency Implications

Increasing the proportion of journeys made by active travel - which produces no, or minimal, carbon emissions - is an important part of the council's strategy for working towards a 'climate ready' net zero city. Work which encourages and enables sustainable behaviours such as increased levels of physical activity through active travel and healthy eating may have further co-benefits for tackling the climate emergency.

Service delivery also generally contributes to the council's carbon emissions. Impacts of delivery can be managed through measures such as encouraging partners to use sustainable travel and transport options and use buildings and materials efficiently.

Where relevant, information about the climate benefits of such actions could also be included in communications as part of the programmes.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246

Dated: 14 October 2025

4.5 Other Implications

Signed:

Dated:

5. Background information and other papers:

6. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1: 16 commitments within the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight adopted in 2022 by Leicester City Council

	Strategic/system leadership
1	Implement the Local Authority HWD as part of a long term 'systems wide approach' to obesity
2	Advocate plans that promote a preventative approach to encouraging a healthier weight with local partners, identified as part of a 'place-based system' (e.g. Integrated Care System)
3	Support action at national level to help local authorities promote healthy weight and reduce health inequalities in our communities (this includes preventing weight stigma and weight bias)
4	Invest in the health literacy of local citizens to make informed healthier choices ensuring clear and comprehensive healthy eating and physical activity messages are consistent with government guidelines
5	Local authorities who have completed adoption of the HWD are encouraged to review and strengthen the initial action plans they have developed by consulting Public Health England's, Whole Systems Approach to Obesity, including its tools, techniques and materials
	Commercial determinants
6	Engage with the local food and drink sector (retailers, manufacturers, caterers, out of home settings) where appropriate to consider responsible retailing such as, offering and promoting healthier food and drink options, and reformulating and reducing the portion sizes of high fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) products
7	Consider how commercial partnerships with the food and drink industry may impact on the messages communicated around healthy weight to our local communities. Such funding may be offered to support research, discretionary services (such as sport and recreation and tourism events) and town centre promotions
8	Protect our children from inappropriate marketing by the food and drink industry such as advertising and marketing in close proximity to schools; 'giveaways' and promotions within schools; at events on local authority controlled sites
	Health Promoting Infrastructures/Environments

9	Consider supplementary guidance for hot food takeaways, specifically in areas around schools, parks and where access to healthier alternatives are limited
10	Review how strategies, plans and infrastructures for regeneration and town planning positively impact on physical activity, active travel, the food environment and food security (consider an agreed process for local plan development between public health and planning authorities)
11	Where Climate Emergency Declarations are in place, consider how the HWD can support carbon reduction plans and strategies, address land use policy, transport policy, circular economy waste policies, food procurement, air quality etc
	Organisational Change/Cultural Shift
12	Review contracts and provision at public events, in all public buildings, facilities and 'via' providers to make healthier foods and drinks more available, convenient and affordable and limit access to high calorie, low nutrient foods and drinks (this should be applied to public institutions scrutiny given to any new contracts for food drink provision, where possible)
13	Increase public access to fresh drinking water on local authority-controlled sites (keeping single use plastics to a minimum) and encouraging reuseable bottle refills
14	Develop an organisational approach to enable and promote active travel for staff, patients & visitors, whilst providing staff with opportunities to be physically active where possible (e.g. promoting stair use, standing desks, cycle to work/school schemes)
15	Promote the health and wellbeing of local authority staff by creating a culture and ethos that promotes understanding of healthy weight, supporting staff to eat well and move more
	Monitoring and Evaluation
16	Monitor the progress of our action plan against the commitments, report on and publish the results annually

Reference list

- ¹ A secondary analysis of the childhood obesity prevention Cochrane Review through a wider determinants of health lens: implications for research funders, researchers <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-021-01082-2>
- ² Whole systems approaches to obesity and other complex public health challenges: a systematic review <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-6274-z>
- ³ Health Matters: whole systems approach to obesity [Health matters: whole systems approach to obesity - GOV.UK](#)
- ⁴ Early Years High Impact area 4: [Early years high impact area 4: Supporting healthy weight and nutrition - GOV.UK](#)
- ⁵ Learning from Local Authorities with downward trends in childhood obesity : [Learning from local authorities with downward trends in childhood obesity](#)
- ⁶ November 2024 obesity profile statistical commentary [Obesity Profile: statistical commentary, November 2024 - GOV.UK](#)
- ⁷ University of Liverpool Study reveals scale of junk food advertising in UK's most deprived areas [Study reveals scale of junk food advertising in UK's most deprived areas - News - University of Liverpool](#)
- ⁸ Nesta: A blueprint to halve obesity in the UK comparing over 30 policies to help reduce the prevalence of obesity [Blueprint - A blueprint to halve obesity in the UK](#)
- ⁹ Tackling Obesity: improving policy making on food and health [tackling-obesity.pdf](#)