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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing Board</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on physical activity strategy development and implications of COVID 19 pandemic physical activity agenda.
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
<b>Report by:</b>	Andrea Wright, Health Development Manager
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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**1. Requested by** Health and Wellbeing Board

**2. Purpose**

- 2.1 The physical activity levels of an individual can significantly impact their health and wellbeing and life expectancy. Inactivity is defined as less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week<sup>1</sup> and is responsible for 1 in 6 deaths in the UK. Being active can prevent and manage over 20 chronic diseases including liver disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory conditions and mental ill-health.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.2 Physical inactivity is widespread in Portsmouth, with approximately 42,000 of the adult population doing less than 30 minutes of activity a week<sup>3</sup> and many more not reaching the recommended level of 150 minutes of moderate activity per week<sup>4</sup>. Only 38.1% of Portsmouth's children and young people under 16 undertake 30 minutes of activity a day<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.3 National evidence shows that certain groups are more likely to be inactive, these include: low socio-economic, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, women and girls, those suffering mental health problems, the disabled and those with a long-term conditions.
- 2.4 We know COVID-19 is more likely to disproportionately affect and cause serious illness amongst BAME communities and those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods. It's also these groups who are more likely to be affected by conditions such as cardiovascular disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes, the other preventable risk factors for contracting COVID-19. Evidence is emerging that people

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<sup>1</sup> Physical Inactivity Levels in Adults aged 40-60 in England 2015 to 2016, 2017, PHE

<sup>2</sup> Physical Health: Applying for All our Health, 2019, PHE

<sup>3</sup> Active Lives Survey, 2018-19, Sport England

<sup>4</sup> Chief Medical Officer Guidelines, 2019, Government

<sup>5</sup> Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018-19, PHE

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who are overweight or obese are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 infection and at increased risk of needing hospital treatment including critical care and mechanical ventilation and death.<sup>6</sup>

- 2.5 The current pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and negatively impacted on activity levels, widening the gap between the most and least active.
- 2.6 Sport England<sup>7</sup> produced weekly reports on impact of Covid on physical activity during the first lockdown and then at key points thereafter.
- Overall, older people, people on low income, people in urban areas, those living alone and who had to shield found it more difficult to be physically active.
  - Walking and cycling increased after the first lockdown.
  - Between May and Sept, 33% of low income, 29% with disability or longstanding condition and 33% of females were meeting the recommended physical activity levels of 5 x 30 minutes per week.
- 2.7 It's worth noting that access to and attractiveness of open spaces can often impact on behaviour, with good quality public spaces helping to reduce sedentary behaviour. . For some people space is an issue, especially within urban residential areas, for example, 'People of all ethnic minorities are less likely to have a garden than those of White ethnicity, with those of Black ethnicity being least likely to have access to a garden'<sup>8</sup>.
- 2.8 Overall Covid has negatively impacted on physical activity levels with people's ability and motivation deteriorating as lockdown and subsequent restrictions were in place<sup>6</sup>.
- When restrictions ended, people reported feeling safer exercising at home rather than in public spaces.
  - In September physical activity levels within adults were at a lower level than prior to lockdown.
  - When more tiered restrictions came into place in October, adult activity levels further decreased.
  - However, children's activity levels seemed to increase in correlation with new school term in Sept.
- 2.9 The pandemic has on the whole increased health inequalities. However, there are opportunities arising from the pandemic, such as increases in walking/cycling which can be built upon. Investing in active travel can bring environmental, health and economic benefits<sup>9</sup>:
- Promoting active travel can result in reduced emissions of air pollutants, helping to tackle climate change and improve air quality.
  - Active travel can contribute towards the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity for adults each week, which are hugely important for maintaining health.
  - Walking and cycling can contribute towards economic performance by reducing congestion, supporting local businesses and more. The benefit to cost ratio of investments in walking and cycling are estimated at 5:62:1 (or 'very high' value for money)

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<sup>6</sup> Excess weight and COVID-19: insights from new evidence, 2020, PHE

<sup>7</sup> Covid-19 Briefing, 2020, Sport England

<sup>8</sup> Access to garden space: England, 2020, Office for National Statistics

<sup>9</sup> Research Briefing: Active travel: Trends, policy and funding, 2020, UK Parliament

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- 2.10 Emerging evidence from some studies has suggested that long-term exposure to air pollution before the pandemic is associated with severe symptoms from COVID-19 and a greater risk of death<sup>10</sup>. Therefore increases in active travel don't just benefit physical activity levels but also help support cleaner air and wider health benefits.
- 2.11 This paper gives a very brief update on the development of our new physical activity strategy, which reflects the impact of the pandemic, and measures to mitigate those impacts.

### **3. Information Requested**

#### **3.1 Regional Physical Activity Strategy**

3.1.1 Energise Me, our regional active partnership, is leading on the strategy's development. This is the second Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth (SHIP) regional physical activity strategy to be produced by Energise Me. The strategy is being developed in conjunction with ourselves and colleagues in the three other Public Health teams across SHIP.

3.1.2 The new strategy launching in 2021 aims to tackle activity in those least active. At a population level the biggest health gain lies in encouraging those not active to do some activity.

3.1.3 The new strategy will address some of the barriers to physical activity created by the pandemic such as closure of facilities and the disinclination of vulnerable users to return to exercise facilities. Specifically it will address the impact of Covid on widening the gap between active and inactive.

3.1.4 The strategy timeline:

**Summer 2020** - A review of the progress since the last strategy was conducted and an audit of linked strategies, thus ensuring the new strategy is developed based on local learning and evidence. Internal discussions between Energise Me and representatives from the four PH teams took place at regular points and gathering data, to inform discussions.

**Autumn 2020** - The public consultation, the 'Big Conversation' is scheduled to run between 17<sup>th</sup> Nov - 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 2020. The format is an online conversation that people can add to, agree/disagree with comments, voice theirs, vote on things that have been said etc. It is part-facilitated meaning there is opportunity for a staff member to contact a person for further explanation if necessary. There is also opportunities for focus groups where the online conversation is not appropriate or not the preferred method for residents. The 'Big Conversation' is open to everyone in the SHIP region but there will be a dedicated push to try and engage our key target audiences i.e. inactive and those affected most by Covid.

**Winter 2020/21** - A report will be produced summarising the themes and key information from the public consultation. Workshops will then be held with key

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<sup>10</sup> Does exposure to air pollution increase the risk of dying from the coronavirus (COVID-19)?, 2020, Office of National Statistics

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stakeholders to explore the findings in more detail. A draft strategy will then be produced based on the two consultations (public/stakeholder) for final comments by stakeholders.

**Spring 2021** - New regional physical activity strategy launched

3.1.5 Underpinning the strategy, in Portsmouth further work will be developed by PH and key partners to ensure local needs are being met. The Active Portsmouth Alliance will play a vital role in helping address physical inactivity.

**3.2 Active Portsmouth Alliance**

3.2.1 The Active Portsmouth Alliance is a multi-agency network who have an interest in physical activity in the widest sense. Partners include PCC, Health, community and voluntary sector, BH Live (the council's leisure providers), University, Navy, Fire service and others. Membership continues to grow year on year and currently sits at over 90. The focus of the Alliance is to work together to improve inactivity levels across the city.

3.2.2 The first meeting since the pandemic started was held over MS Teams on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November (as many members had been furloughed and others re-deployed), with regular meetings re-established for 2021 to take forward the work of the new strategy.

3.2.3 There is a commitment from partners to work together to harness opportunities and resources and to improve activity levels amongst the most inactive. The Alliance's target groups will be refreshed in line with the upcoming physical activity strategy.

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Signed by: