

**Agenda Item No:** 5(b)  
**Report To:** Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board  
**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
**Report Title:** Healthy Weight Action Plan report 2017-18 Quarter 3:  
October to December 2017  
**Report Author:** Deborah Smith  
**Organisation:** Kent County Council, Public Health



**Summary:** Excess weight among children aged 4-5 and 10-11 year old and overweight and obesity rates among adults are higher in Ashford than the national average. Nationally, obesity is a growing problem and is often exacerbated by social norms, especially clothe sizing, accessibility of fast food outlets and poor nutrition. It is estimated that only half of the population have 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

Tackling a major issue such as obesity at a local scale can be a challenge, but the task and finish group are committed to ensure that partners work together to ensure that all relevant policies take advantage of opportunities to address healthy weight in the community.

Recent work of the group has been focussed on using local insights to identify local solutions using engagement and co-design. This work is ongoing. The One You shop is an accessible resource for local people to manage their weight and seek advice on healthy lifestyles. With a larger premises, the shop could deliver a wider range of healthy weight services.

**Recommendations:** **The Board be asked to:-**

- i) Note the contents of this report
- ii) Comment on the report

### **Purpose of the report**

1. The Task and Finish Groups for Smoking and Obesity are delivering specific 2017/18 Action Plans from April 2017. This report provides a quarterly update to the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board and invites comments on progress.

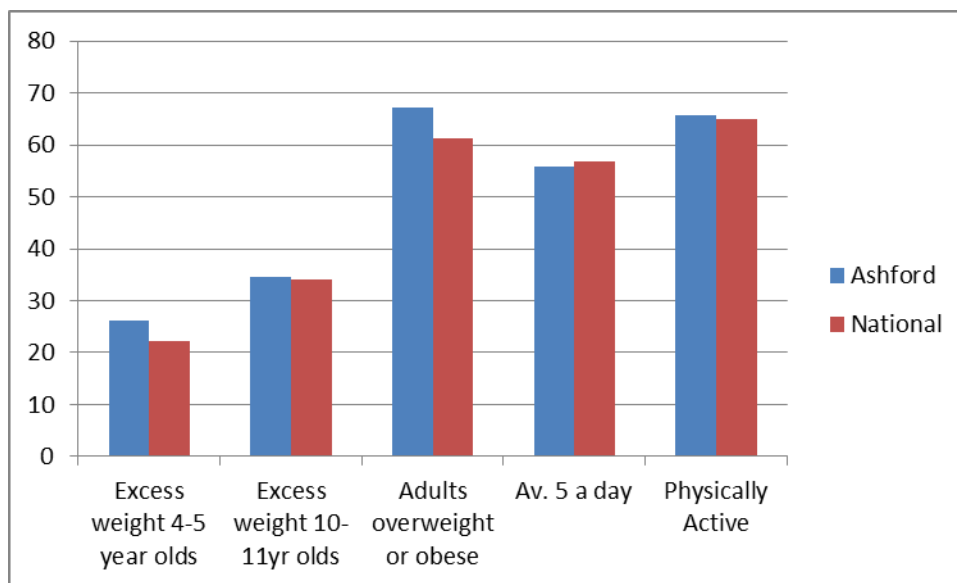
### **Background**

2. In December 2017, the two separate task and finish groups focussing on Stop Smoking and Obesity have amalgamated as the individual plans now include joint initiatives such as the communication plan, the One You shop delivery and a Health event for local businesses. The merged task and finish group will now cover both priorities, still meet monthly and retain stop smoking and healthy weight specialists.

## Healthy Weight Prevalence in Ashford 2016

- Excess weight among children and adults in Ashford is higher than the national average. Child Measurement at the age of 4-5 is 26.1% in Ashford compared to the national rate of 22.1%. Among 10-11 year olds, the rate is 34.6% in Ashford against a national average of 34.2%. Adults who are overweight or obese in Ashford is estimated at 67.1% of the population, 5.8% higher than the national average (61.3%). There are fewer people in Ashford who have an average of 5 fruit & vegetables a day but more are reported to be physically active than the national average (65.8% and 64.9% respectively).

Chart 1: Health Weight Rates in Ashford 2015/16




Source: Public Health England, Local Tobacco Control Profiles

## Progress to Date:

- Key progresses in the last quarter:

### Research

A number of in-depth interviews were commissioned to gain insights into the attitudes and behaviours of local people in respect of their weight and obesity. These were conducted in the Victoria ward which has the highest obesity estimates in Ashford. The insights were revealing, with all associating concerns and risks of obesity with mobility, image, mood and energy rather than health risks. The interviewees measured weight and being overweight by clothe size and mobility than they did with BMI scores. Most people thought they were smaller than their actual size and many felt that to reduce weight was difficult, overwhelming and could not taking action without accessing support services. The results of the interviews were categorised into three different stages of behaviour change:

<p>Red</p> 	<p>Amber</p> 	<p>Green</p> 
<p><u>Attitude to Weight:</u></p> <p>I accept my weight</p> <p>I won't change</p> <p>I make excuses &amp; am in denial</p> <p>Take me as I am</p>	<p><u>Attitude to Weight:</u></p> <p>I want to change</p> <p>I know I am overweight when I feel overweight</p> <p>I feel conscious of my size</p>	<p><u>Attitude to Weight:</u></p> <p>I am motivated towards a healthy weight</p> <p>My weight is my top priority</p> <p>My weight is part of my lifestyle</p>
<p><u>Barriers to Change</u></p> <p>It is too hard</p> <p>It is too boring</p> <p>I can afford this lifestyle</p>	<p><u>Barriers to Change</u></p> <p>I want to, but can't commit</p> <p>It is too overwhelming</p> <p>It is not a priority at the moment</p> <p>My weight is outside of my control</p>	<p><u>Barriers to Change</u></p> <p>I am addicted to a healthy lifestyle</p> <p>I feel guilty if I don't manage my weight</p>
<p><u>Drivers for change</u></p> <p>A major life/health event</p> <p>I can't get up, have a low mood and have no energy</p> <p>I cannot be in denial any longer</p>	<p><u>Drivers for change</u></p> <p>I need an offer of support</p> <p>I need to feel better</p> <p>I need to look better</p>	<p><u>Drivers for change</u></p> <p>Perseverance</p>

### One You shop

Healthy Weight advice and drop-in 'weigh ins' are the most popular service in the One You shop. Over 900 of the 1,868 interventions have been about healthy weight or physical activity. A further 238 interventions have been blood pressure checks and 76 have received Health Trainer support. This activity demonstrates that weight is an important issue to many people, but tackling the issue and commitment can seem overwhelming and perceive that there is a lack of accessible support available.

An additional 225 people have received a health check or a health MOT in the One You shop and these activities can be opportunities for motivational and critical discussions with individuals. The insights work being carried out will help inform a range of messages and services that are accessible, fit for purpose and effective.

## **Conclusion**

5. The insights work produced using local engagement is a positive start in considering the range of existing services and ascertaining whether these are accessible and fit for purpose for local target groups. The headline results are a source of useful insights to help shape effective service delivery. It also highlights that many individuals and professionals find weight a personal and difficult subject to approach so further thought will be given to this and included in the task and finish group's communication plan.

**Contacts:** Email: [Deborah.Smith@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Deborah.Smith@kent.gov.uk)  
Tel: 03000 416696