

The Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight

LGA Event: Tackling Obesity during the Covid-19 pandemic

Alex Holt, Programme Lead, Food Active

20th July 2020



**FOOD
ACTIVE**

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LOCAL AUTHORITY
DECLARATION ON

**healthy
weight**

In a class of 30 students:
If one fails, you might blame the child.
If 20 fail, you must blame the teacher.
With almost 2 in 3 of us overweight,
Why do we still shame the individual?

@sandrodemaio

FOOD ACTIVE – A NORTH WEST RESPONSE

- A collaborative programme launched by the North West Directors of Public Health in November 2013 to tackle increasing levels of obesity.
- Focusing on population-level interventions which take steps to address the social, environmental, economic and legislative factors that affect people's ability to change their behaviour.
- Less victim blaming, more environment framing



THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON HEALTHY WEIGHT

TIMELINE



THE NEW HWD

- Greater emphasis on physical activity and active travel
- Increased focus on food insecurity and the impact of the food environment
- Links with blue and green infrastructure, climate change and sustainability agenda
- A focus on partnerships and 'place-based' approaches
- A recognition of the negative impact of weight stigma
- Joint narrative with PHE on how the Whole Systems Approach to Obesity and the HWD can support one another



WHAT DO DECLARATIONS DO?

- Strategic leadership: creates an opportunity for senior officers and politicians to affirm their commitment to an issue
- Local awareness: shines a light on importance of key activities internally and externally
- Driving activity: a tool for staff to use to create opportunities for local working



DPH PERSPECTIVE

“From my experience in local government and public health, I believe that taking a whole systems leadership approach to the obesity crisis, among other public health issues, is key to driving change. System leadership needs to be multi-level and multi-organisational, and is essential in establishing a joint vision, shared by all partners in the whole system. The healthy weight declaration provides the framework for this approach.

Adopting a system leadership approach involves building and managing effective partnerships to ensure that clear and consistent messages and action are delivered across the board. In my role as a Director of Public Health we have engaged the whole council and wider partners to consider healthy weight as a priority and in doing so work closely with planners, transport agencies, education, digital and media, and others.”

**Matthew Ashton, Lead DPH, Food Active
and DPH Liverpool City Council**



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OPPORTUNITIES FROM COVID?

- Covid has affected people's diets and levels of physical activity
- Opportunities to build back better
 - partnerships
 - enhanced level of food support for vulnerable people
 - reduce car use within cities
 - protect and support local food systems
 - support healthier food behaviours



GET IN TOUCH

Webinar link – Relaunch of the Healthy Weight Declaration Wednesday 22nd July

11am

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0G8cA2onQr2LHURosAJaqw



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