

CONTENTS

	Page Number
Chair's Foreword	2
Summary of Recommendations	4
Introduction/Background Information	6
Chapter 1: Communications	11
Chapter 2: Redditch Borough Council	17
Chapter 3: Items to Note	24
Conclusion	26
Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference	27
Appendix 2 - Witnesses	31
Appendix 3 - Timeline of Activities	32
Appendix 4 - Projects in Redditch designed to help people to lose weight and to live healthy lifestyles	34

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FOREWORD

I would never have contemplated such an immense area for scrutiny had I not read the following article in The Times newspaper:

'Rather than setting distant public health targets for professionals to deliver, Mr Cornett [mayor of Oklahoma] wanted individuals to be engaged. He set up a website, thiscityisgoingonadiet.com with advice, discussions and a weight-loss counter where everyone could add to the city's tally. Almost 50,000 people signed up, about a third of the overweight population. It caught the city's imagination. Restaurants offered low-calorie options and gyms offered discounts for participants.

18 months into the campaign Oklahoma had lost close to half a million pounds, but the mayor's constituents had realised there was a fundamental problem with building more activity into their lives – the city was built for commuting by car. The mayor held a referendum asking people to approve a 7-year, one-cent increase in sales tax to pay for bike lanes, sidewalks, hiking trails, ice rinks, green spaces and wellness centres. The answer was a resounding yes.

Oklahoma hit its weight-loss target 3 years ago. Enthused businesses have given loans to make more improvements. It now has a higher employment rate than any urban area in America and the mayor says that fitter and more reliable employees are a key part of the attraction. He has been re-elected for a third successive term.' Jenni Russell – The Times (27 March 2014)

I was encouraged to think that with a strong vision and application we might just be able to help residents to reduce their weight and thereby live healthier and happier lives. However whilst we have been impressed by the quantity and quality of interventions that are available for the public, it has proved very difficult to find an affordable solution to providing the motivation for residents to take advantage of these opportunities.

As can be seen from the following quote from the LGA First magazine, the cost to residents is not just to our health but also our pockets:

'The cost to taxpayers of tackling obesity is set to rise by tens of millions of pounds in just one year. Spending on the growing obesity epidemic is expected this year to reach more than £127 million, a 21% increase on the previous year's figures when council in England spent £105 million. The LGA is warning that we need immediate action to tackle the problem and is calling for a fifth of the current VAT from sales of fast food, soft drinks and confectionery to directly confront the issue.' LGA First News 27 September 2014

We were also disappointed with the response from our Clinical Commissioning Group who do not appear to have an identified programme to deal with their patients who are overweight or obese. Perhaps this is not surprising given national headlines such as: *'Almost all obese people are in denial'* *Times* 14 November 2014, *'GPs are reluctant to talk about obesity'* *Times* 13 January 2015.

However we have made a number of recommendations which we hope will raise the profile of the various initiatives and encourage councillors and council workers to be aware and thereby help residents to make healthier choices.

I would like to thank the members of the task group, Andrew Brazier, Natalie Brookes, Joe Baker and Paul Swansborough for their help, support and enthusiasm, as well as Jess Bailey who has worked hard to help us tackle this important and complex issue.

**Councillor Jane Potter,
Chair of the Tackling Obesity Task Group**



**Councillor Jane Potter, Chair
of the Tackling Obesity Task
Group**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNICATIONS

Recommendation 1

A Communications Strategy should be developed to enable the Council and partner organisations to promote existing healthy eating projects, physical activities and other initiatives that help people to live healthier lifestyles. This strategy should particularly focus on using social media to market local projects.

Financial Implications: There would be the cost of Officer time in terms of developing a communications strategy for this purpose.

At the Council there would be the cost of Officer time to issue messages using social media. However, the Communications Team already use social media and it is not envisaged that additional resources would be required. Similarly partner organisations would need to invest Officer time, though in many cases partners already use social media and therefore the group does not envisage that they would need to use extra resources for this purpose.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

Recommendation 2

GP practices should be notified of all of the healthy eating and physical activities that partners are delivering in the local community. Consideration should be given to providing GP practices with monthly updates.

Financial Implications: The group is envisaging that promotion of activities to GP Practices could be addressed in the Communications Strategy and as part of current efforts by partners to promote healthy lifestyles. Members are therefore not anticipating that any additional financial investment would be required.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

CHAPTER 2: REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Recommendation 3

Officers should investigate further the potential for a Supplementary Planning Document for hot food takeaways to be introduced at Redditch Borough Council. Officers should report back to Committee on the outcomes of their investigations.

Financial Implications: There would be the costs of Officer time involved in investigating the potential to introduce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for hot food takeaways and of producing a Committee report on the findings of that investigation.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified in relation to undertaking an investigation of this subject. However, due to the legal framework within which local planning authorities operate the group would strongly urge the planning department to involve Legal Services in this investigation.

Recommendation 4

Elected Members should all be encouraged to attend health chat training. Frontline service Officers should also attend health chat sessions if they have not already done so.

Financial Implications: There are no financial implications for Redditch Borough Council. Health Chat training is provided to participants for free and is advertised on a regular basis.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

CHAPTER 3: ITEMS TO NOTE

Measures: The group is proposing that the statistics for the levels of obesity and Type 2 diabetes in Redditch should be provided when monitoring update reports are provided for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Healthy Eating Awards: Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) is urged to develop and launch Healthy Eating Awards to encourage local restaurants and takeaways to provide customers with healthy food options.

Leading by Example: Members concur that Redditch Borough Council should continue to take all action possible to lead by example in encouraging staff to live healthy lifestyles.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Health inequalities were identified as a concern for Redditch when compared to the rest of Worcestershire in the Comprehensive Area Assessment in 2010. To address this concern the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership included health inequalities, focusing on tackling smoking, alcohol and obesity/healthy lifestyles, as one of the key local priorities in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy. Redditch Borough Council has also recognised the importance of health to the local community and has adopted a strategic purpose to address this consideration: help me to live my life independently (including health and activity).

