

Health & Social Services Scrutiny Committee

Task & Finish Review

An Active & Healthy Start

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Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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1 Members of the Task & Finish Group



**Cllr. Gareth John
(Chair)**
Carmarthen Town
North and South



Cllr. Michelle Donoghue
Bynea
Labour



Cllr. Rob Evans
Dafen & Felinfoel
Labour
(left 08/11/23)



Cllr. Meinir James
Llangyndeyrn
Plaid Cymru



Cllr. John Jenkins
Elli
Unaffiliated
(resigned 18/01/24)



Cllr. Hefin Jones
Llanfihangel
Plaid Cymru



Cllr. Louvain Roberts
Glanymor
Independent

2 Chair's Foreword



We undertook this Task & Finish Group research in response to the publication of alarming data which indicated that Carmarthenshire has the highest levels of overweight children in Wales with 31.4% of aged 4-5 years being overweight or obese.


Obesity is one of the greatest public health challenges of modern times. It leads to many adverse health conditions including; type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, liver and respiratory disease, an increased incidence of cancer, and can affect mental health and wellbeing.

Obesity is a growing problem with 27% of children living in Wales, aged 4-5 years, overweight or obese (Public Health Wales (PHW),2022). Carmarthenshire has the highest proportion of overweight or obese children aged 4 – 5 years in Wales. Around 55% of obese children go on to be obese in adolescence, around 80% of obese adolescents will still be obese in adulthood and around 70% will be obese over age 30 (Simmonds et al, 2016). At 29.2%, Hywel Dda UHB has the highest proportion of overweight and obese children aged 4—5 years in Wales, with Carmarthenshire the highest of its three counties (31.4%).


(Ref: Child Measurement Programme for Wales 2021/22, Public Health Wales)

The figures are stark with the implications of such a high proportion of our population being over-weight is huge. Unhealthy lifestyle choices and behaviours significantly increase the possibility of developing chronic diseases and a major cause of preventable diseases and early death. Public Health Wales estimate that obesity alone directly costs the Welsh NHS £73 million a year, increasing to £86 million when including overweight. It is estimated that UK wide diabetes costs some £14 billion.

Obesity



Across Wales, excess weight and obesity is becoming more common and poor unhealthy lifestyle behaviour and habits are certainly a factor, with the prevalence of obesity continuing to climb. At the same time our collective ability to recognise what being a healthy weight looks like is reducing, raising significant public health concern as carrying excess weight can have significant implications for an individual's physical and mental health.

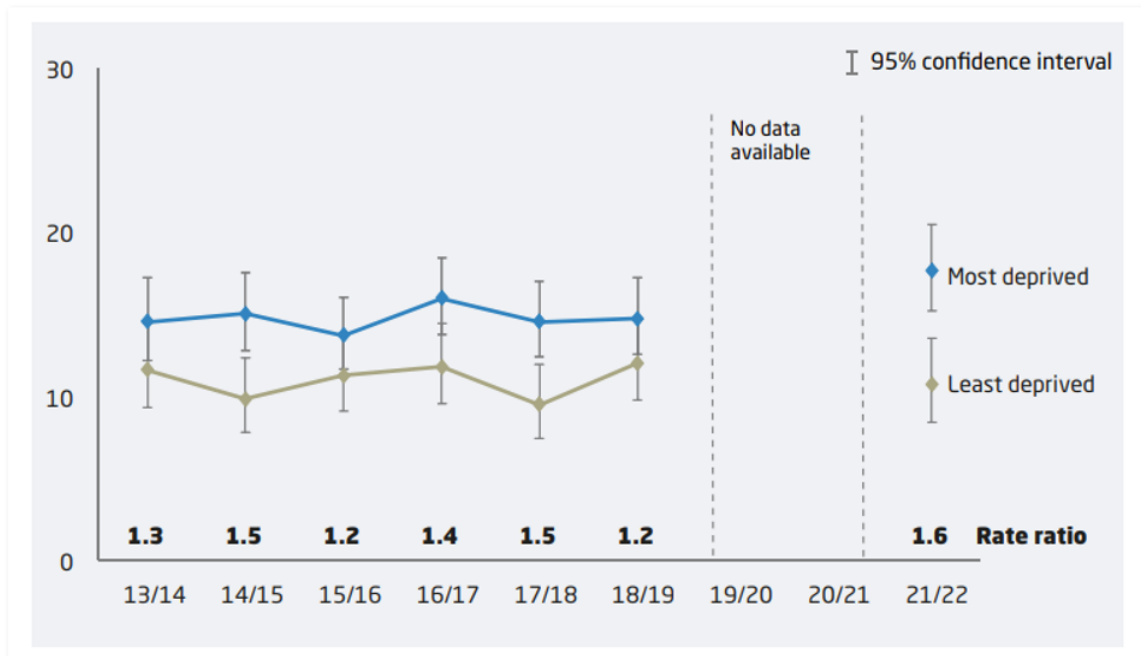


Being overweight or obese increases the risk of a wide range of chronic diseases, principally:

