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Title of meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board

Subject: Superzone Pilot

Date of meeting: 27th Septemer 2023

Report by: Andrea Wright, Public Health
Dominique Le Touze, Public Health

Wards affected: Charles Dickens

1. Requested by

Councillor Matthew Winnington, Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, Health & Care

2. Purpose

To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the progress of the pilot Superzone in the Charles Dickens ward.

3. Information requested

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Fostering Portsmouth as a 'healthy place' is at the heart of the Portsmouth Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the City Vision, and the Local Plan. The Marmot Review (2010, 2020) set out a number of evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequalities. One of the six recommended policy objectives was to 'create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities', enabled by 'social justice, health and sustainability at the heart of policies' in order to reduce health inequalities and improve health and wellbeing for all.

3.1.2 Taking this 'Health in All Policies' approach, the Portsmouth Superzone is a small-scale place-based approach to improving the urban environment for health. The initiative brings together policy and community practice to improve health and wellbeing in a hyper-local area. The project was originally established to tackle the drivers of childhood obesity - the causes of poor diet and physical inactivity. These so-called 'causes of the causes' or wider determinants of health are substantially influenced by the environment in which we live, for example by how easy it is to walk and cycle, or the availability of fresh, healthy food.



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- 3.1.3 As the Superzone has developed, the co-benefits of this focused place-based approach have become apparent. Potential benefits for other health issues such as mental wellbeing and respiratory health, as well as the benefits for education, poverty alleviation and climate action have emerged.
- 3.1.4 Superzones were first established in London, and Portsmouth is the first Superzone outside the capital. Arundel Court Primary Academy (ACPA) in the Charles Dickens ward is the central point of the Superzone, which extends 400m from this point. The road boundaries of Fratton Road, Lake Road, Commercial Road and Canal Walk are approximately 200m from the school (Appendix 1). The rationale for choosing ACPA was based on its high levels of childhood obesity, its location in the ward with the highest deprivation and in an Air Quality Management Area.
- 3.1.5 Early research was carried out with school pupils to determine their perceived barriers and enablers to being healthy. A thematic analysis of their insights uncovered four 'causes' or themes: healthy food environment, active places, cleaner air and community safety.
- 3.1.6 These themes informed workshops with a range of professionals linked to health, education, housing and community. The aims, objectives and output indicators agreed between delivery stakeholders informed a series of multi-faceted interventions to generate short term improvements in healthy eating, physical activity, community safety and air quality. Additional benefits accrued as a result of collaborating and pooling resources across agencies and the community on shared agendas.
- 3.1.7 The first Superzone pilot in Portsmouth was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in Sept 2019 with delivery on course to start in March 2020 just as the Covid-19 pandemic began, which resulted in an unforeseen 18-month delay.
- 3.1.8 The Superzone pilot restarted in September 2021. The ongoing disruptive impact of the pandemic on the school community led to communication and engagement going through ACPA's school network rather than directly with pupils and parents. This has had the unforeseen benefit of using a trusted partner to gain deeper and more honest feedback and insight from children and their families.
- 3.1.9 Delivery during the 21/22 academic year continued to be hampered by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in schools. In the summer term, it was agreed to extend the pilot into the 22/23 academic year, and it has been further extended into the 23/24 academic year. The additional time has been extremely valuable, allowing for a deeper understanding regarding the issues raised by the children and local community, and allowing time to work collectively on solutions to tackle them. On



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more than one occasion, original plans were altered based on the increased knowledge and insight gained in 21/22 and refined in 22/23.

3.1.10 As the first Superzone outside London, we are working closely with the London Superzone network, benefiting from guidance and information sharing with peer Local Authorities in London, supported by the Greater London Authority.

3.2 Delivery in the 2021/22 academic year

3.2.1 Rather than the planned simultaneous launch of actions, a staggered approach was required due to the increased pressures within the school linked to the pandemic response. In hindsight this worked well and is worth considering if future Superzones are rolled out.

3.2.2 Appendix 2 gives a summary of the actions in 2021/22.

3.3 Delivery in the 22/23 academic year

3.3.1 The focus for the most recent academic year was to build on existing insights and to progress actions already underway, deliver interventions, and implement new actions delayed by the pandemic.

3.3.2 Appendix 3 gives a summary of the actions in 2022/23.

3.4 Athletic Skills Garden

3.4.1 In addition to the original action plan, we have been working with the University of Portsmouth to establish an Athletic Skills Garden, or PLAYCE - the first in the UK¹ - , at Lords Court, an underused Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in the Superzone area. The Skills Garden is a dedicated community space, designed to enable good quality physical activity using the Athletic Skill Model (ASM). The ASM is an evidence-based approach that promotes the 10 fundamental physical movement skills our bodies need for optimum health and vitality (for example, running, jumping and so on).

