

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 OCTOBER 2022

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) **QUESTION FROM DAVID WEBB TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH INTEGRATION**

What initiatives and strategies are Southend City Council working together with schools, GP surgeries to improve and promote healthy eating for children (what are the targeted ages of the children), adults?

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. Our focus is to embrace whole systems thinking and implement a prevention and early intervention approach. The core of all our policies and strategies, is to address health inequality.

We are currently undertaking Healthy Eating Insights work to develop a local evidence base of diet and nutrition patterns. This work includes all ages and aims to respond to changing population needs following the Covid-19 pandemic, socioeconomic and cost of living crisis impacts and the related consequences in eating behaviours. Our goal is to develop a Food Environment Policy for Southend City to advance nutrition and health equity for vulnerable groups. In terms of local focus on intervention, this can be categorised in four groups of people:

Preconception/Maternity – The Maternal Healthy Weight pathway has been reviewed and healthy eating initiatives embedded in the antenatal offer, with a universal vitamins offer scheme in early pregnancy that supports initiation of healthy behaviours.

Early Years (0-4yrs) – The Healthy Child Programme and its key review points such as 3-4 months Health Visiting contact, supports healthy eating initiatives. The Healthy Start Scheme for vulnerable families encourages healthy eating habits by consuming fresh fruit/vegetables & free vitamins for mother and children. Breastfeeding and infant feeding are important in preventing childhood obesity in later life.

In Southend-on-Sea, according to the latest data 2020/21 from the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), 50.3% of women are breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks following birth above the 32.3% nationally. A Better Start Southend (ABSS) infant feeding support projects alongside the City Council and wider partners, have increased the prevalence of breastfeeding rates from 39.1% in 2018 to 50% in 2022 across the six ABSS wards.

A new pathway is underway following the end of the 'HENRY' programme, which aims to promote healthier eating. Developing healthy eating habits at early stage protects children from short and long-term illnesses and diseases later in life. Healthy cooking programmes for parents are delivered across the City at our Family Centres.

Children & Young People (5-19yrs) – The Council's Health for Life (Children's Weight Management Programme) initiative supports healthy eating by combining nutrition and physical activity. There is an improved offer for 2022-23, where the programme is delivered in school settings to maximise uptake and enhance family involvement.

The development of School Health Profiles is enhancing our targeted approach as well and a nationally acclaimed peer support programme for secondary pupils, Youth Health

Champions have been introduced in 2022 across three schools and the plan is to roll this out to more schools.

Young people are actively participating in health & wellbeing matters including healthy eating initiatives and support in designing of future campaigns, with the engagement of the Southend Youth Council members.

Adults 18+ - Everyone Health promotes healthy eating initiatives via the wide offer of various adult weight management programmes tailored to individual needs. Their Health Trainers are located in GP surgeries, providing information, advice and guidance on diet and nutrition as well as suitable referral routes.

(2) QUESTION FROM DAVID WEBB TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, LEARNING AND INCLUSION

In the annual report 2021 -22 of Southend City Council, it states by 2050 Southend City Council is a successful city and we aim our children are school ready and young people are ready for further education, employment and training.

What steps, strategies are you going to put into place 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and towards 2050 to achieve this goal?

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile outcomes are monitored by the Early Years Development Team and provide a useful indicator as to the school readiness of children in Southend. The Foundation Stage Profile results are analysed and tracked back to childcare settings to identify trends. This information is then used to provide bespoke advice and support and training if needed.

The Southend Connexions Service work in partnership with schools to deliver impartial careers advice and guidance to students in Southend. The following are arrangements in place to ensure young people are ready for further education, employment, and training.

In January 2022 an All Age Careers guidance service that supports any age was launched. This is delivered in partnership with Southend Adult Community College, South Essex College, National Careers service and Department for Work and Pensions, with Connexions taking the lead role. This means work can continue with students as they progress into adulthood.

In Summer 2022, the Connexions team began a targeted intervention careers day for the most vulnerable students. This is delivered with other organisations including training providers and Further Education establishments. Unlike other careers fairs every attendee receives a one-to-one careers guidance session from a Connexions personal adviser and then a warm introduction to the training/education provider/s that would best meet the needs of the students.

From September 2022 the service will engage with Year 7's to ensure students are aware of the Connexions service and the support it can and will give. Personal advisers will continue to see students in Year 9 to support their option choices to ensure that they are aware of the subjects they may need to take to pursue their preferred education, employment, or training opportunities when they have completed their GCSEs. In addition to support career and work readiness, the Connexions team will be starting one-to-one interviews with Year 10's, historically this has only been an offer for Year 11. This work will continue with Year 11's as in previous years.

The team will continue to attend parents' evenings and option evenings so that any questions/guidance from students' parents/guardians can be given.

Connexions will continue to attend results days to support any students that were not successful in obtaining the grades they needed and in turn provide advice and guidance in looking at alternative options. The service will also continue to follow this up in September/October on an annual basis to make sure that that young people are successful in moving into their post 16 options. If this was not possible and they become not in employment, education, or training (NEET), the service makes regular contact to support them either into training providers/apprenticeships or further education. The work with young people that are not in education or training is regular, with weekly telephone calls, text messaging and doorstep guidance.

The service continues in partnership with 'My Future, My Southend' to arrange inspiration career days for primary school children aligning with sectors and industries that are based in Southend. Recently 4000 primary school students for all year groups from Year 1 upward took part in Space and Aviation sessions over two days. Volunteers from the Royal Navy, a defence agency that design fighter jets, and helicopters and the European Space Agency all supported the event.