In this context the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided in July 2014 to launch a review of action that could be taken to tackle obesity levels in Redditch. The group was tasked with reviewing the following:

- To investigate the action taken by the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership to tackle obesity levels in the Borough (including the work delivered through the Area of Highest Need project).
- To assess the contribution made by Redditch Borough Council to tackling obesity.
- To consult with local representatives of relevant NHS bodies.
- To review actions taken both nationally and internationally to tackle obesity that could potentially be replicated in Redditch.
- To consult with residents about barriers to losing weight.
- To consider the findings from other local authority scrutiny reviews of similar subjects as well as the outcomes of the CfPS Health Inequalities Programme.

Approach to the review

The group gathered evidence from a range of sources. Interviews were conducted with key Council representatives including; the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, the Sports and Physical Activity Development Manager, the Redditch Partnership Manager, the Chief Executive, the Development Control Manager, Planning Officers, the Communications Manager and the Leader of the Council, in his capacity as the Portfolio Holder for Leadership and Partnership (including health and the voluntary sector). Representatives of Worcestershire County Council provided invaluable evidence for the consideration of the group including; the Health Improvement Co-ordinator for Redditch, Neighbourhood Development Manager, Health and Wellbeing Strategy Development Officer, Public Health Consultant and representatives of Choose How You Move. The Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a senior diabetes nurse and nutritionist were also consulted during the review.

Written documentation was another key source of evidence referred to by the group. Documents considered by Members included the Worcestershire Obesity Plan, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-16, Redditch Health profiles

for the period 2010 to 2014, the Redditch Obesity Plan, the Redditch Health and Wellbeing Profile (2013), the Healthy Lives: Healthy People Government White paper and the Healthy People, Healthy Places Briefing on Obesity and the Environment published by Public Health England (2014). Members also considered scrutiny reports produced by other local authorities on the subject of adult and childhood obesity. This included reports published by Birmingham City Council (2014), North Lincolnshire Council (2014) St Helen's Council and Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (2010).

Attempts were made to engage with the public. A press release was issued inviting residents to comment on activities that helped them to lose weight and the barriers that discouraged healthier lifestyles. In total 18 local residents submitted evidence for the consideration of the group. Whilst Members recognise that this is a small sample which cannot necessarily be considered representative of the local view, the feedback was useful and helped to inform the group's recommendations. Members also considered feedback provided by local residents to the Worcestershire Viewpoint survey (2013), which is carried out by Worcestershire County Council. In total three quarters of the respondents to the survey had reported that they considered obesity to be one of the top three health issues facing people in Worcestershire.

Local Context

Figures for obesity are monitored in the health profiles for Redditch, which are produced every year by the Association of Public Health Observatories. These health profiles also contain statistics measuring areas such as the proportion of people living in the Borough with Diabetes and the proportion of adults participating in 150 minutes of physical activity a week.

The figures recorded in the past five years for a number of relevant areas have been recorded in the table below for ease of reference. (The figures for 2015 were not available at the time of writing).

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Obese Children (Year 6)	9.3%	18.7%	20.9%	17.1%	17.7%
Healthy Eating Adults	21.7%	24.1%	24.1%	24.1%	24.1%
Physically Active Adults	10.2%	11.1%	10.2%	53.7%	53.7%
Obese adults	29.9%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	22.9%
People Diagnosed with Diabetes	4%	5.2%	5.3%	5.8%	6.3%
Life Expectancy - Male	77.6	77.9	78	78.7	78.9
Life Expectancy - Female	81.5	82.3	82.6	82.8	82.9

Relatively accurate figures are recorded in these profiles for childhood obesity levels because children's weight is monitored in Reception (for children aged 4 to 5 years) and Year 6 (for children aged 10 to 11 years). Accurate figures cannot be provided for adult obesity levels in the Borough because there is no consistent programme for weighing adults in the country. The figures provided in the profiles are based on survey feedback. It is important to note that the surveys used to assess adult obesity levels have changed during the period 2010 to 2014. Previously data in the Health Survey for England was used to assess adult obesity levels, however, in 2014 the Active People Survey 2012 was used to assess adult obesity levels. The group would therefore urge caution when comparing these figures.

The group also feel it is important to note that the figures provided in the health survey relate to those people who are classified as obese only. Members have been advised that a significantly higher proportion of adults living in Redditch, 65.9 per cent, are classified as either overweight or obese.

Obesity levels in Redditch appear to be comparable to the national average. However, data provided in the *Redditch Health and Well-being Profile* (October 2013) indicates that obesity rates increase in areas with higher levels of deprivation than in more affluent parts of the Borough. Public health experts consulted by the group suggested that the links between social deprivation and higher obesity levels are also reflected in national trends.

Physical activity is important for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and levels of physical activity are monitored in the health profiles. The statistics provided are again based on survey findings. Members have been assured that the surveys underpinning these results were conducted in accordance with best practice. However, the group has debated the extent to which the figures provided in the health profiles are accurate and question the accuracy of the figures recorded between 2012 and 2013 which seem to indicate that there was a significant increase in participation in a 12 month period.

The Worcestershire Obesity Plan 2013-16 is the key strategic document influencing local partners' approaches to tackling obesity in the Borough, including Redditch Borough Council. There are four priorities in the plan which underpins the work of partner organisations:

- Empowering Individuals to take responsibility for their own and their families' diet and physical activity habits. This priority recognises that individuals need to be motivated and feel able to act in order to make sustainable changes to their behaviour.
- Tackling the obesogenic environment. Essentially this priority focuses on the potential impact that the local environment can have on people's health. Action can be taken to change the environment for example through the planning process.
- Developing a healthy workforce.

- Developing robust care pathways. This priority focuses on ensuring that the medical care pathways for patients are fit for purpose.

Health Implications of Obesity:

The group has been informed that many people do not realise they are overweight or obese. Increasingly, due to the greater number of overweight and obese people living in society, larger weights are becoming normalised making it difficult for people to recognise when they are overweight. A healthy size is generally measured in relation to a person's Body Mass Index (BMI). An individual's BMI is calculated on the basis of their height and weight. A person with a healthy weight has a BMI of between 18.5 and 24.9. People with a BMI of between 25 and 29.9 are classified as being overweight, people with a BMI of between 30 and 39.9 are classified as obese and people with a BMI of 40 or more are classified as very obese.