3.4.2 Each Athletic Skills Garden, is uniquely designed based on local needs. Three consultations events with the residents in the area, led by the University, have informed the design, with a provisional launch planned for early October 2023. In addition to the Skills Garden, the surrounding area will also be landscaped, and green coverage increased, thus making the whole area a more inviting space for all.

¹ [UK's first "PLAYCE" to be built in Portsmouth to encourage people to get moving | University of Portsmouth](#)

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It aims to be an intergenerational, modern space for both socialising and being active.

3.4.3 In April 2022, we were the first UK city to train local staff in the ASM fundamental 10 principles. A one hour taster session was delivered in the autumn of 2022 to Play and Youth staff and a second full course was delivered in July 2023. Seventeen local professionals were trained, including 10 Play and Youth staff (adventure playground/youth clubs), 1 local school staff member, 4 Holiday, Activities and Fun (HAF) providers and 2 University staff. Training will support users to get maximum use from the new community facility. The knowledge and skills staff have gained can also be applied within their own settings, bringing more benefits over the longer-term.

3.5 Evaluation

3.6 A detailed evaluation of each of the workstreams is currently underway. When the Superzone pilot concludes in July 2024, we will start to explore ways that the model could be adapted to other schools around the city, using learning from Arundel Court and the London Superzones.

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Signed by (Director)

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Map describing Superzone location

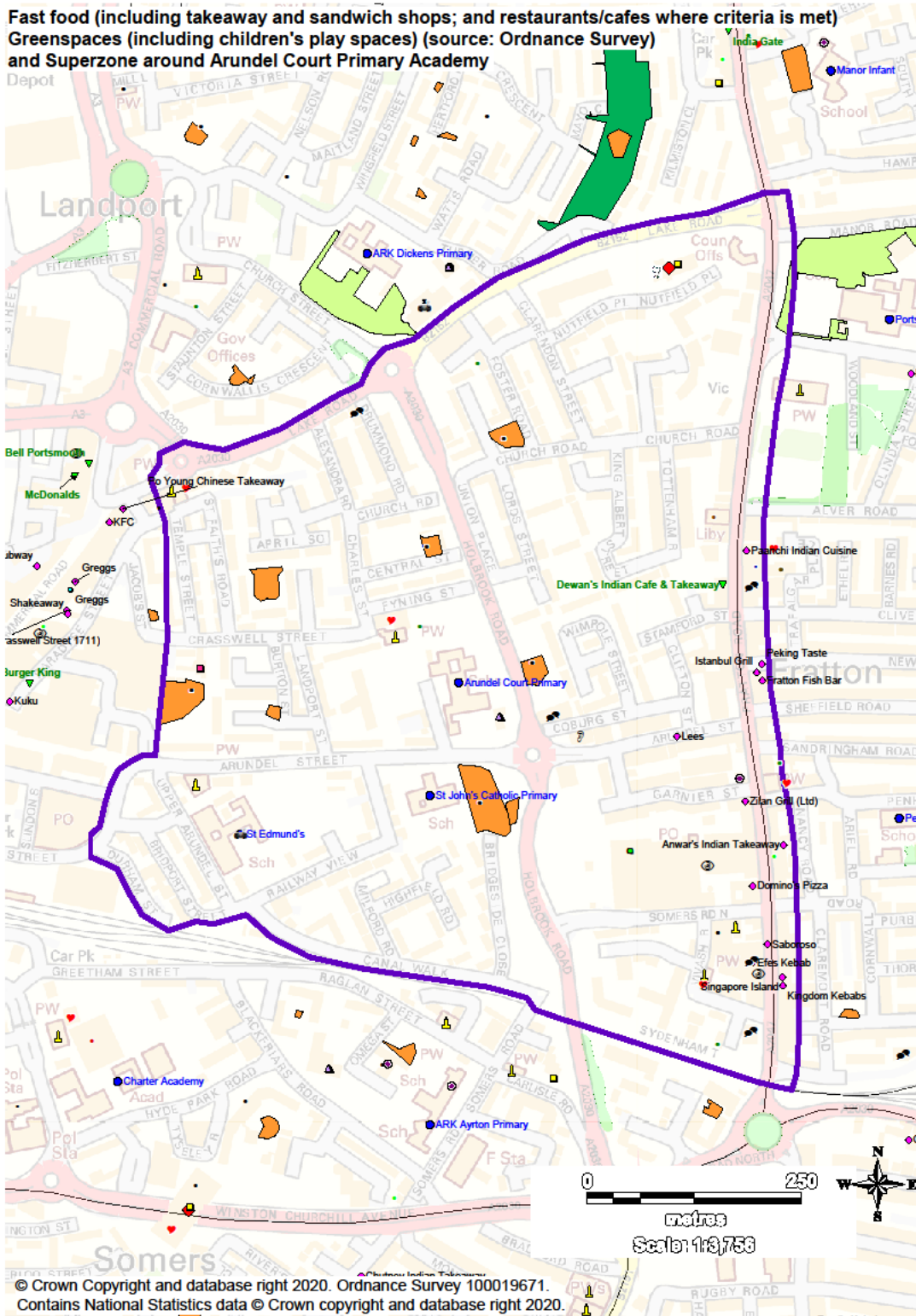
Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