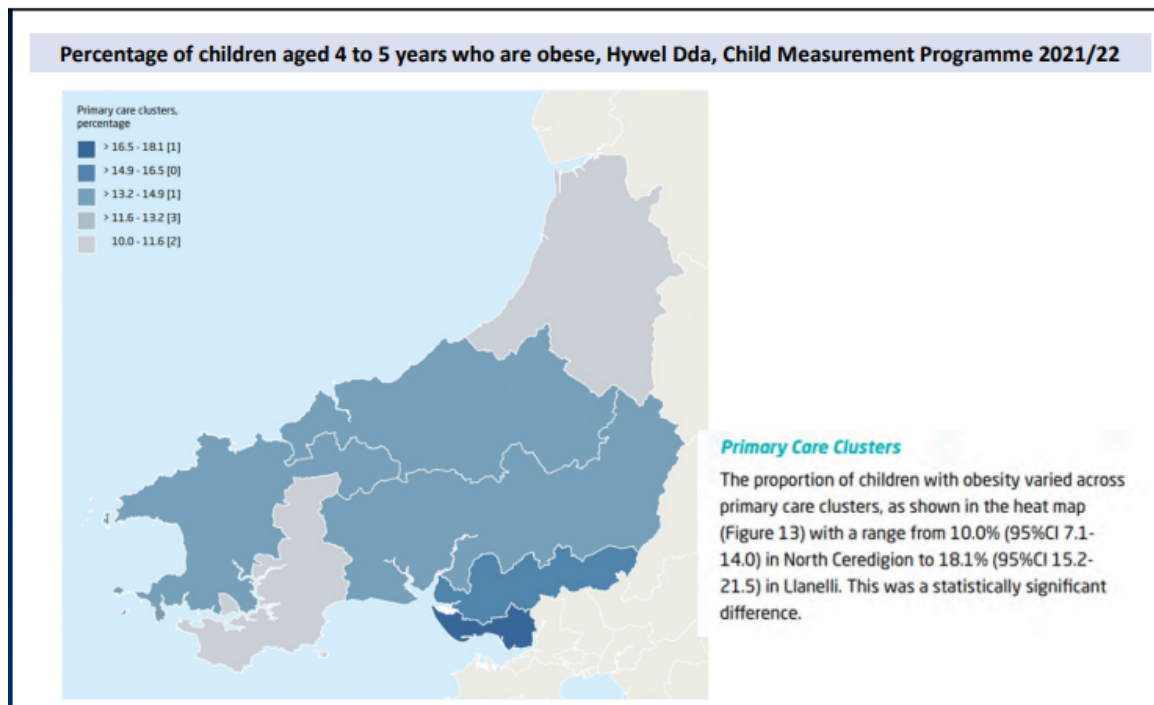
- Type 2 diabetes
- Hypertension
- Cardiovascular disease including stroke
- Cancer

We are also aware that social- economic status and deprivation has a bearing, further widening health inequality within the County and across the region.

Percentage of children aged 4 to 5 years who are obese, Child Measurement Programme, Hywel Dda UHB by most and least deprivation fifth, 2013/14 - 2021/22



The proportions of children with obesity in the most deprived Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile were higher compared to the proportion in the least deprived quintile across all six LHBs. This difference was statistically significant in four of the LHB regions.



The determinants affecting one's health are obviously numerous and complex however all agree that prevention is better than cure and that early and positive interventions around diet, movement and social networks play a key part.

A healthy balanced diet is clearly critical in addressing this challenge with the group being briefed on the development of Carmarthenshire's Local Food Strategy and the work being undertaken towards an integrated local food system.

The scale of the challenge is highlighted within the 2023 research data for pre-schools in Carmarthen indicating that 87% of the children are below average or poor in their motor competencies (running, jumping, throwing, catching, balance etc) as measured by a validated motor assessment tool – which predicts high inactivity levels and risk of a poor health trajectory in adulthood.

Likewise, less than half of the 73 schools surveyed comply with the recommended 2 hours of minimum time for physical education with 23 offering 60 minutes or less. On a similar theme school swimming attendees have almost halved over the decade (79.5% of pupils to 34.8%).

On a positive the group have been impressed by the number of projects and initiatives already being undertaken locally to address matters and feel it imperative that they continue ([Appendix A refers](#)).

The report highlights how essential it is that knowledge, expertise, and resources are shared, maximised and sustained across the public, private and voluntary sectors to try and address these challenges.

This is a complex subject and requires a holistic approach with strategic and operational multi-agency alignment of current and emerging strategies such as the new prevention strategy that is currently at an early stage of development, the Maternity and Early Years Strategy for West Wales and Local Food Strategy.

Underpinning the work and recommendations of this group are the principles set out in the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(2015\)](#), and set within the context of **no additional core funding** resource being or becoming available for the foreseeable future to address these challenges:

- Prevention
- Collaboration
- Person-centred focus
- Addressing inequality

The report concludes with 7 key recommendations and actions for consideration, focussing on actions that would make a significant difference in meeting the challenges in respect of:

- Stakeholder governance
- Pre-natal and pre-school age;
- Primary School age;
- Community Sport & School swimming provision;
- Food and healthy eating; and
- Addressing inequity within the County using Pentre Awel and South Llanelli as a key focus area.

- 'Fit for the future' infrastructure to enable children and families to be active.

Cllr. Gareth John – Chair of the Task & Finish Group

3 The Task & Finish Review

Objectives and Scope

The Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee has a key role to play in monitoring services, development of key policies and strategies as well as identifying areas for improvement or development.

At its scrutiny Forward Planning Meeting on the 18th April 2023, the Health & Social Services Scrutiny Committee agreed in principle to undertake a review into childhood obesity in Carmarthenshire – *An Active & Healthy Start (0-11 year old age group)*.

Following its first meeting, the Group agreed that the main aims of the review would be:

- Understand the extent of the problem and identify the root cause of the issues in Carmarthenshire.
- To undertake a review of existing resources - avoid duplication of work.
- To establish how effectively partners work together to achieve outcomes.
- Develop a coordinated approach to tackling the issue of obesity to improve the health and well-being of children in Carmarthenshire.
- To formulate recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet.

Corporate / Community Objectives and Well-Being Objectives

The Group agreed that this review would contribute to achieving the following corporate / community well-being objectives and outcomes, which are all aligned with the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(2015\)](#): -

County Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-2027:

- Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life (Start Well)
- Enabling our residents to live and age well (Live and Age Well)
- Providing services as efficiently as possible, ensuring value for money
- Investigating and developing new ways of working and providing services
- Increasing collaboration with our partners and communities in order to support the delivery of services.

The outcomes of this review would also directly link to the following.

Carmarthenshire County Council Well-being objectives:-

- Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences – Objective 1
 - Giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing inequalities across the life course.
 - Children who experience stressful and poor-quality childhoods are more likely to experience poor mental health and develop long term health problems as they move into adulthood.
 - What happens during these early years has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being - children with developmental delays

in their motor competence in early childhood are at a greater risk of inactivity, overweight and obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and mental health, and can negatively affect educational achievement and economic status.

- There is a growing recognition of the detrimental impact which exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in childhood, particularly multiple ACEs, can have upon physical and mental health and well-being, relationships with others, educational attainment, and prosperity outcomes into adulthood.
- Looked After Children (LAC) are more likely to have been exposed to high rates of Adverse Childhood Experiences associated with poor long-term outcomes before entering care.
- Help children live healthy lifestyles – Objective 2
 - Projections suggest an increase in trends for childhood obesity with figures showing males between the ages of 2 – 15 being at greatest risk.
 - Assessment engagement activity with primary school children showed being physically active to be the second most important factor for positive well-being of children aged 6 – 11, after connections with family and friends.
 - Living healthy lives allows children to fulfil their potential and meet education aspirations.
 - Habits established early in life remain with people to allow them to play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.

Approach

The Task and Finish Group's membership was as follows:

- Cllr. Hazel Evans (Chair) (Resigned from Committee 13th September)
- Cllr. Gareth John (Chair) (replaced Cllr Hazel Evans on 13th September)
- Cllr. Louvain Roberts (Vice Chair)
- Cllr. Michelle Donoghue
- Cllr. Rob Evans (Resigned from Committee 6th November 2023)
- Cllr. Meinir James
- Cllr. John Jenkins (Resigned as Councillor 18th January 2024)
- Cllr. Hefin Jones

The Democratic Services Unit based in the Chief Executive's Department, provided research and general support to the Group.

The following officers provided specialist advice and support during the Group's review:

- Ian Jones – Head of Leisure
- Carl Daniels – Senior Sports & Leisure Manager
- Catrin Rees – Senior Healthy Schools Officer
- Mari-Ann Jones - Actif Communities Manager

- Alex Cook – Food Development Officer
- Noeline Thomas, Senior Manager (Strategic Commissioning & Early Years)

Initially, it was planned that the review would be completed in 6 meetings between May 2023 and November 2023. The timescale for development of the report was impacted due to the availability of some of the external consultees.

The Group considered evidence and information from a variety of sources and as part of the research, the task and finish group consulted the following:

- Dr Michael Thomas – Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Hywel Dda UHB
- Dr Simon Williams – Associate Professor - Institute of Management and Health, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- Dr Nalda Wainwright - Associate Professor - Institute of Management and Health, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- Ann Vincent – Obesity Empowerment Network
- Victoria Edwards – Service Transformation Lead, Hywel Dda UHB
- Kelly White, Service Delivery Manager for Prevention & Wellbeing, HDDHB

The group also linked across to the work of the multi-agency Carmarthenshire Preventions Group, which feeds into the Healthier Carmarthenshire Board and the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Board.

Additionally, a review of relevant literature on childhood obesity, including studies, reports and policies was undertaken.

4 Summary of Key Findings

4.1 Child measurement programme report 2021/22

The [Child Measurement Programme \(CMP\) for Wales](#) measures the height and weight of children in Reception class in order to learn how children in Wales are growing so that NHS Wales and partners can better plan and deliver health services. Public Health Wales is responsible for the coordination of the Child Measurement Programme and every health board across Wales is taking part in the programme.

Data taken from the 2021-22 CMP report formed the basis of evidence and baseline measures for the current position with regards children who are over-weight or obese in Carmarthenshire. *N.B 2022-23 CMP report due 21/5/24*

Key findings:

- Carmarthenshire has the highest levels of overweight or obese children in Wales with 31.4% of 4–5 year-olds being overweight or obese.
- Deprivation trends within Local Health Boards over time show similar patterns from pre pandemic to 2021/22 across three LHB regions. For Swansea Bay the deprivation gap appears to have reduced since 2018/19. However, for Cardiff & Vale and Hywel Dda the gap appears to have increased.

4.2 Overweight and Obesity definitions in Wales

Public Health Wales use Body Mass Index (BMI) to define healthy or unhealthy weight.

BMI categories are: underweight <18.5. healthy weight 18.5 to <25. overweight 25 to <30. obese 30 to <40.

Obesity is defined as an increase in body weight that is greater than 20% of an individual's ideal body weight.

It is characterised by abnormal or excessive fat accumulation.

4.3 Factors Contributing to Childhood Obesity

As noted previously, the determinants affecting health are numerous, complex, and inter-related however, there is little doubt that early and positive interventions around movement, diet, and social network play a key part, as illustrated in Dahlgren and Whitehead's (1993) model below.

Dahlgren and Whitehead Social Determinants of Health Framework



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991
 'Rainbow' model of the determinants of health

The Task and Finish Group had several discussions on the factors identified below, as well as the potential impact of mobile phones, and electronic devices on young people's behaviour and (lack of) movement, potentially resulting in more sedentary lifestyles than in generations past.

Assessment of societal factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedentary lifestyles • Unhealthy eating habits • Lack of access to healthy food options
Evaluation of environmental factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited opportunities for physical activity • Reliance on private transportation.
Examination of socioeconomic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income disparities • Food insecurity.
Psychological factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, parental, and family stress can increase a child's risk of obesity
Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some prescription drugs can increase the risk of developing obesity

The group also considered climate change and the impact of more rainy days on people's ability to go outdoors as well as the impact of extreme weather patterns and the more frequent cancellation of outdoor sports and physical activity opportunities as a contributory factor towards more sedentary behaviour.

4.4 Complications

At the acute end of being over-weight, obesity often causes complications in a child's physical, social, and emotional well-being.

Physical Complications:

- Type 2 diabetes. This chronic condition affects the way your child's body uses sugar (glucose). Obesity and a sedentary lifestyle increase the risk of type 2 diabetes.
- High cholesterol and high blood pressure. A poor diet can cause a child to develop one or both conditions. These factors can contribute to the build-up of plaque, which can cause arteries to narrow and harden, possibly leading to a heart attack or stroke later in life.
- Joint pain. Extra weight causes extra stress on hips and knees. Childhood obesity can cause pain and sometimes injuries in the hips, knees and back.
- Breathing problems. Asthma is more common in children who are overweight. These children are also more likely to develop obstructive sleep apnoea, a potentially serious disorder in which a child's breathing repeatedly stops and starts during sleep.
- Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). This disorder causes fatty deposits to build up in the liver and can lead to scarring and liver damage.

Social and emotional complications

- Children who have obesity may experience teasing or bullying by their peers. This can result in a loss of self-esteem and an increased risk of depression and anxiety.
- Poor academic outcomes due to lack of physical activity levels and poor motor skills.

4.5 Current Initiatives and Programs

Despite the challenges, the group were heartened by the enormous amount of good pro-active work that is already taking place to mitigate the challenges associated with obesity. In fact, it is very worrying to think of what the picture would look like it were not for this work. However, it is worth noting that much of this work is linked to fixed-term grant funded posts and projects.

The group received information outlining excellent work that is already going on across the County via groups and projects that were making a difference to combat childhood obesity. It is recognised that this scoping exercise was (necessarily) limited and that there is a need for a coherent framework or resource that maps all provision across the county.

[Appendix A](#) provides a summary of key initiatives identified in terms of physical activity interventions and healthier food choices. Below is further information to supplement that shown in appendix A and specific to some of the evidence presented to the T&F Group.

Physical Literacy

The Task and Finish Group heard from Dr Nalda Wainwright - Associate Professor and Director of the Wales Academy for Health and Physical Literacy at UWTSU, an expert in the field of Physical Literacy and movement in young people. Some of the key points highlighted by Dr. Wainwright are listed as follows:

- **Prevention** is better than cure.
- **Physical literacy** starts in the early years (pre-school years) – it's a developmental process.
- There is a direct **correlation between motor skills, physical activity levels and academic outcomes**.
- Highly capable children with high perception exhibit higher physical activity participation and more likely to be a normal weight.
- It is **4 times harder to change behaviours in year 4 than aged 4**.
- The **importance of parental engagement** – The [Mini Movers](#) App is an excellent example of work that empowers parents to support their children.
- The need for a **strategic collaborative approach is essential** – both private and public sector.
- **Critical that Health Visitors and key workers within the sector are engaged** and appropriately trained to promote and deliver key messages and programmes.

Dr Wainwright also quoted evidence of research data for pre-schools in Carmarthen showing 87% of the children are below average or poor in their motor competence as measured by a validated motor assessment tool. This is 2023 data and thus very concerning when considering the correlation previously referenced - this would predict that 87% of children in Carmarthenshire will be inactive and at risk of a poor health trajectory.

Actif Sport & Leisure provision

The group learnt about the pivotal role that Actif Sport and Leisure, Carmarthenshire County Council's Sport & Leisure Services team, play in supporting and enabling physical activity opportunities across the county. Within the 2020-2030 Actif Strategy the team's mission is to 'improve wellbeing through inspiring a population to be active for life'. This is delivered through 5 strategic pillars, each with 3 key objectives:

Start Well

1. Give people the best start in life through the development and provision of high quality, inclusive, sustainable activity opportunities across the county.
2. Focus on areas of deprivation, helping connect communities and build resilience with an awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences approach to improve wellbeing.
3. Provide connection between young people and their communities, through intergenerational projects and a 'kindness' approach that creates volunteers and leaders of the future.

Live Well

4. Develop and provide high quality, inclusive, sustainable opportunities that enable people to live healthy lives through participating and volunteering.
5. Help people to help themselves through a targeted, thriving offer of accessible activities as a preventative approach to inactivity and ill health.
6. Provide help when people need it through simple systems of referral (incl. self-referral) to safe, effective activity programmes.

Age Well

7. Enhance and deliver an appropriate programme of accessible activity that enables an ageing population to maintain participation in their later years.
8. Help tackle loneliness and isolation through connecting people in greatest need with activity and volunteering opportunities.
9. Develop a highly effective falls prevention programme, consisting of robust connections to referral partners and sustainable activity in a range of venues.

Manage Well

10. Ensure high quality standards of our services in our facilities and in the community, exceeding any service standards set and benchmarking across the sector where possible.
11. Provide high quality experiences for our those who access our services and support, resulting in growth of our customer base and of the community sport network.
12. Be 'Fit for the future' through a culture inspired to deliver sector-leading, inclusive, innovative services that are sustainable in terms of finance, people, places, and the environment.

Connect Well

13. Achieve a reputation as a successful and trusted service that positions Actif prominently in the sport, health, and education sectors locally, regionally, and nationally.
14. Maximise physical activity capacity and engagement across the county through strong and effective partnerships with local, regional, and national organisations.
15. Enhance provision through an integrated and person-centred approach to improving people's wellbeing.

Naturally, the objectives that sit within the Start Well pillar directly impact on the childhood obesity agenda, as do objectives 14 and 15 within Connect Well. The 6 Leisure centres managed by Actif, plus the work undertaken in the community to support circa 400 sports clubs and a wide range of venues, groups, and organisations across the county, enable hundreds of thousands of children's activity opportunities every year.

According to the National School Sports Survey for 2022, 58% of the County's children and young people attend a community sports club at least once per week, which is above the regional and national average and is testament to the successful

work of the Actif Communities Team in inspiring children and promoting transitions from schools to clubs.

That said, only 37.7% of Carmarthenshire children attend extra-curricular 'school sport' clubs at least once per week which is below regional and national averages and indicates there is work to be done in this regard with schools.

Additionally, only 35 of the 73 schools surveyed complied with the recommended minimum time for Physical Education (2 hrs) with 23 schools offering 60 minutes or less; with one school only offering 30 minutes per week.

Such issues contribute towards the fact that the percentage of children and young people participating in sport and physical activity 3 times or more per week has decreased from 48% to 41% since the 2018 survey.

Examples of Start Well programmes being offered and enabled via Actif include:

- Physical Literacy development – Actif's Physical Literacy Whole School Approach Training, Actif Passport programme, Library Loan Bags, Actif Story Time
- Community Sport – Support to new and existing sports clubs and groups
- Targeted programmes e.g. 'Us Girls' and Inclusion programmes
- Aquatics – School Swimming, Learn to Swim lessons, Swimming Clubs
- Holiday Activity Programmes e.g. Actif Club in Leisure Centres, Actif in the Park
- Programmes for deprived and disadvantaged e.g. Food and Fun, Amser Actif
- Leadership Programmes e.g. Young Ambassadors and Actif Leaders
- Sport Specific Programmes e.g. Balance-bikes, Go Ride, Events, Competition,

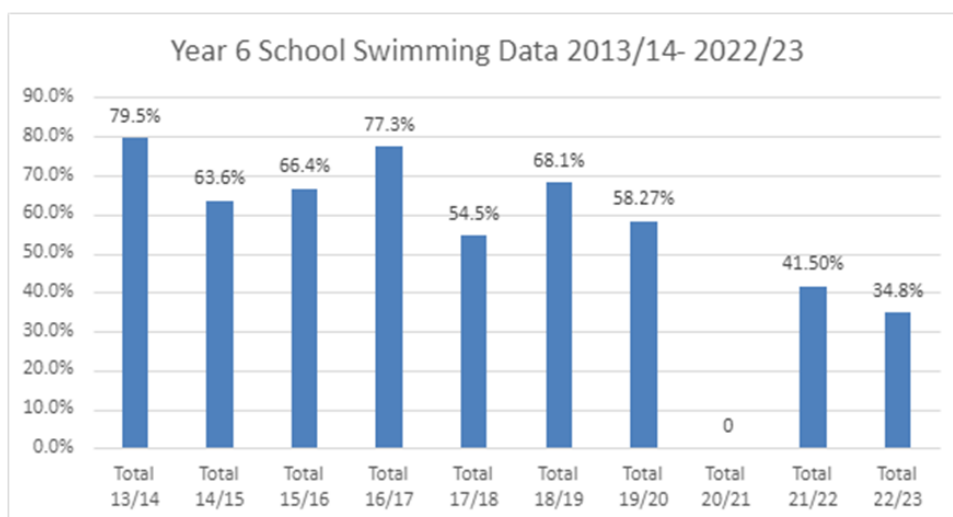
Actif Sport and Leisure measure their effectiveness in delivering the objectives within their strategy through various measures as seen below:

Ref #	Measures	2022/23 Position	2030 Target
	Start Well		
Leis/011	The percentage of young people (years 3 to 11) taking part in 3 or more physical activity sessions per week.	41%	55%
Leis/015	Total number of activity attendances by people aged 0-17yrs at facility sessions run/facilitated by Actif	288,625	377,589
Leis/018	Total number of activity attendances by people aged 0-17yrs at community sessions run/facilitated by Actif	Not available	168,460
Leis/012	The percentage of young people (years 3 to 11) from 'Free School Meals' quartiles 3 and 4 participating in 3 or more activity session per week.	FSMQ3=38% FSMQ4=33%	Avrg 54%
	Total number of activities to develop workforce run/facilitated by Actif, e.g. courses, mentoring	1,946	3,154
Leis/007	% of people (15+yrs) volunteering in sport & physical activity in Carmarthenshire	17,203 (11%)	40,000 (25.5%)

Connect Well			
Leis/010	Indicative monetary return on investment of activity levels of Actif members, against Health, Subjective Wellbeing, Crime reduction and Education attainment	£5.4m	£12m

School Swimming

- **Swimming is a life skill and a skill for life** with universally recognised physical, mental, and social benefits. Learning basic swimming and water safety skills save lives.
- The recent Cabinet endorsed 10-year Carmarthenshire Leisure Strategy 2023-33 includes a key ambition for the authority to ensure **every child can swim 25m by age 11**. This is the ‘safe swimmer’ status as defined by Swim Wales (the Aquatic National Governing Body) and endorsed by Welsh Government. Data is collected on achievement levels on an annual basis against this ambition and submitted to both Sport Wales and Swim Wales. Unfortunately, Carmarthenshire’s school swimming attainment levels have been falling and continue to fall.
- School swimming lessons are the main way that our young people learn to swim – 86% of children who swam in the 22/23 academic year are wholly reliant on school swimming to learn to swim, thus disproportionately affecting deprived children/families who may not be able to afford access via paid learn to swim programmes outside of school hours.
- Primary schools attend swimming lessons at all Carmarthenshire leisure centres (Carmarthen, Ammanford, Llanelli, Llandovery, and Newcastle Emlyn swimming pool). Lessons are taught by schoolteachers / staff who are supported on poolside by Senior Swimming Teachers, based at the centres.
- Since 2016, schools are charged per pupil per day (currently £2.60 per child per lesson, going up to £2.80 for 24/25) and swim for 45 minutes each lesson. Transport costs are covered by the school.
- It is recommended that schools attend daily lessons of 45 mins on 15 consecutive days on an annual basis for Year 4, Year 5 & Year 6 – this provides a total of 11.25 hrs of instructed swimming each year and 33.75 hrs over three years. Allowing for absences/illnesses this is sufficient to meet the Swim Wales recommendation of 26 hours of instructed swimming time.
- Swimming attendances and compliance with the recommendations are declining at a concerning rate and have been since charges were introduced in 2016, albeit this may not be the sole reason. **Attendees have almost halved (from over 5,000 to 2,900) and the percentage achieving ‘safe swimmer status has more than halved (79.5% reduced to 34.8%).**



School swimming stats for the Autumn 2023 term

- 1041 pupils attended school swimming during this period.
- 31.4% achieved the 'safe swimmer' status (327 – 148 males and 179 females). This represents a further fall from the 34.8% achievement rate for the academic year 2022/2023. Of course, this is only for one term but could be an indicator for the remaining two terms.
- It is interesting to note that in this term, girls are outperforming boys. We also noted this in the 2022/2023 statistics where 395 males (1752 males attended) and 476 females (1772 females attended) achieved the safe swimmer status. This is of significance given the higher percentage of males who drown. The 2022 drowning statistics, for Wales, show that of the 22 drownings that occurred, 20 were males.
<https://www.nationalwatersafety.org.uk/waid/annual-reports-and-data>. All age groups were represented from under 20 to aged 69.
- Several schools have cancelled their school swimming booking over recent years – citing financial pressures.

Welsh Network of Health & Well-being Promoting Schools Scheme

The Scheme provides all schools with a Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) in relation to Food and Fitness so that they can evaluate how well they are embedding a Whole School Approach in relation to this Health topic. The SEF allows schools to evaluate themselves in 4 key areas:

- Leadership & Communication,
- Curriculum,
- Ethos & Environment; and
- Family & Community Involvement.

The SEF requires schools to assess its current policies and practices in relation to Food & Fitness: how many hours of quality PE pupils receive; does the school environment promote Physical Activity and Healthy Eating; do staff receive relevant training; does the school promote consistent messages in relation to Healthy Eating and Physical activity; does the school allow pupil voice; and does the school

participate in national and local initiatives and invite parents / key partners / specialists into the school to enrich the curriculum and pupils experiences.

Healthy School Promoting Officers support schools on their Self Evaluation journey, identify areas of strength & development, and then produce an Action Plan to focus on areas of development. Officers signpost schools to resources, guidance, key partners, specialists, and practices that will support them to develop their identified areas of need.