Obesity and being overweight can place a person at an increased risk of developing certain health conditions. This includes:

- Circulatory disease – circulatory disease is the leading cause of death in Worcestershire.
- Coronary heart disease – obese adults are more than twice as likely to develop coronary heart disease as people who are a healthy weight.
- High Blood Pressure – high blood pressure is a key risk factor for strokes.
- Type 2 Diabetes – two-thirds of patients diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes are overweight or obese.
- Musculoskeletal disorders including osteoarthritis.
- Cancer – being obese increases the risk of developing certain types of cancer including breast, colon and uterus.
- Respiratory disease – obese individuals are at greater risk of developing asthma and sleep apnoea.
- Gastrointestinal and liver disease – including gall stones and fatty liver disease.
- Reproductive and urological disorders – including a greater risk of complications during pregnancy.
- Psychological and social problems – including discrimination, stigmatisation and a 70 per cent greater risk of developing dementia in later life.

(This information has been obtained from the Worcestershire Obesity Plan).

According to the Worcestershire Obesity Plan treatment for obesity related health conditions costs the local NHS £80 million per year. A further £60 million is spent on treating the consequences of excess weight.

Unfortunately, Members learned during the review that many people are not aware of the health risks associated with excess weight. Furthermore Members have been advised by the Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG that, based on feedback received from GPs, the patients who are most motivated to lose weight

are those who have already developed a chronic condition such as high blood pressure, back pain or diabetes.

Members concur that taking no action to address this situation is not an option. Without action being taken to prevent people from gaining excess weight and to encourage healthy lifestyles Members are concerned that obesity levels will continue to increase in the Borough to the detriment of public health.

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNICATIONS

Recommendation 1	A Communications Strategy should be developed to enable the Council and partner organisations to promote existing healthy eating projects, physical activities and other initiatives that help people to live healthier lifestyles. This strategy should particularly focus on using social media to market local projects.
Financial Implications	<p>There would be the cost of Officer time in terms of developing a communications strategy for this purpose.</p> <p>At the Council there would be the cost of Officer time to issue messages using social media. However, the Communications Team already use social media and it is not envisaged that additional resources would be required. Similarly partner organisations would need to invest Officer time, though in many cases partners already use social media and therefore the group does not envisage that they would need to use extra resources for this purpose.</p>
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

Background

When Members launched the review they were concerned about the levels of obesity in the local population and concluded that there must be limited opportunities available to enable people to lose weight and to live healthy lifestyles. However, during the course of the review Members found that this assumption was flawed as there were multiple projects and activities that were being delivered in the Borough which were designed to enable people to lose weight. A full list of the activities that were identified for Members' consideration by expert witnesses can be found at Appendix 4. There were a number of projects that the group agreed were particularly effective and which they felt should be highlighted in this report:

- Couch25k – Couch25k is a national programme designed to help anybody to progress from little or no exercise to running a 5k marathon. In Redditch Officers have encouraged people to develop their running skills at their own pace. In total 680 people had participated in the programme by November 2014. Members have been particularly impressed by the high profile advertising campaign used to promote this project.

- Cooking on a budget sessions – the Health Improvement Co-ordinator for Redditch has been delivering cooking on a budget training to frontline service professionals. This should provide trained staff with the skills to advise and support residents on low incomes to eat healthily. By November 2014, 53 frontline staff had participated in the sessions, which had been delivered at relatively limited financial cost. Members were informed towards the end of the review that partners have been so impressed by this training that the model is due to be rolled out across the rest of Worcestershire.
- Make it Like Mandeville – Make it Like Mandeville is a project inspired by the activities of patients at Stoke Mandeville Hospital during and after World War II. The project provides people with physical disabilities with an opportunity to participate in physical activities. The initiative has been recognized as an example of best practice and won an award in the 2014 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Awards.
- Health Chats (further information is provided about health chat sessions in relation to Recommendation 4).

Unfortunately the group found that both they and a number of expert witnesses consulted during the review had limited awareness of the full range of opportunities available within Worcestershire. Furthermore, the majority of residents who responded to the group were only able to highlight a couple of physical activities that they had found to be useful, such as Outdoor Physical Training and Couch25k. Members concluded therefore that marketing was a weakness of the current approach to tackling obesity.

Communications Strategy

During the review Members discovered that, like Redditch, other local authorities that had reviewed obesity had found there was limited awareness within their communities of the projects available to enable people to live healthy lifestyles. North Lincolnshire Council in a review of childhood obesity was typical in commenting:

“The panel was impressed with the number of activities and programmes available in North Lincolnshire, particularly in its schools. However, the awareness of their availability to the community, and how the information was distributed was questioned by the panel”.

Members have been advised that no Communications Strategy currently exists to promote all the local projects that are being delivered by partner organisations to tackle obesity in Redditch. By contrast, a number of the local authorities that have reviewed obesity and their partners have already introduced marketing and communications strategies to raise the profile of local projects.

“The Obesity Partnerships, Engagement and Communications Group...is developing and implementing a communications strategy for the public and partner organisations to communicate the ambition, plans and opportunities available with the aim of changing attitudes and culture.” (Birmingham City Council, 2014).

“The Health Improvement Service has a Communications and Marketing Plan to target health improvement messages to Tameside residents and encourage the public to make healthier choices as the norm”. (Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, 2010).

Consequently there is evidence to suggest that local authorities and partner organisations in other parts of the country are using a co-ordinated approach to communications to raise the profile of healthy lifestyle projects. The group believes that there is no reason why partners should not adopt a similar approach in Redditch.

A Communications Strategy would enable the Council and partner organisations to issue consistent messages as part of a cohesive marketing campaign. A number of expert witnesses consulted by the group have also conceded that a Communications Strategy could have a beneficial impact on awareness of local initiatives.

Social Media Campaign

The group considered proposing that, as with Oklahoma City, a bespoke interactive website could be developed to tackle obesity levels in Redditch. However, a number of challenges were identified which deterred the group from including this proposal in their final recommendations including:

- The anticipated financial costs of £15,000 to £25,000 to develop a bespoke website, which the group recognised both the Council and partner organisations would struggle to fund.
- The need for a permanent member of staff to maintain the website. Members understood that the Council and partner organisations would potentially lack the resources to support this post.
- The existence of numerous websites maintained by partner organisations as well as the Council which already provide information about projects in the local area that are designed to tackle obesity.
- Advice from the Council’s communications team that websites were increasingly considered to be passé.

