

## **Report to Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

# **Council Motions**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To provide the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee with a summary of the health-related motions that were discussed and agreed by Council on 7 November 2018 and an update on the responses and actions to date.

### **Recommendations**

Health Scrutiny Sub-committee is requested to note the update.

## **Council Motions**

### **1 Background**

1.1 The following health-related motions were discussed and approved at the Council meeting on Wednesday 7 November 2018:

- Tackling child hunger
- Creating a healthy and thriving Oldham

1.2 Council also discussed and approved the following Youth Council Motion:

- National Exemption for Prescriptions for Care Leavers

### **2 Current Position**

#### **2.1 Tackling Child Hunger**

This Council notes

1. that the numbers of children living in poverty continues to rise. In Oldham in 2017, 40.66% of our children lived in poverty (the 7<sup>th</sup> highest across the UK) including 62.11% of Coldhurst Ward's children, the highest rate in the UK. Government policy, including welfare reform and the impact of full service Universal Credit, underpins this increase.
2. that Oldham Council, working with many local partners, has taken steps to tackle food poverty and to ensure that children receive award winning nutritious school meals. However, during school holidays many children, especially those entitled to Free School Meals, go hungry.
3. The pilot work done by Oldham Council, If Oldham, the Food Bank and local community and church groups this summer to provide free lunches for children.

This Council believes that every child has the right to a balanced and adequate diet and resolves to support efforts to provide free lunches for those who need them during school holidays including:

1. To investigate and apply for additional sources of funding , including using District budgets where possible and appropriate
2. To research different models of tackling holiday hunger including 'Feed and Read' and 'Feeding Britain' and to put together an strategy that best meets Oldham's needs using Council and community resources such as libraries, community and leisure centres and faith buildings
3. To introduce an Oldham programme to alleviate child holiday hunger as soon as practically possible

#### **Update – Dominic Coleman, Principal Policy Officer – Food Economy**

1. To investigate and apply for additional sources of funding, including using District budgets where possible and appropriate

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- The Council, working in partnership, will look at opportunities for internal and external funding, including
    - Working with the Oldham Education Partnership and Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition Partnership who have both jointly funded a Holiday Hunger pilot in the Summer 2018 and are committed to a provision during the Christmas Holiday 2018
    - Exploring the potential, eligibility and benefits of the Department for Education funding for Holiday Activities and Food that is expected to be launched in Spring 2019, following an initial pilot in Summer 2018
    - To connect directly as a council, and to connect eligible partners, with additional funding streams where possible an appropriate
2. To research different models of tackling holiday hunger including ‘Feed and Read’ and ‘Feeding Britain’ and to put together a strategy that best meets Oldham’s needs using Council and community resources such as libraries, community and leisure centres and faith buildings.
- The Council, working in partnership, will:
    - Research different approaches to tackling holiday hunger: including those listed. This is in addition to existing research carried out around best practice approaches across Greater Manchester – informed through Oldham’s role as the Chair of the Children and Young People sub-group for the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance, as well as best practice activity from approaches in Stoke and Greenwich.
    - Develop an Action Plan for a longer term approach to Holiday Hunger that maximises the potential use of existing assets in Oldham, including the many buildings and sites in communities where provision could be increased and securing sustainable funding in the future.
3. To introduce an Oldham programme to alleviate child holiday hunger as soon as practically possible.”
- The Council, working in partnership, has developed a local Oldham programme to tackle child holiday hunger as part of a pilot during the Summer 2018 and is committed to developing a provision for Christmas Holiday 2018 that helps to feed children and families. There is a commitment, subject to securing continued funding from partnership programmes, to increase and expand on the initial pilot for the Summer 2019, and to explore how we can commit to a long term plan that alleviates child food poverty, both inside and outside of the school day.

## 2.2 Creating a healthy and thriving Oldham

Oldham Council notes:

- That good health is more than the lack of disease or illness.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated that 13 million deaths annually are attributable to preventable environmental causes. WHO estimates that 24% of the global disease burden (healthy life years lost) and 23% of all deaths (premature mortality) are attributable to environmental quality.

