

## **Community Planning Partnership**

**Title: COVID-19 Recovery Planning - Whole Systems Approach**

**Director: Jenni Craig, Customer & Communities**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

### **1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Community Planning Partnership are asked to**

- (a) note the submission of a grant application to the East Region Diabetes Prevention Partnership to progress phase 1 of an Eyemouth Whole Systems community led approach to improve diet and healthy weight, within a post COVID-19 community context; and**
- (b) support the work through the provision of existing resources within Eyemouth.**

This includes:

- The submission of a grant application of up to £60,000 (£10k in Phase 1 and £50k in Phase 2) to test and design a pilot project in Eyemouth to explore a range of levers and opportunities to identify barriers to a healthy diet and weight with a focus on children and health inequalities.

This includes two stakeholder engagement and workshop sessions, the first to map the local barriers and issues; and the second to co-create an action and implementation plan. Workshops will be creative, virtual engagement events with key community stakeholders who have been active in Eyemouth during the COVID phase, contributing funding and practical support (Eyemouth Response Team, LINKS Eyemouth, SPLASH (EDCT), Abundant Borders, Early Years Centre, Eyemouth Food Bank, BAVS, SBSEC, Berwickshire Housing Association, The Rotary Club of Eyemouth & District, local retailers, churches & other community groups) alongside new and existing community volunteers & our locality Community Assistance Hubs who can advocate from a public health perspective and bring knowledge & understanding of lived experience. This event will identify & agree the most important community priorities based on recent experiences of working through the pandemic crisis.

- All outputs will be co-produced and include community led plans with priority actions & leads. This will include an indication of how phase 2 funding will be allocated across Eyemouth to deliver on diet & healthy weight priorities.
- This work will be led at locality level by the Joint Health Improvement Team Health Improvement Specialist who will report into the SBC Whole Systems Partnership governance group.

### **2 MAIN POINTS/ISSUES**

Having a healthy weight, being active and having good emotional and mental health are some of the most important aspects of reducing health inequalities and improving population health. The Scottish Government has set an ambition to halve childhood obesity by 2030<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A Healthier Future: Scotland's Diet & Healthy Weight Delivery Plan (2018) [www.gov.scot/publications/healthier-future-scotlands-diet-healthy-weight-delivery-plan](http://www.gov.scot/publications/healthier-future-scotlands-diet-healthy-weight-delivery-plan)

From a local perspective, NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council & Third Sector have made a commitment to reducing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing, in partnership.

A Whole Systems Approach (WSA) is one method of delivering on these ambitions and can be defined as applying systems thinking and tools that enable *an ongoing, flexible approach by a broad-range of stakeholders to identify and understand current and emerging public health issues where, by working together, we can deliver sustainable change and better lives for the people of Scotland*<sup>2</sup>. The Scottish Borders is one of three Early Adopter Areas who have been identified to develop and test a whole systems approach to diet and healthy weight. The WSA methodology has been used successfully in England, Scottish Government has provided funding to access training from Leeds Beckett University for early adopter sites. NHS Health Scotland will be involved in evaluating the WSA process to find out if this methodology can be applied to other public health priorities.

Scotland has six public health priorities, the WSA work in Eyemouth will deliver primarily on Public Health Priority Six:

*A Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active*

However, it will also make a contribution to all other public health priorities. The WSA will be community led and asset based, therefore Eyemouth will make further moves towards a good food & physically active culture together.

We have seen a change in the way things are done throughout COVID in Scotland, the Scottish Borders and in Eyemouth, with the community centre adapting its practice to become a food distribution site, almost overnight. There has been other good examples of similar adaptations across a range of settings in Eyemouth. This has brought partners together to respond to community priorities in a way they would not have been able to do previously. This new way of working should be enhanced and developed further beyond the crisis phase of the pandemic. Eyemouth has successfully responded to the need for emergency support and other activities that have helped their communities to “stay at home, protect NHS Scotland and save lives”.

There are many significant strengths in Eyemouth including:

- Good size town
- Thriving Community
- Range of Community Groups & Activities (across life stages)
- Good Partnership Working
- Increase in participation levels – Active Schools work
- Children & families regularly use settings based activities
- Good Food Partnership
- Volunteering Culture
- Infant Feeding Programme

However, it is also recognised that there are some specific challenges. Profile data provides an insight into why a Whole Systems Approach would be a positive development to support better health outcomes across the lifestages. We know that child poverty is a growing concern in Scotland and this is reflected across many areas, including Eyemouth with 15.6% of children living in low income families and 14.3% of the population income deprived.

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<sup>2</sup>Public Health Reform. 2019. *Enable a Whole System Approach to Public Health*. Available from: <https://publichealthreform.scot/media/1520/phob-enabling-the-whole-system-to-deliver-the-public-health-priorities-paper-22.pdf> [Accessed 12 October 2019]

Other important considerations for health improvement work in Eyemouth include making a difference to primary 1 dental health and preventing early deaths from Coronary Heart Disease.

There is a long history of public sector partnership work with the Eyemouth community, practitioners have used a raft of creative ways to engage people in health improving activities. It is recommended that the community response to COVID is nurtured, enhanced and invested in to improve health outcomes.

Partnership working between NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council has demonstrated the positive impact on the health of families and communities for example, School Holiday programmes. These programmes reflect collaboration from locality to strategic planning level with the buy in of participants, volunteers, community groups, business, agency partners and community benefits.

A Whole Systems approach in Eyemouth will help build a collective understanding, commitment and leadership approach to moving forward with a shared community plan that reflects their pandemic resilience.

### **3 IMPLICATIONS**

#### 3.1 Financial

There are no financial implications other than the support of existing public sector workers who already have a commitment to working in this locality. Grant funding will reduce any financial risk, providing the opportunity to test out what works with a view to replicating this across other areas where a community plan is required.

#### 3.2 Risk & Mitigations

There are a range of risks relating to progression of a community plan using a WSA in the post COVID community context including:

##### COVID fatigue:

Partners have been working to a crisis response for a sustained period of time. *This could be right time to offer partnership support to work in partnership and build on the success of the Eyemouth community response*

##### Timing:

Recovery & renewal are on everyone's agenda, discussion is required to agree what this looks like for Eyemouth, it may be difficult to progress collectively without an agreed approach

##### Virtual Engagement:

It is more difficult to facilitate a participatory approach using technology *National research should be considered to ensure everyone has a voice (Kelly McBride & Kevin Ditcham, The Democratic Society (Scotland): Creating online spaces for deliberation)*

##### Sustaining Locality Engagement:

In the absence of a physical presence it is more difficult to nurture and sustain a community led approach.

*Digital support is working well in Eyemouth and people are engaging.*

##### Support from Early Adopters:

East Region is one of the three Early Adopter sites for WSA to diet and healthy weight (includes Dundee and Ayrshire & Arran). A national group has been set up

in partnership with SG, Public Health Scotland and Obesity Action Scotland to encourage partners from across sites to share best practice and learn from other areas. Support will also be provided by the East Region Diabetes Programme Team and includes training in WSA with Leeds Beckett University.

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