Instead, Members concluded that a social media campaign would represent a more effective method to promote local healthy eating and physical activity projects. A range of benefits to a social media campaign have been identified during the review including:

- The majority of partner organisations including the Council already use various forms of social media to communicate with customers. Additional investment in new communications tools or staff skills would not therefore be required.

- Social media can reach a wide audience. For example a tweet can be shared with a large number of people through retweets made by an organisation or individual's followers.
- The group was advised by the Council's communications team that social media is a more popular form of communication than website or traditional print media, particularly for younger generations.

Time to Change Pledge

During the review Members were informed that many people who are overweight and obese can have low self-esteem and may have been bullied or encountered other forms of social isolation as a result of perceptions of their weight. This can unfortunately impact on an individual's confidence in their ability to lose weight and lead to depression. Such difficulties were highlighted by a number of residents who submitted evidence for the consideration of the group:

"...I have struggled with my weight and self-confidence issues..."

"...I was a 37 year old 21.5 stone single mom... on antidepressants, who did not exercise but had tried to lose weight and had no confidence. My eating habits were horrendous..."

"...No matter how strict I was I knew that I would have to do more than watch my food if I wanted to lose any weight. I went on holiday in December 13 and realised that actually my fitness was shocking, so much so I started to fall into depression as I couldn't work out what to do, there was no help or encouragement that I could find..."

In this context the group concluded that it would be appropriate to link the social media campaign to tackle obesity to the Time to Change initiative. Redditch Borough Council signed up to the Time to Change Pledge in December 2014. The pledge is designed to *"Reduce the stigma of mental illness and support staff who are experiencing, or who may experience, personal or family mental health issues."* Since the pledge was signed the Council has started to take action to promote the pledge and to support staff. A launch event, Take Five / Time to Talk, took place on 5th February 2015 and provided staff with an opportunity to learn more about support available to help with mental health problems, the option of a free health check, advice on healthy eating and other useful support.

Like other people Council staff may suffer from a range of health problems, including conditions associated with obesity. Members believe that it would be timely to link the social media campaign to tackle obesity to the Time to Change pledge due to the prominence of that campaign at present as well as the overlapping themes. The group also recognises that this would help to reduce the need for additional investment of resources by the Council in the social media campaign as the communications team and other relevant Officers will already be working in support of this initiative.

Recommendation 2	GP practices should be notified of all of the healthy eating and physical activities that partners are delivering in the local community. Consideration should be given to providing GP practices with monthly updates.
Financial Implications	The group is envisaging that promotion of activities to GP Practices could be addressed in the Communications Strategy and as part of current efforts by partners to promote healthy lifestyles. Members are therefore not anticipating that any additional financial investment would be required.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

Background:

There are options available to help obese and morbidly obese patients to lose weight, including bariatric surgery in the most extreme cases. The Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG has also highlighted the need for investment to be made in introducing Tier 3 services, which entail an intensive multi-agency approach to supporting obese patients with a BMI in excess of 35. However, the group believes that there should be greater focus on promoting and using preventative actions, which enable an individual to lose weight at an earlier stage and require less intrusive interventions.

Members have been advised that many people consult their GPs as an initial step when considering action that can be taken to lose weight. The Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG has indicated that patients tend to seek advice from medical professionals immediately after they have received a diagnosis of a medical condition associated with excess weight. GPs and other medical staff, as frontline service providers, are therefore in a prime position to refer patients to activities that could help them to lose weight and / or to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

In recognition of this role for the medical profession a number of projects have already been delivered which are designed to provide direct support to patients. This includes:

- The social prescribing model, whereby patients provide information about their needs and preferences which are shared with Voluntary and Public Sector activity providers. The patient is subsequently contacted by the provider to discuss options available to them.
- A brief intervention scheme which was piloted at Hillview Medical Practice. For this pilot project medical practitioners referred patients directly to a

representative of the Sports Development team working from the surgery for face-to-face advice and support.

Members are also aware that strenuous efforts have been made at a strategic level to raise awareness of local projects and opportunities to live healthy lifestyles. In particular the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership and the Worcestershire Obesity Action Group, which has co-ordinated work in relation to the Worcestershire Obesity Plan, have worked hard to raise awareness of projects amongst partners. Representatives of local NHS bodies sit on relevant partnerships and have contributed to strategic level discussions.

However, unfortunately the information shared between partners about opportunities does not appear to be filtering down to the operational level. Members consulted with representatives of local NHS services during the course of the review and discovered that there was limited awareness of the preventative actions and projects being delivered by partner organisations. The reasons for this limited awareness may vary between medical professionals, though the following challenges have been brought to the group's attention:

- Increasing demand for GP services. Members have been advised that in recent years average attendances to see a GP have risen from 2.7 times per year to 6 attendances per year.
- Limited time available to discuss a patient's weight or to highlight preventative actions during an average consultation lasting 10 minutes.
- Complicated referral criteria which take time to learn about.
- Difficulties keeping track of new, short-term pilot projects.
- Complex or lengthy referral forms.

The group is in agreement that this situation needs to be addressed in the Communications Strategy referred to in Recommendation 1 above. In particular Members are keen for a section of the strategy to reflect on action that could be taken to more effectively promote healthy eating projects and physical activities to GP practices and other medical practitioners. Members would envisage a monthly communication to a named person in every practice updating them on the various options. This individual could circulate the update to every GP in the practice (copies of the information could be printed if required). As a consequence medical practitioners will be better informed and hopefully there will be an increase in awareness of local initiatives amongst the public.

CHAPTER 2: REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Recommendation 3	Officers should investigate further the potential for a Supplementary Planning Document for hot food takeaways to be introduced at Redditch Borough Council. Officers should report back to Committee on the outcomes of their investigations.
Financial Implications	There would be the costs of Officer time involved in investigating the potential to introduce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for hot food takeaways and of producing a Committee report on the findings of that investigation.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified in relation to undertaking an investigation of this subject. However, due to the legal framework within which local planning authorities operate the group would strongly urge the planning department to involve Legal Services in this investigation.