Completing the SEF process does have a positive impact on school practices, e.g. increase in the number of schools amending Food & Fitness policies; the number of schools including healthy eating education within their curriculum; communicating key messages to Parents/ Carers; increase in the number of schools engaging with local & national initiatives; not permitting nor rewarding pupils with unhealthy drinks and snacks on school site; and an increase in outdoor learning.

Healthy Schools Network on HWB: The Local Scheme has established a Healthy Schools Network on HWB with its primary focus being an information sharing platform. It includes a wealth of knowledge on 7 health topics including Food & Fitness. Schools can access Educational / Curriculum Resources in relation to Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, and PE on the Network. The Scheme has also produced a Directory of Resources for Food and Fitness, Physical Activity & PE across the phases of learning for schools and families which are available on the [Healthy Schools Network and Family Information Service website](#).

The Network also includes the latest National Guidance in relation to Physical Activity levels and Healthy Eating, good practice observed in schools, generic information such as posters, flyers & Infographics for schools to display & dates of relevant health campaigns & CPD opportunities.

The Network is also utilised to raise awareness to any new developments within the Health & Well-being agenda through the announcements feature it has, this ensures that all members of the Network receive a prompt notification via e-mail of the latest information shared nationally & locally in relation to Health & Well-being, ensuring that schools are kept up to date with any relevant developments.

CPD provision: The local scheme has delivered and funded various CPD opportunities for Primary Practitioners in relation to the Healthy Eating and PE agenda including a Local Healthy Eating Conference & Courses focussing on the delivery of Healthy Eating & PE in the Curriculum. Free resources were also provided to schools who attended the training.

Termly Cluster Meetings for Healthy School & PE Co-ordinators. The Scheme along with our key partners, Actif Young People (AYP) & Explore and Learn Officers, delivers termly cluster meetings to share key information with Co-ordinators. The meetings are also utilised as a platform for Co-ordinators to raise any challenges they may face, concerns or observations they may have in relation to the Food & Fitness agenda. For example, healthy packed lunches are a challenging area for schools, and support officers signpost them to exemplar policies and practices.

- To date the following Phases / Accreditations have been achieved by Carmarthenshire schools:

Phase 1: 110 (100% of schools)
Phase 2: 108 (98% of Schools)
Phase 3: 101 (92% of schools)
Phase 4: 76 (67 % of schools)
Phase 5: 39 (35% of schools)
Phase 6: 7
National Quality Award: 7

Pupil Well-being Surveys produced by the School Health Research Network

The scheme includes questions about Eating and Activity Habits. It encourages and ensures the engagement of all Secondary Schools with the School Health Research Network (SHRN) and allow pupils from Year 7-11 to complete Pupil Well-being Surveys. These Surveys include questions about a young persons' eating and activity habits. SHRN collates the data on a School and Local Authority level. Each school is provided with its own individual report on the Survey findings, with the Local Authority also having its own report. The data published within these reports allow Schools and Healthy Schools Officers to assess and analyse the data sets for eating and activity habits. Schools can then act if needed. For example, actions could include developing the outdoor environment to encourage more physical activity or include more healthy eating education within the curriculum.

Healthy eating and food

Diet makes up 70-80% of weight-loss and contributing to addressing obesity. A healthy, balanced diet is therefore critical in terms of addressing this challenge, in terms of targeting priority demographics and county-wide public settings.

Carmarthenshire Public Service Board as part of the Well-Being Plan 2023-27 have committed to 'Develop and Publish a Local Food Strategy' and 'Work towards an integrated local food system'.

Under the draft shared vision of 'A Carmarthenshire Food System that produces, promotes and provides healthy and sustainable food fit for Future Generations', the *"Local Food Strategy can play a pivotal role in delivering: sustainably produced and healthy food for everyone; better livelihoods and economic security of local producers; and support a transition to environmentally regenerative food production"*.

Currently over 400 stakeholders at a local, regional, and national level have been consulted, including residents, business, and organisations active in the local food system. It has detailed significant and novel analysis of the local food system Public Sector Organisational impact and key intervention areas for action. The work is supported by both the Bwyd Sir Gar Food Partnership (strategic) and Carmarthenshire Food Network (operational).

Given the nature and complexities of the local food system, and the challenges faced here in Carmarthenshire, it is crucial that alignment and integration exists between the recommendations in this report, the Local Food Strategy, and the Food Systems Development Project. The recommendations in this report should thus form part of an Integrated Impact Assessment.

The Local Food Strategy sets out 6 interlinked 'Food Goals' (medium/long term 5-15 Years), 12 Strategic Objectives (medium term 5 years) with Key Targets and Draft Action Plans for delivery and a series of recommendations (short term), some of which are more relevant to this task and finish review.

These include Strategic Objectives around: Food Growing, Home and Community, and Public Sector Provision, along with Accessibility, Health, and the Economy.

Food Goals

- Food for All

Carmarthenshire becomes the first county in Wales to eliminate the need for food banks. By creating access to the food they need in a dignified way and empowered with the skills to prepare food in order to lead a healthy life.

Potential Target - Zero food banks in Carmarthenshire by 2030

- Food for Public Health

Increased consumption of vegetables, which are produced sustainably in Wales, for Wales. Educational provision on food related issues in each key stage in all schools.

Potential Targets – A) 75% of Gov Eatwell Guides recommended vegetable consumption produced locally/regionally and sustainably by 2030. B) 100% of schools include Food Literacy in Key Stage 1–3 Curriculum.

Physical Literacy (play) and Food Literacy (diet) are the 2 key foundational enablers for healthy lifestyles. While prevention is better than cure, we don't have the luxury of focussing on prevention in singularity as we already have the existing rate of obesity.

Food and Fun School based programme

Food and Fun is a school-based education programme run across 12 days during the school summer holidays funded by the WLGA. It is delivered by school staff and partners along with support from Carmarthenshire County Council and health professionals. The programme provides food and nutrition, education, physical activity, enrichment sessions, and healthy meals to children in areas of social deprivation.

The overall aim of Food and Fun is to contribute to long-term improvements in the health and well-being of children.