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- For Oldham residents to thrive good mental, physical and social wellbeing is essential.
  - Health and wellbeing has an important relationship to income, quality employment, decent housing, access to basic services including education, physical activity, a good quality built environment, the natural environment and cultural and social fulfilment.
  - That access to affordable, quality healthy food is essential to good health. The number of environmental factors locally, such as the sale of harmful products and unhealthy food, impacts directly on health in our communities.
  - Environmental factors within Oldham have resulted in a higher than the national average number of deaths from heart disease and smoking related illness, and vast health inequalities and gaps in life expectancy between different parts of our borough
  - Of particular concern is the health of young people and Oldham has unacceptably high levels of childhood obesity, young people smoking and children with poor dental hygiene. Furthermore, low quality environments impact upon the quality of mental health

This Council believes:

1. That immediate action is required to eradicate environmental factors contributing to poor health and wellbeing of residents
2. The council and its partners has an important role to play to protect health and wellbeing of residents

This council resolves:

1. To create a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process as a means of evidence-based policy in order to make improvements in health and wellbeing. Any policy, project or programme that does not necessarily have health as its primary objective will be subject to a robust Health Impact Assessment
2. To use this process to develop Health Improvement Zones in areas where environmental factors have a significant detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of local communities, developing additional policies where needed e.g. Supplementary Planning Documents aimed at managing the availability of unhealthy take away food.

Update – James Mallion, Acting Consultant in Public Health:

A motion was made to full council around creating a healthy and thriving Oldham with resolutions to create a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process and Health Improvement Zones to make improvements in health and wellbeing. Work is currently ongoing within the public health team to further identify evidence based approaches to tackling these issues and the areas of the borough most affected by health-harming environmental factors. As part of this we have undertaken scoping of approaches adopted in other parts of the country and are looking at opportunities in the council's regulatory areas to improve health. This health-focused input could identify any health impacts of proposals/applications and make recommendations for mitigations against these. We are continuing to explore options and work this up to align with existing processes and adhere to outstanding obligations the council has in these regulatory functions. Initially this is involving discussions with

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colleagues across different areas of the council (e.g. Planning; Licensing). Further progress and details will be shared in the near future.

### 2.3 Youth Council Motion

This Council notes that from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 the law changed and Local Authority Children's Services must provide care leavers with support up to the age of 25 (even if they are not in education as used to be the case). This is in recognition that young people still need help and support in these early adulthood years. For most young adults that support comes from their own parents or family members, for many care leavers this support simply isn't there.

Council recognises that over the past few years the Children in Care Council have made health a priority issues and have undertaken work in this area to improve the health experiences of looked after children and care leavers. This includes:

- Creating the passport to independence that provides a comprehensive guide and information resource for care leavers including information and advice around health
- Work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and GP practices to raise awareness of the issues facing children and young people accessing primary care.
- Addressing the CCG AGM and the Devolution Difference Conference sharing the perspective of care leavers and their health experiences.

Council notes:

- The health inequality that is facing some of the Borough's care leavers.
- Currently the cost of an NHS prescription £8.80 per item.
- For care leavers aged 19 – 25 who are in receipt of DWP benefits they are able to have free prescriptions as a national exemption criteria.
- Care leavers who are in work or in higher education are not entitled to free prescriptions.
- The Borough has 86 care leavers currently that are having to pay for prescriptions.
- Many of these young people are on low income employment via apprenticeships, or are in higher education. They do not earn a lot of money.
- With the money from their employment they are having to sustain a totally independent way of living, paying the rent, bills, transport cost and food for example.
- Many are managing on a very tight budget, where having to make a decision about paying for the medication needed or paying for food or fuel is a real choice.

Council recognises:

The Government's corporate parenting principles, Principle 1 is 'To act in the best interest and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.'

- Oldham Council takes its role as a corporate parent seriously and that health and improving the health and wellbeing of Oldham citizens is a high priority for Oldham.

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- Being ill isn't something that anyone can plan for and the unforeseen cost of prescriptions is a concern and financial worry the Children in Care Council would like to see eradicated for care leavers now and in the future.
  - The cost of prescriptions is nothing compared to the health risks faced when the appropriate medication isn't obtainable at the right time.

Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Health asking the care leavers until the age of 25 becomes a national exemption criteria on prescription charges.

On being put to the vote, the MOTION was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The Chief Executive be asked to write to the Secretary of State for Health to ask that care leavers until the age of 5 become a national exemption criteria on prescription charges.
2. Options to locally fund the cost of prescriptions be explored.

Update – Merlin Joseph, Interim Director of Children's Services:

Councillor Chadderton, Cabinet Member for Children's Services has met with the Deputy Chief Executive People and Place and the Interim Director of Children's Services. The Joint Acting Director of Public Health/Consultant in Public Health (Healthcare) and the Interim Corporate Parenting Manager are currently exploring the practicalities of Oldham funding the prescriptions going forward and consideration will be given to how this sits with the wider Greater Manchester ambition for supporting our care leavers. Discussions will take place with partners and options will be presented for consideration to senior officers from Oldham Council and Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group.