Background

Throughout the review the group was keen to consider action that could be taken by the Council and partner organisations to create a local environment that supports healthy lifestyles. A briefing produced by Public Health England in 2014, *Obesity and the Environment: Regulating the Growth of Fast Food Outlets*, highlighted the potential benefits to public health of modifying the local environment:

“One important action is to modify the environment so that it does not promote sedentary behaviour or provide easy access to energy-dense food. The aim is to help make the healthy choice the easy choice via environmental change and action at population and individual levels.”

Action in relation to this aspiration would also help partner organisations to contribute to meeting one of the priorities in the Worcestershire Obesity Plan to tackle the obesogenic environment.

Some progress has been made in recent years in shaping the local environment to encourage people to live healthier lifestyles. For example, over the past three years Choose How You Move has encouraged residents in Redditch to make greater use of sustainable forms of transport. Members have been informed that the number of residents reporting that they are more likely to substitute some of their car journeys for walking has increased from 26.2 per cent in 2012 to 76.9 per cent in 2014 whilst the number of residents prepared to substitute their car

journeys for a cycle ride increased from 13 per cent in 2012 to 49.3 per cent in 2014.

However, the group concluded that further action could be taken, particularly by the local planning authority, to create a local environment that would enable residents more easily to live healthy lifestyles.

SPD for hot food takeaways:

The group believes that one key action which would help to modify the local environment to the benefit of public health would be to introduce an SPD for hot food takeaways. The *Obesity and the Environment* briefing paper noted that there had been a dietary trend in recent years towards increasing consumption of food outside the home. Hot food takeaways are identified as a source of concern in this context as they tend to sell food high in fat and salt content and low in fibre, fruit and vegetables.

Members are concerned about the impact on the diets of local school children of hot food takeaways opening in close proximity to schools. The Council's planning process does not currently permit a planning application for a takeaway to be refused on health grounds due to the proximity of the building to a school. However, the *Obesity and the Environment* briefing paper notes the benefits of taking action on this matter to children's health:

"Improving the quality of the food environment around schools has the potential to influence children's food purchasing habits, potentially influencing their future diets."

Public health experts consulted by the group have confirmed that on occasion they have felt it necessary to comment on planning applications submitted in the county which could have led to the introduction of hot food takeaways close to schools. Action on the food environment is also encouraged in NICE guidance on *Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease*: This recommends that local planning authorities should "...restrict planning permission for takeaways and other food retail outlets in specific areas (for example within walking distance of schools)" (This is also reported in the *Obesity and the Environment* briefing paper).

A number of the local authorities have taken action in recent years to introduce an SPD for hot food takeaways:

- Worcester City Council has an SPD for hot food takeaways and this planning document is cited in the Worcestershire Obesity Action Plan as an example of action being taken by local partners to address the obesogenic environment.
- St Helen's Council introduced an SPD which restricts planning approval for hot food takeaways using a range of criteria, including a 400m exclusion zone around primary and secondary schools as well as sixth form colleges.
- By April 2014 Birmingham City Council was able to report that the Council was one of 21 local authorities that have a statutory planning policy in place

for hot food takeaways. The number had increased from one Council with an SPD for this purpose in 2008 (for Waltham Forest Borough Council).

Planning Context

Planning Officers were consulted as part of the review. They informed the group that planning applications must be considered in terms of the policies in the Council's local plan and in the National Planning Policy Framework. In Redditch Policy 35, *Health of District Centres*, can be taken into account when applications are received for takeaway use of a property in a district centre. However, whilst this policy limits takeaway use in the district centres these limitations focus on protecting the primary retail function of the district centres rather than on the health of residents.

In the planning process properties used for takeaways are considered to have an A5 use class. Various takeaways can operate in a property with permission for A5 use, including both takeaways that provide healthy food options and businesses that provide unhealthy food options. Planning applications for A5 use of a property are considered in relation to the use rather than the specific business that will be occupying the property. Members have been informed that similar rules apply to planning applications for A3 use (restaurants and cafes). Planning Officers have reported some of the planning requirements that need to be taken into account with regard to applications for A5 use.

“...The planning process does not allow planning applications to be considered in terms of occupiers or owners, nor does it allow the LPA (local planning authority) to control management/operational practices and therefore whatever may be intended at the point of applying for consent may change over time.”

The group is aware that an SPD for hot food takeaways would not change these rules in relation to the planning process. The Council could not, therefore, use an SPD of this nature to require only takeaway businesses that provide healthy food options to operate from a property with permission for A5 use.

SPDs must relate to policies in the local planning authority's Local Plan. At the time of writing Redditch Borough Council's Local Plan Number 4 was in the process of being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. The group has been informed that it is not possible to make changes to the policies contained in the plan whilst it is being considered by the inspectorate. Officers have suggested that an additional SPD for hot food takeaways could be introduced at a later date, however, it would be some years before an SPD of this nature could be adopted.

The potential for an SPD for hot food takeaways to lead to the rejection of planning applications on health grounds has also been questioned. In some cases where permission has been refused in accordance with an SPD for hot food takeaways the decision has been taken to appeal. Some of these appeals have been upheld whilst others have been defeated. For example, in 2012 Sandwell Council lost an appeal against a decision to refuse permission for a hot

food takeaway that would have been sited close to a school because little support had been provided by the school affected. The *Obesity and the Environment* briefing paper acknowledges that where healthy eating and proximity to a school has been considered in a decision on a planning application it has not tended to be the “*sole or determining factor... except for one occasion we know of.*”

Planning Officers have also brought to the group’s attention the need for evidence to be provided that hot food takeaways impact on obesity levels.

“Ultimately if Redditch Borough Council wanted to produce such an SPD... we would need to back it up with evidence of a link, in Redditch, between the location of hot food takeaways in relation to schools and childhood obesity.”

However, it is difficult for the group to provide clear evidence of the causal link between hot food takeaways and obesity levels amongst children at local schools. Indeed, the group would contend that this is not surprising as the *Obesity and the Environment* briefing paper acknowledges:

“It is only in recent years that local authorities have started to use the legal and planning systems to regulate the growth of fast food restaurants, including those near schools. There is thus an unavoidable lack of evidence that can demonstrate a causal link between actions and outcomes, although there is some limited evidence of associations between obesity and fast food, as well as with interventions to encourage children to stay in school for lunch.”