The Food and fun programme has run in Carmarthenshire since 2022 and the following schools have participated (It is expected that a further 5 schools will participate in the programme this year):

2022 (total of 4)	2023 (6 schools)	2024 (12 schools)
Ysgol Pen Rhos	Ysgol Pen Rhos	Ysgol Y Bedol

Ysgol Y Bedol	Ysgol Y Bedol	Ysgol Pontyberem
Ysgol Pontyberem	Ysgol Pontyberem	Ysgol Betws
Ysgol Burryport	Ysgol Bro Banw	Ysgol Llandeilo
	Ysgol Betws	Ysgol Pen Rhos
154 children benefitted	Ysgol Llandeilo	Ysgol Burry Port
	240 children benefitted.	Ysgol Gorslas
		Ysgol Gyfun Emlyn
		Ysgol Trimsaran
		Ysgol Old Road
		Ysgol Llanmiloe
		Ysgol Myrddin

Parents are encouraged to attend family engagement sessions as part of the Food and Fun programme and participate in cooking sessions and developing basic food skills. Coleg Sir Gar's 'Cook 24' shared prosperity funded programme, has supported schools with a family meal activity once a week where a team of chefs visits the school and cooks' healthy meals with the children and their families. Food Sense Wales supported Food and Fun with an initiative called 'Veg in Schools' with local vegetables during mealtimes and fully funded farm visits for children to learn more about the vegetables that are grown in their local area and Wales. It is hoped that these initiatives continue in the programme for 2024.

Healthy Eating Measure and Regulations

All schools in Wales must conform with the Healthy Eating Regulations and Measure that was set by Welsh Ministers in 2013. Local Healthy School Officers have a responsibility to remind schools of the Measure and Regulations as set out in the Healthy Eating in Maintained Schools Guidance (Wales) (2014). All Local Authorities and Governing Bodies have due regard to these Regulations and must ensure compliance. All School Catering teams must also comply with the regulations - Carmarthenshire's School Meals Catering Team has achieved its Certificate of Compliance (August 2023). The Regulations are currently under review, however, until new guidance is published the LA, Governing Bodies, and Healthy School Officers must ensure compliance with the current guidance.

Maternity and Early Years Strategy for West Wales

The Maternity and Early Years Strategy for West Wales sets out how we will ensure that all families across the region have access to excellent universal and targeted services that support their health and wellbeing. The strategy aims to develop skills and resilience, which will last a lifetime and enable families to cope well with the challenges and pressures that they may face, whilst:

- Supporting those at a disadvantage and those who encounter challenges; and
- Safeguarding and nurturing the most vulnerable.

The strategy's vision and priorities also contributes to the following Carmarthenshire Wellbeing Objectives:

Start Well :

- Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.
- Help children live healthy lives.
- Continue to improve learner attainment for all.
- Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work and improve the lives of those living in poverty.

Live Well

- Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)

Age Well

- Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities.

In a Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment

- Promote Welsh Language and Culture.

One of the key outcome measures within the strategy is as follows:

Outcomes	Objectives	Indicators
Children	We need to:	As measured by:
are healthy	Increase the proportion of children that have a healthy weight	Percentage of 4-5 year olds who are not overweight

This will be achieved by close partnership working with midwives and health visitors in identifying families as early as pregnancy, ensuring consistent key messages related to health and wellbeing are given to parents at the earliest point possible. The strategy also aims to ensure that parents are given the support required to equip themselves with the necessary information, advice, knowledge, and skills to ensure their children lead healthier lifestyles.

Play Sufficiency Duty

The Play Sufficiency Duty places a statutory duty on all Local Authorities across Wales to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children and young people, which in turn can help activity levels and this reduce childhood obesity.

All children and young people have a right to play as detailed within the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child. Having access to good quality and accessible play opportunities contributes positively to children's overall health and wellbeing. Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people have access to play opportunities and thus develop an annual action plan setting out these priorities.

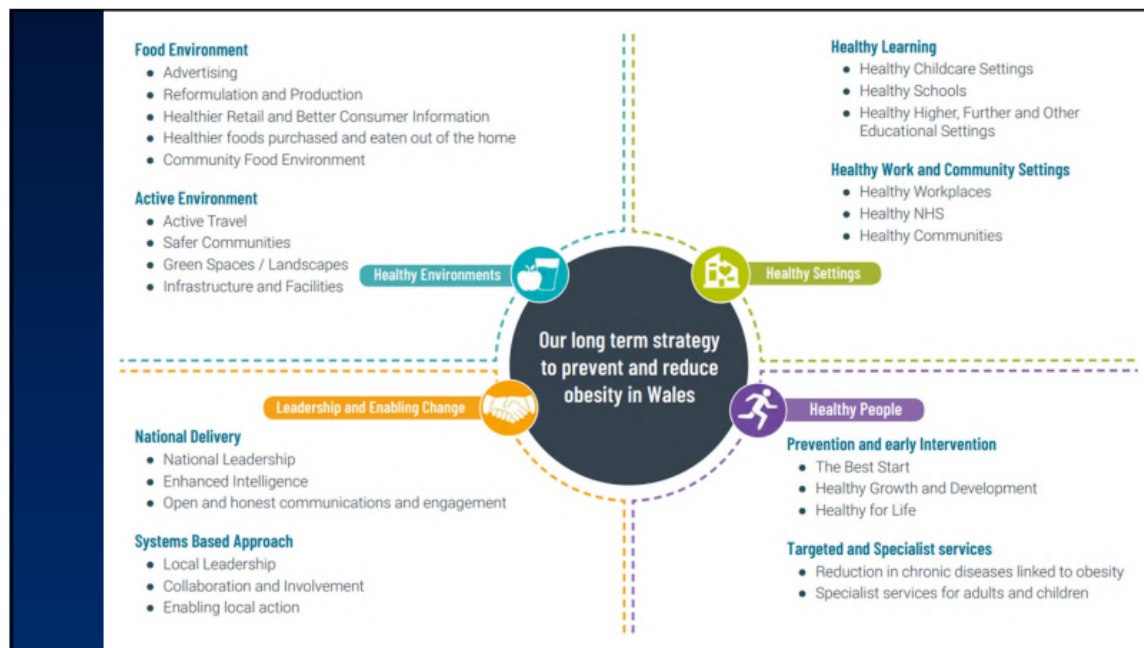
Play Wales has invited Carmarthenshire to be part of a pilot study - Stay and Play. The pilot is focusing on developing the use of school grounds outside of teaching hours and developing school Play Policies to ensure that children are receiving good quality play opportunities during the day and that curtailing play is not a form of punishment within school behavior management policy and practice.