| Title of document | Location |
|---|---|
| Proposal for a pilot Superzone to tackle childhood obesity and create a healthier environment | HWB 25 Sep 19 superzone.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk) |

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Appendix 1 - Map highlighting the Superzone location





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Appendix 2: Actions in 2021/22

| Theme | Progress | Insight gained and delivered actions |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Healthy Food Environment | <u>Lunchboxes</u> Two lunch box audits completed (7 th and 14 th March). | <p>Insight - Around 200 out of 543 pupils take a packed lunch to school. Lunchbox audits found around 80% of lunchboxes contain sandwiches, crisps, fruit, yoghurt or chocolate bar. Replacements for sandwiches included Dairylea Dunkers, Fridge Raiders, cooked cold food e.g. pasta. Around 70% of Year 5 and 6 children had a piece of fruit in their lunchbox.</p> <p>The audits highlighted a lack of food in some lunchboxes, with some children potentially still hungry after lunch. This was most notable in Year R and 1, despite all KS1 children being all entitled to a universal Free School Meal (FSM).</p> <p>As a result of this audit, the focus of intervention shifted to focusing on the quality and quantity of KS1 lunchboxes, and also increasing FSM up-take.</p> <p>This insight was from last academic year, prior to the cost-of-living crisis, so we can hypothesise that this may be an even bigger issue this academic year. We endeavour to support the school and families to ensure children are getting enough food at lunchtime.</p> |
| | <u>Food waste</u> Two food waste audits completed, covering both kitchen and children's waste. Discussion with the children around dinners to explore themes arising linked to food waste on specific days. | <p>Insight - Around 19 bags of food waste were produced each week. Certain days created more waste than others depending on the menu, with Wednesday (roast dinner day) creating the most waste, despite the popularity of roast dinners with children.</p> <p>Kitchen waste was also deemed to be high in the initial audits, but a change in kitchen manager specifically tasked to reduce food waste occurred during this audit period, so this will be reviewed again in 2023/24.</p> |
| Active Places | Daily Mile - delivered regularly across all year groups. | <p>Insight - The school already participated in the Daily mile and is popular with children and teachers alike, with both groups seeing the benefits of regular participation. Children value it for their health and fitness and teachers for both the health and behaviour and concentration benefits in the classroom.</p> <p>Delivery - The Daily Mile was reinstated in September 2021 and is run most days amongst all year groups (R-6), so every child in school regularly takes part in either walking, jogging or running one mile around the outside of their playing field in a marked-out track at some point throughout the school day.</p> |
| | Mode of travel to school was assessed via 3 x hands-up surveys and observation of two school drops offs (wet and dry comparison) | <p>Insight - Around 25% of pupils travel by car each day, with seven regular drop-off points identified. Cycling and scooting to school was low, despite access to a bike, scooter, or both, being relatively high though out the school (83%). Congestion, illegal parking (on yellow lines, middle of the road, blocking footpaths/residents' bays/other cars) and car idling were issues observed at both observation points (Northam Street and Fyning Street) during the observation exercises. It was also observed that many parents enjoy the social opportunity to chat at drop off/pick up.</p> <p>Car journeys to and from school were higher than expected for an inner-city school with a relatively small catchment area, located in the ward with lowest car ownership in Portsmouth. Up to 78% households do not have access to a car in Charles Dickens ward¹.</p> |
| Cleaner Air | Smoking at school gate audit completed and | Insight - Only 4 parents/guardians were smoking outside school gate at drop-off and a further four were vaping on the day of the audit (of a pupil |



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| | observation of cigarette butts on ground around roads leading to school gate | population of 600 children that day). Very few cigarette butts were visible on the ground around the school gate. This insight suggested that smoking at the school gate was less of a concern than originally anticipated. |
| Community and Safety | Re-design of Arundel Park via Safer Streets and greening funding | <p>Insight - A parental survey and community consultation highlighted that residents did not feel safe using the park due to recreational drug use (daytime) and anti-social behaviour (evenings). The park layout and landscaping meant that there were lots of areas outside line of sight, which made parents wary of letting children play freely in the area. Dog fouling was also reported as an issue. A Healthy Street Audits highlighted areas for improvement which were fed back into the respective working groups.</p> <p>Delivery - The park was redesigned in Spring 2022 to improve the landscaping and design, and to encourage better residential use. Low bushes were removed, visibility improved within the main area of the park and to paths outside, trees were planted, and dog waste bins installed.</p> |