Members are therefore contending that the links between fast food and obesity in local schools clearly require further investigation.

The complexity of this matter is also recognised in the scrutiny reports produced by other local authorities on the subject of obesity. Birmingham City Council, which published their report in April 2014, reported that in the previous 12 months applications for eight hot food takeaways had been refused by the Council’s Planning Committee and the four of these decisions which had been taken to appeal had all been defended successfully. However, the report authors acknowledged that it was difficult to refuse an application on health grounds. “...*Planning Committees cannot easily refuse an application based upon its potentially negative effect upon health. Whilst the National Planning Framework acknowledges that planning has a role to play in combating poor health, it does not give us specific policy tools to overturn what would otherwise be acceptable uses in planning terms.*” Therefore even if Redditch Borough Council were to introduce an SPD for hot food takeaways this does not mean that the Council would necessarily be able to turn down planning applications on health grounds.

Conclusion

The evidence gathered by the group in relation to an SPD for hot food takeaways reveals both the benefits of this type of policy as well as a number of significant challenges. As both evidence for and against the idea was gathered by the group, Members did not feel that they could definitively propose that an SPD for hot food takeaways should be introduced by the Council. However, Members concurred that there was the potential for an SPD for hot food takeaways to contribute to improvements to the local environment which could have a beneficial impact on public health. Furthermore, the existence of SPDs for hot food takeaways at other local authorities demonstrates that the option is feasible and a precedent has been set in local government. As obesity levels in the Borough are growing the group feels that Redditch Borough Council has a moral responsibility to investigate this matter further. Given the complexity of the subject matter Members are proposing that this investigation should be conducted by expert planning officers.

The group has been informed that Worcestershire County Council is currently preparing a technical research paper investigating the links between planning and health. Members believe it is likely that Officers involved in this research will have relevant expertise which could assist the Council's Planning Officers when investigating the potential to introduce an SPD for hot food takeaways. The group would therefore suggest that representatives of this research group together with public health experts from Worcestershire County Council should be consulted as part of the proposed investigation.

Members are keen for the outcomes of the investigation to be transparent. Unfortunately the group found that understanding of the planning process and the rules influencing how decisions could be made about planning applications varied. In some cases Members encountered an assumption that the Council could turn down applications on health grounds with one resident commenting *"...We should be looking at the amount of fast food outlets we allow to set up in Redditch. You have the power to decline the application on health grounds..."* Members are therefore proposing that the outcomes of the investigation should be reported back to the Executive Committee, or to another relevant public committee meeting, rather than to the Council's Planning Advisory Panel which meets in private. Such an arrangement will ensure that the Council's final decision as to whether to introduce an SPD for hot food takeaways, and the rationale behind this decision, will be clear to elected Members, residents and local partner organisations.

Recommendation 4	Elected Members should all be encouraged to attend health chat training. Frontline service Officers should also attend health chat sessions if they have not already done so.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications for Redditch Borough Council. Health Chat training is provided to participants for free and is advertised on a regular basis.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

Health Chat training involves the provision of free, interactive public health training. The training is delivered over a period of two and a half hours and can be provided to anybody who either works with the public or volunteers in a frontline role.

The training is delivered by Worcestershire County Council in accordance with the NHS Making Every Contact Count (MECC) programme. The MECC approach focuses on utilising every opportunity when direct contact occurs to encourage people to change their behavior to the benefit of their health. The MECC process is also designed to empower people to make informed changes to their lifestyles.

The health chat training provides participants with information about health priorities in Worcestershire. The training covers a variety of health issues including; alcohol consumption, smoking, physical activity, diet, mental wellbeing and ageing well.

By the end of the sessions participants should be able to do the following:

- Have the skills to have informed, brief discussions with people about their health.
- Feel confident about discussing healthy lifestyle issues with people.
- Assess how individuals can be motivated to make positive changes to their behaviour to the benefit of their health.
- Signpost people to other appropriate support services.

During the course of the review two members of the Task Group, Councillors Brookes and Potter participated in Health Chat training. They found the session to be invaluable as it provided them with useful information. Participants are informed about local initiatives, health campaigns and projects. This information could be used by councillors to signpost residents if they felt it was appropriate and the residents were interested in learning about local opportunities. The group therefore concluded that it would be useful for every elected Member to have

access to the information provided during the training sessions. Participation in the sessions could provide Members with knowledge that will help them to fulfill their roles as community champions. Furthermore, by obtaining this information Members will be in a better position to actively contribute to meeting the Council's strategic purpose; help me to live my life independently (including health and activity).

Unfortunately, whilst the sessions were advertised in the October 2014 edition of the Members' newsletter so far only two Redditch Councillors have participated in the Health Chats. The group agrees that if this recommendation is approved opportunities to maintain Members' awareness of the sessions and the training dates will be enhanced through the quarterly scrutiny recommendation tracking process.

Members have been advised that frontline service staff have already been offered the opportunity to participate in Health Chat sessions. Fourth-tier managers are also due to be offered an opportunity to participate in these sessions in order to provide them with the skills needed to support any members of their teams who may be experiencing health difficulties. The group welcomes this work and would urge any frontline service Officers who have not already participated in a health chat session to do so.

CHAPTER 3: POINTS TO NOTE

Measures:

The group agrees that it is important that Members try to measure the effectiveness of everything they do in order to ensure that the Council is using tax payers' money effectively. Members are therefore proposing that the figures for childhood obesity, adult obesity and Type 2 Diabetes levels should be provided in the scrutiny tracking report as part of any on-going updates on progress with the implementation of this group's recommendations.

There is a need to monitor health over time because whilst many people may be able to lose weight in the short-term achieving sustained weight loss and improving one's lifestyle in the long-term can be challenging. For this reason the group would urge the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to schedule a monitoring update report onto the scrutiny Work Programme for a later date, preferably in three to five years' time, to enable Members to more accurately assess the impact that the group's recommendations have had on the health of people living in the Borough.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives biannual updates on the progress that has been achieved in delivering local priorities detailed in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy. As tackling health inequalities (including obesity) is one of the priorities in the strategy the group would urge Officers to provide the latest figures for childhood obesity, adult obesity and Type 2 Diabetes levels within this update. Members also wish to encourage partners to retain health inequalities as a priority in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy when it is refreshed due to the continuing problems with public health in the Borough.

