

**COSLA's Consultation Response to A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight**

**Policy Development**

To ask Board Members to consider and endorse COSLA's response to the Scottish Government's Consultation "[A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight](#)" (the Consultation).

**Summary and Recommendations**

Scotland's obesity rates are amongst the highest in the developed world. The Scottish Government has indicated that meeting the [Scottish Dietary Goals](#) is proving challenging. The Consultation is proposing to change Scotland's food culture, and to implement cross-cutting policy interventions that will rely less on individual choice and more on changes to the wider environment, including:

- Transforming the food environment;
- Living healthier and more active lives; and
- Leadership and exemplary practice.

Local government has a central role in delivering public health and prevention and early intervention services. Local authorities have a significant interest in national proposals on diet, activity and healthy weight. Achievement of the Consultation's cross-cutting policy proposals will be dependent on engagement and collaboration with partners across sectors, and between central and local government.

COSLA's response is generally supportive of the Consultation's ambitions. However, COSLA is concerned that some of the Consultation's proposals will have unintended consequences, and their implementation will place additional demands on local authority staff, finances and services.

It is expected the finalised Strategy will be published in summer 2018.

This paper invites Board Members to:

- i. Consider the Consultation's proposals; and
- ii. Agree COSLA's consultation response, as set out in Annexe 1.

**References**

Previous reports on Diet and Obesity:

- Health and Wellbeing Executive Group
- 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 - General Update Report
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013 – Obesity Toolkit – Beyond the School Gate

**COSLA's Consultation Response to *A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight***

**Policy Development**

1. The Scottish Government has issued the Consultation "[A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight](#)". This report asks Board Members to consider the Consultation's proposals and agree COSLA's consultation response, as set out in Annex 1.

**Background**

2. COSLA has supported several national food and health strategies including;
  - [Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: a route map towards healthy weight](#),
  - The obesity toolkit, [Beyond the School Gate](#); and
  - [Better Eating, Better Learning a New Context for School Food](#).
3. It is COSLA's understanding that the forthcoming Strategy will build upon the ongoing implementation of existing food, health and activity strategies.
4. Scotland's obesity rates continue to be amongst the highest in the developed world. The Scottish Government has indicated that meeting the [Scottish Dietary Goals](#) is proving challenging. Being overweight or obese places demands on services and impacts on wider socioeconomic performance. Maintaining a healthy weight significantly reduces the risks of several of diseases, including developing type 2 diabetes, 13 types of cancer, cardiovascular disease and depression. The Scottish Government's [Programme for Government](#) set out the ambition for Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up, be cared for and to be healthy. These ambitions set the premise for the Consultation's proposals.
5. It is expected the finalised Strategy will be published in summer 2018.

**Consultation Proposals**

6. The Consultation acknowledges that whilst consumer education and personal responsibility are important, the focus of the Consultation is on changes to the wider environment to make healthier choices easier when we eat at home, eat out or eat on the go. Board Members are asked to consider the Consultation's proposed actions, which include:
  - i. *Transforming the food environment:*
    - Legislate to restrict the promotion of food and drink high in fat, sugar and salt
    - Increase the promotion and availability of healthy food
    - Strengthen current restrictions on both broadcast and non-broadcast advertising of food and drink high in fat, salt and sugar, particularly in relation to children
    - By summer 2018 produce a strategy for out of home providers, including action on calorie labelling and portion size

- Explore how food outlets in the vicinity of schools can be better controlled
- Strengthen current labelling arrangements
- Help small and medium enterprises reformulate their products to produce healthier food
- Engage with the UK Government to seek transparency on how Soft Drinks Industry Levy will be distributed. The Soft Drinks Industry Levy will apply to the production and importation of soft drinks containing added sugar. The levy is due to take effect from April 2018.

*ii. Living healthier and more active lives:*

- Reduce health inequalities by prioritising work with families in poverty and on low incomes
- Develop a positive relationship with food from birth, including using the early learning and childcare workforce to engage with families to promote healthy eating
- Expand the child healthy weight interventions in schools and communities
- Invest in supported weight management to tackle the increase in type 2 diabetes
- Increase physical activity e.g. increase funding in active travel and build upon the Place Standard

*iii. Leadership and exemplary practices, through:*

- Public sector leadership
- Food and drink industry leadership

### **Proposed COSLA Response**

7. COSLA's consultation response has been informed by IJB Chief Officers, Trading Standards Scotland, Scotland Excel, Public Health Directors, Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health Scotland, VOCAL and the Federation of Small Businesses.
8. COSLA is generally supportive of the Consultation's ambitions to change our food culture, and to implement the cross-cutting policy interventions that will rely less on individual choice and more on changes to the wider environment. However, COSLA is concerned that some of the Consultation's proposals will have unintended consequences, and their implementation will place additional demands on local authority staff, finances and services. Board Members are asked to agree to COSLA's consultation response, which is set out in Annexe 1.

### **Next Steps**

9. COSLA officers will continue to engage with the Scottish Government on addressing diet, activity and healthy weight, reinforcing local government's central role in delivering public health and prevention and early intervention services.

## Summary and recommendations

10. The Scottish Government has issued the Consultation "[A Healthier Future – Action and Ambitions on Diet, Activity and Healthy Weight](#)". Following engagement with professional bodies, COSLA has drafted a consultation response that is generally supportive of the Consultation's ambitions. COSLA is concerned that some of the Consultation's proposals will have unintended consequences, and their implementation will place additional demands on local authority staff, finances and services.
  
11. Board Members are invited to:
  - i. Consider the Consultation's proposals; and
  - ii. Agree COSLA's consultation response, as set out in Annexe 1.

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