

## **1. Purpose of this Briefing Note**

This note sets out the areas of work that West Oxfordshire District Council is already delivering to prevent obesity and promote maintenance of a healthy weight for its residents.

## **2. Background**

- West Oxfordshire District Council has a strategic priority around enabling its residents to access and maintain physical and mental health and wellbeing lead healthy summarised as:  
*Work in partnership to sustain vibrant, healthy and economically prosperous towns and villages with full employment.*
- The Council works closely with the CCG, County Council and local GP commissioning group to develop appropriate initiatives and programmes. The Council's Healthy Communities Manager sits on the PH Healthy Weight Steering Group on behalf of the city and district councils and the Strategic Physical Activity group for Oxfordshire.
- The Council is engaged in a range of activities that help people to gain and maintain a healthy weight. They can broadly be categorised as
  - opportunities to be physically activity through structured activity
  - opportunities that stem from medical interventions
  - casual opportunities to be physically active through spatial planning including access to green spaces.

## **3. Opportunities to be physically active through structured provision**

The council is engaged in:

- Full exercise programme through our leisure facilities, including establishing the 'easy-line' fitness facility for people who are not ready or comfortable in a large open fitness suite.
- Financial support for sports clubs who want to improve their facilities and become more accessible to local people.
- The ISO Project, our lottery funded programme, opening up participation opportunities for young people with a range of disabilities. 280 young disabled people accessing this service in the first year.
- Targeted work with vulnerable groups – to enable them to use facilities easily. The Council has introduced a range of concessions and free services to encourage

differing groups to access leisure opportunities – main beneficiaries are vulnerable young people and adults with complex needs

- Financial support for communities who wish to enhance their community facilities, such as village halls, to enable activities to take place.
- Securing developer contributions to create sport, physical activity and leisure infrastructure in suitable locations including indoor and outdoor activity space, leisure centres and play areas.

#### **4. Opportunities that stem from medical interventions**

The council is engaged in:

- Exercise on prescription is encouraged and there is a successful programme running in partnership with the Councils leisure management contractor GLL Better.
- Introduced some activities to the most recent cycle of the Reach for Health programme in West Oxfordshire led by Oxford Health. Interested to build on this but contract dissolved.
- There is on-going engagement with GP's across the district including a presentation to GPs in the last year.
- GLL Better's Health Manager has visited Practices with guidance and encouragement.
- GPs also have physical activity on their calendar for a 2016 Practice Learning Time session, which will be led by the Council's health personnel.
- West Oxfordshire GPs have been referring through More Life to weight loss providers, which has proved popular and has had some success (60% of participants experiencing weight loss).
- Pilot council in recent Sport England research exploring how best to build closer relationship between commissioners and second tier local authorities – has resulted in more visibility for both parties and some greater engagement.

#### **5. Casual opportunities to be physically active through spatial planning including access to green spaces.**

The council is engaged in:

- Financial support for communities to build appropriate and innovative play provision.
- High level of success in developer contributions to green spaces and play provision.
- Strategic approach to spatial planning within the Council services of *Planning and Strategic Housing* and *Leisure and Communities* with regards to open spaces, in particular play spaces.