Healthy Eating Awards:

During the course of the review Members briefly investigated the potential for healthy food options to be provided at restaurants and takeaways. Anecdotal evidence was also brought to the group's attention that some residents prefer to be able to select smaller food portions and healthy meals when visiting restaurants and takeaways, though these options are not always available at establishments in the Borough.

Members were advised of good practice taking place in some parts of the Borough. This included a fish and chip shop in Winyates which has worked with the Area of Highest Need team to offer healthier options alongside traditional menu items. In addition, some businesses, such as Weatherspoons, are providing information about the calorie content of their meals which helps to inform customers when they are choosing food options at these establishments. Members welcome the action that has already been taken by some businesses and would urge other local restaurants and takeaways to adopt a similar approach on a voluntary basis.

The group was advised by representatives of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) that the service is currently considering whether or not to launch a Healthy Eating Awards scheme for the county. Members agree that this could represent an excellent opportunity to encourage local restaurants to provide healthier options and local residents to live healthier lifestyles. Representatives of WRS have reported that there could be additional financial costs involved in facilitating an awards process, though these costs could not be confirmed at the time of writing. Members recognise that if these costs are prohibitive it may not be possible to progress this idea further, due to the financial challenges facing partner organisations. However, Members would urge WRS to investigate this matter further due to the potential benefits to public health that could be achieved.

In the event that the awards are introduced the group would urge WRS to consider introducing an award category that recognises best practice in business, in order to encourage more restaurants and takeaways to provide healthy food options and information about the calorie content of meals. The group would also urge WRS to work with the civic team at the Council as they believe that the Mayor of Redditch, by attending an awards process, could help to raise the profile of the process and of the benefits of healthy eating.

Leading by Example:

The group also wishes to highlight the action that Redditch Borough Council has been taking to support healthy lifestyles amongst staff. The Council has signed up to Worcestershire Works Well, which is an accreditation programme designed to encourage organisations to enable their staff to live healthy lifestyles. Numerous actions have been taken to enable staff to live healthier lifestyles including; a cycle to work scheme, discounted membership of the Abbey Stadium for staff, and the option of regular health checks for staff. The Council is also taking a significant amount of action to support staff and to help them to live healthy lifestyles as part of the Time to Change pledge.

Members welcome this action by the Council and urge the Executive Committee and senior Officers to continue to provide support to staff who wish to live healthier lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

The Tackling Obesity Task Group has conducted a detailed review of efforts to improve local residents' health. Members have gathered evidence from a number of sources and considered a range of actions that could be taken to tackle obesity levels at the local level.

Members welcome the hard work that partner organisations are undertaking to tackle obesity. However, neither the Council nor partner organisations can become complacent about this subject. Obesity levels have increased both locally and nationally over a period of many years; without taking further action this problem will continue to escalate primarily to the detriment of public health but also of the public purse.

Members are keen for the people of Redditch to be healthy, happy and active members of society. The group hopes that if their recommendations are approved they will contribute to achieving this ambition.

APPENDIX 1

Scrutiny Proposal Form

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Jane Potter	Date of referral	22/07/14
Proposed topic title	Obesity Levels Task Group		
Link to national, regional and local priorities and targets	Council Strategic Purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help me live my life independently (including health and activity).• Provide me with good things to do, see and visit. Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health inequalities – with particular focus on smoking, obesity and alcohol.		
Background to the issue	<p>The health of the people of Redditch has been an issue of concern at the local level for a number of years. In 2010 the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) identified health inequalities as an issue impacting on the population of Redditch. These inequalities were particularly noticeable when compared to the rest of Worcestershire.</p> <p>Whilst the CAA was subsequently discontinued those health inequalities remained. This was recognised by the Redditch Partnership and tackling health inequalities was incorporated as one of the key priorities in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). In the year in which this strategy is due to be refreshed (2014) it would seem timely to undertake a scrutiny review to investigate the progress</p>		

that has been made at the local level by partner organisations in addressing health inequalities.

There is the potential for Members to investigate every aspect of health inequalities. However, it is likely that by focusing on such a wide remit a Task Group would take a significant amount of time to complete their exercise and might only be able to identify broad solutions that would not necessarily address specific problems. With this in mind I am proposing that this particular review should focus on action that can, is and has been taken to address obesity levels within the Borough.

Obesity can be a contributory factor to a number of medical conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. These conditions can have a significant impact on the quality of an individual's life and can lead to them needing to access specific health care services for the rest of their lives. However, there is the potential, through lifestyle changes, for obesity levels to be addressed and potentially to prevent those health conditions from developing. A scrutiny group could help to identify actions that could be taken to address this problem.

I am particularly keen to identify support that can be provided to people from deprived communities. Individuals from deprived backgrounds may struggle to access some forms of support that are currently available, especially if they are required to pay to participate or need to be able to access transport to reach the support that is available. I am also concerned about childhood obesity levels because children and young people are the future for Redditch and it is important that they have a healthy start in life so that they can go on to achieve their potential.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), a national body with expertise in the field of Overview and Scrutiny, has led efforts in recent years to tackle health inequalities through scrutiny. As part of this process the CfPS has been working with various local authorities on a Health Inequalities Programme since 2009. Using funding provided by the Department of Health, the Health Inequalities Scrutiny Programme "*...was created to develop innovative solutions to long-standing inequalities...*" including obesity. A Redditch review of obesity could make use of this knowledge and

	<p>potentially identify whether solutions applied at other local authorities as a result of scrutiny could equally be applied in Redditch.</p> <p>I am aware that traditionally scrutiny of health matters is led by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Worcestershire. However, this issue has such significance at the local level for the people of Redditch that I believe a scrutiny review could justifiably be undertaken by a Redditch Borough Council scrutiny group.</p> <p>There are some key outcomes that a scrutiny review of this subject could help to address if constructive proposals are brought forward and accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the number of people living within the local community who are classified as obese. • A reduction in the levels of health conditions associated with obesity amongst the local population, particularly diabetes.
<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To investigate the action taken by the Redditch Partnership to tackle obesity levels in the Borough. (This should include reviewing the work of the Area of Highest Need project). 2) To assess the contribution made by Redditch Borough Council to tackling obesity levels amongst local residents. 3) To consult with relevant local representatives of the NHS (including the Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group) regarding the action that already have and could in future be taken to address obesity levels locally. 4) To review relevant outcomes from the CfPS Health Inequalities Programme and to identify any solutions arising from this programme (including from scrutiny reviews conducted by other local authorities as part of the programme) that could be applied in Redditch. 5) To investigate other actions taken in the country or internationally to tackle obesity levels and the potential for similar action to be taken in Redditch.