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Appendix 3: Actions in 2022/23

| Theme | Action | Insight gained and delivered actions |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Healthy Food Environment | Improve Healthy Lunchboxes and increase Free School Meal (FSM) up-take | <p>Delivery - We worked with the school meals provider (Caterlink) to discuss the issues identified both in terms of school meals quality and food waste and poor-quality lunchbox content for some children. We are exploring ways Caterlink, the school and other partners could support an increase in up-take of school meals and improvement in lunchboxes, especially for those children entitled to FSM.</p> <p>Two University of Portsmouth masters' students undertook a desktop research project into better understanding school meal up-take, including FSM, with the research being finalised over the summer. The plan is to test the emerging theories, with parents, via a workshop in the new autumn term.</p> <p>A practical lunchbox workshop targeted at KS1 parents is scheduled for early in the new academic year, capturing the new Year R parents as they start their lunchbox journey, plus offering it to the other year groups of where lunchboxes is of the greatest concern (Yr 1 and 2). There will also be opportunities to discuss ideas with parents other interventions that they would find useful linked to diet/nutrition/lunchboxes/school meals etc.</p> |
| | Reduce food waste | |
| Active Places | Continue the Daily Mile | Ensure children continue to regularly participate in the daily mile, capture data to use in the classroom as part of projects and highlight the benefits for their health and learning. |
| | Increase active travel to school | <p>Insight - Further discussions took place in the Autumn term between stakeholders and a parent's survey was issued around how and why they chose the method (active or driving) they do to get to school. The idea was to unpick some of barriers to active travel and ask for potential solutions from the parents themselves. Findings are currently being considered, with relevant and appropriate ideas being feed into the range of active initiatives already underway.</p> <p>Following last year's observations of drop-offs and major safety concerns raised at Northam Street in particular, a road safety audit at school pick-up took place. A road safety officer examined both road layout/markings, aids/barriers to walking and cycling around school gate, and parental driving behaviour at a pick-up on 7th November. The findings were shared and discussed with the key partners involved in active travel action, and feed into next steps around active travel.</p> <p>Delivery - A range of interventions are currently underway with the school based on the 21/22 insight, including classroom work, homework and trialling of innovative initiatives such as a scooter library, Wheelie (scoot/cycle) Wednesdays and inter-schools competition around active travel, launching in autumn term.</p> <p>A 4-day road closure pilot as part of Sustrans national Big Walk and Wheel took place the last week of term before Easter holidays. Anecdotal feedback from children, parents, staff and residents was very supportive. Surveys were completed both during (paper copies) and after (online/paper), which showed overwhelming support for full time road closure at Northam Street, with approx. 90% supportive. The main comment coming through was the desire to also close Fyning Street. The Active Travel team and Sustrans are currently working with the school on the next steps.</p> |
| Cleaner Air | Reduce smoking at school gate | Following the smoking drop-off observation and cigarette butt audit around the school gate identifying a relatively small number of smokers, the school decided to focus on active travel this past few terms due to the road safety concerns. It is hoped the piloting of a smoke-free school gate will start sometime during the new academic year 23/24. |
| Community and Safety | Improve Arundel Park | Insight - A follow-up survey was administered to parents, to gain feedback on the park improvements, with parents still not using the park for a number of reasons, |



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| | and increase usage | mainly linked to perceived safety concerns. The findings will be reviewed in detail and future feedback sought, in a bid to unpick the issues and increase usage as an on-going piece of work. Changing people's perceptions of an area takes time. Ensuring greater usage by residents, would by default increase perceptions of safety. However, there are genuine health and safety concerns (needles, drug taking, anti-social behaviour) that all partners are aware of and unless these are addressed (outside scope of this project) then park usage will ultimately still be affected. |
|--|--------------------|--|

In addition to the above actions, campaigns on anti-idling, reducing litter and dog fouling in the area and promoting cycling are all planned within the next 6 months:

- The anti-idling campaign will be linked to city-wide work on this issue.
- A campaign targeting litter and dog fouling issues will focus on promoting the My Portsmouth App and encouraging anonymous tip offs, which have been successful in increasing reporting in the past.
- Work on increasing family cycling will take place in the summer, promoting active travel, plus Bikeability training via the school.

ⁱ [Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038](#)