	<p>6) To consult with local residents about the barriers to losing weight and actions that could be taken to motivate weight loss.</p> <p>7) To identify any legal and financial implications to proposals brought forward by the group at the end of the review.</p>
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p>I think that a review of this subject, if it is to lead to constructive outcomes, would take some time to complete. If the review starts in the summer of 2014 I would anticipate that it could be completed by March 2015.</p>

Please return this form to: Jess Bayley or Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officers, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Email: jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk / Amanda.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2
Witnesses

Members would like to thank the following for providing evidence during the course of the review:

Fiona Allen, Choose How You Move, Worcestershire County Council
Liz Altay, Public Health Consultant, Worcestershire County Council
Helen Broughton, Redditch Partnership Manager
Ms Wendy Butters, Diabetes Specialist Nurse
Lucy Chick, Health and Wellbeing Strategy Development Officer, Worcestershire County Council
Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive
John Godwin, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
Anne-Marie Harley, Communications Manager
Councillor Bill Hartnett, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership (including health and the Voluntary Sector).
Laura Kerrigan, Sports and Physical Activity Development Manager.
Mr Billy Law, Dietician.
Claire Moran, Health Improvement Co-ordinator, Worcestershire County Council
Neil Perrett, Web Developer
Ailith Rutt, Development Control Manager
Henry Soulsby, Community Engagement and Social Marketing Manager
NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group
Dr. Jonathan Wells, Chair of the NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group
Alexa Williams, Planning Officer
Liz Williams, Neighbourhood Development Manager

APPENDIX 3
Timeline of Activities

Date	Task Group Activity
19th August 2014	Consideration of the group's terms of reference and identifying potential expert witnesses and written sources of evidence.
1st September	Interview with the Redditch Partnership Manager, to discuss the Redditch Obesity Action Plan and health inequalities.
1st October	Interview with the Neighbourhood Development Manager, to discuss action taken in Winyates as part of the Area of Highest Need project.
15th October	Consideration of the Redditch Health Profiles for the period 2010 to 2014 and scrutiny of the Worcestershire Obesity Plan.
4th November	Interview with the Health Improvement Co-ordinator for Redditch.
19th November	Interview with the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services and the Sports and Physical Activity Development Manager, consideration of information provided by Choose How You Move.
9th December	Consideration of progress with the review, reviewing feedback from the public, considering information about the public health deal, assessing initial feedback from the Planning Department, reviewing the content of the Healthy Lives, Healthy People Government white paper and information about MECC.
17th December	Consideration of scrutiny reports produced by other local authorities on the subject of obesity.
8th January 2015	Interview with the Communications Manager, consideration of feedback from the Web Development Team and reviewing the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey feedback.

20th January	Interview with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Development Officer and the Public Health Consultant from Worcestershire County Council and consideration of further information provided by the Planning Department, including the Public Health England briefing paper: <i>Obesity and the Environment</i> .
29th January	Interview with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership (including health and the Voluntary Sector) and with the Chief Executive of the Council and an interview with a Diabetes Specialist Nurse and a Dietician.
5th February	Consideration of written feedback provided by the Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and agreeing the group's recommendations.
18th February	Finalisation of the group's report.

APPENDIX 4
Projects in Redditch designed to help people to lose weight and to live healthy lifestyles

The following projects in Redditch have been identified by partner organisations, Council staff and residents who have submitted evidence for the consideration of the group. This should not be considered an exhaustive list as there will be initiatives that have not been brought to the group's attention. The full range of sporting activities available in the town have also not been listed here (further information about sporting opportunities can be obtained from the Council's website and the Sports Development team). Projects and activities have been listed in no particular order.

- Couch25k.
- Cooking training sessions for residents in Winyates.
- Cooking training for community representatives.
- Eating Well on a Budget training delivered to frontline staff using a Train the Trainer model.
- Leisure Services Officers working with the locality teams to visit tenants and to identify their physical activity requirements and health needs.
- The social prescribing model approach to referring patients from GPs to voluntary sector and public sector organisations for support.
- The brief intervention scheme which was piloted at Hillview Medical Practice.
- Choose How You Move.
- Worcestershire Works Well workplace accreditation programme.
- Health Chat training.
- Arrow Valley Health Walks
- Worcestershire Welcomes Breastfeeding scheme, to encourage mothers to breastfeed their babies.
- Time to Change initiative, which Redditch Borough Council pledged to support in December 2014.
- A recipe book, containing healthy food options, had been produced.
- Living Allowance sessions for residents which provided participants with an opportunity to learn about basic food shopping lists.
- Informal healthy cooking sessions delivered at the Space in Winyates.
- Not on a Diet sessions at The Space, Winyates, designed to enable residents to lose weight in an informal and friendly environment.
- A strolling group in Winyates, which encouraged local people to get involved in basic physical activity.
- Buggy Powers, a keep fit group for mothers.
- The breakfast clubs at Roman Way First School and RSA Academy Ipsley, to provide children with a healthy breakfast.
- Lunch clubs in Church Hill, Matchborough and Winyates.
- Fitness equipment in the local parks.
- Walk in the park initiatives.

- The jigsaw initiative that has been organised by the Redditch Mental Health Action Group (MHAG) in consultation with the Yum Tum Club to promote healthy eating.
- Free swimming provision at Council leisure centres.
- Make it Like Mandeville.
- The Redditch Special Olympics.
- WeightWatchers
- Slimming World.
- OPT (Optimum Performance Training)
- Zumba classes and other forms of aerobic exercise.
- Crossfit classes, for physical exercise.
- Park runs.
- The Moon Mission, a project co-ordinated by Worcester University to encourage residents collectively to contribute to travelling the distance to the moon and back using any form of physical activity.