The 'Playworks Holiday Grant' delivers free open access play provision and healthy snacks within communities across the county. The aim of the 'Playworks Holiday Project' is to provide better play opportunities for children living in vulnerable communities and to realise the benefits this brings in terms of child development and activity levels. People Speak Up are commissioned to facilitate bilingual inclusive street play sessions in Carmarthenshire, to engage with the local community and encourage families to create a positive family approach to play as well as help reduce holiday hunger by providing healthy snacks during the play sessions.

5 Potential Framework for Action

Welsh Government’s Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales Strategy provides a ready-made framework for future action made up of four themes:

- Healthy environments
- Healthy settings
- Healthy people
- Leadership and enabling change.



Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales strategy 2030

The framework can help partners and agencies align these themes with actions and programme as suggested below.

<p>Healthy settings (Education and Awareness):</p>	<p>a. <u>Health Education Programs</u>:</p> <p>Integrate evidence-based nutrition education into the school curriculum, teach children about healthy food choices, portion control, and the importance of regular physical activity.</p> <p>b. <u>Parental Education</u>:</p> <p>Provide resources for parents / carers on nutrition, healthy cooking, and creating a home environment for healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>c. <u>Community Awareness Campaigns</u>:</p> <p>Conduct awareness campaigns to educate families about the risks of childhood obesity, the</p>
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	importance of healthy living, and available resources.
Healthy (Food) Environments:	<p>a. <u>School Meals:</u></p> <p>Ensure that school meals meet nutritional guidelines, offering balanced and nutritious options while limiting processed foods, added sugars, and unhealthy fats.</p> <p>b. <u>Healthy Food Options:</u></p> <p>Collaborate with local food retailers, eateries, and community organisations to increase the availability and affordability of healthy food options, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Discourage the promotion of unhealthy foods targeted at children.</p>
Healthy (Active) Environments:	<p>a. <u>Active School Environments:</u></p> <p>Enhance physical activity opportunities within schools by promoting physical education classes, recess, and extracurricular activities.</p> <p>b. <u>Community Recreation Programs:</u></p> <p>Develop community-based physical activity programs that are accessible, affordable, and cater to children of all abilities and interests.</p> <p>c. <u>Active Transportation:</u></p> <p>Improve infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling for short-distance journeys to schools and other locations, linking with Active Travel plans / Safe Routes to schools initiatives.</p>
Healthy (Supportive) Environments:	<p>a. <u>Family Involvement:</u></p> <p>Engage families through support groups, parenting workshops, and family-centered interventions to encourage healthy eating and regular physical activity.</p> <p>b. <u>Public Spaces:</u></p> <p>Enhance public parks, playgrounds, and open spaces, ensuring they are safe, well-maintained, and inclusive to promote physical activity for children and families.</p>
Healthy People	<p><u>Targeted interventions</u></p> <p>Early years (Pre-natal; pre-school and primary)</p>

	Specialist support (physical / mental)
Leadership and enabling Change Collaboration and Policy:	<p>a. <u>Multi-Sector Collaboration / Joint Working:</u></p> <p>Foster partnerships between government agencies, health / healthcare providers, educational institutions, community organisations, and the private sector to collectively address childhood obesity.</p> <p>b. <u>Policy Development:</u></p> <p>Advocate for the implementation of policies that support healthy environments for children, such as regulations on food marketing, nutritional standards in schools, and urban planning strategies that prioritise physical activity.</p> <p>c. <u>Monitoring Systems:</u></p> <p>Establish a data monitoring system to track childhood obesity rates, identify high-risk populations, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions over time</p>

By broadly following the Healthy weight, Healthy Wales framework, and using the data and assessment of current provision gathered as part of this T&F work for the County, we can focus on some specific Carmarthenshire actions to create as supportive and healthy an environment as possible for future generations.

We will promote positive lifestyle choices, reducing the incidence of childhood obesity, and improving the overall well-being of children across all our communities.

Crucial to this, is engaging with relevant stakeholders to sustain these efforts in the long term to achieve lasting impact.

6 Recommendations

Key principles agreed as underpinning all actions and future working:

- Well-being of future generations principles
- Prevention rather than cure – getting ahead of the curve.
- Collaboration – link work via Carmarthen Prevention Group (and Healthier Carmarthenshire Board / PSB) and align with emerging Prevention strategy for County.
- Person-centred approach
- Addressing inequality
- Making best use of existing resources - assuming no additional core funding resource available.

Recommendation One

Focus area: Review stakeholder governance.

KEY ACTION – Improve collaboration to make best use of resources.

Ensure alignment with data, plans, and resources to deliver greatest impact.

Sub-Actions

Action 1 – Update stakeholder mapping for all childhood obesity work across Carmarthenshire

Action 2 – Review and monitor actions from this report via Carmarthenshire Prevention Board, which in turn can report through to Healthier Carmarthenshire Board and Public Service Board (PSB)

Action 3 – Align this plan with emerging Local Food Strategy and Health sector Prevention strategy.

Cost implications

Limited implications envisaged re: governance and collaboration. Principle is to align with existing governance structures and ensure best use of resources and knowledge sharing.

Recommendation Two

Focus area: Pre-School, play, and physical literacy provision.

KEY ACTION – Collaborate across sectors to maximise benefit from existing programmes, networks, and opportunities for pre-school groups.

Method of collaboration to be reviewed to ensure all relevant partners align regarding information, promotion, interventions, training, etc. for maximum effectiveness and efficiency so that every pre/post-natal and early years setting, and family is provided with:

- information on importance of physical activity
- signposting to healthy eating resources

Sub-Actions

Action 1 – Ensure a pre-natal to pre-primary working forum exists (linking via Carmarthenshire Prevention Group) to suitably cover this agenda, with all relevant partners present, and connections out to groups and organisations who operate within this space.

Action 2 – Collaborate to review key information and opportunities, and to ensure effective communication through all relevant streams, e.g. GP Surgeries, Leisure Centres, Hospitals, Midwives, Health Visitors, Family Centres, Community Centres, etc.

Action 3 – Agree a menu of physical activity/development-related training and support with minimum expected standards, from which all pre-school settings would be required to undertake and/or adopt from a set minimum.

Training examples: Physical literacy, SKIP, Actif Story Time, Toddlebikes, Healthy & Sustainable Pre-School Scheme...to improve understanding and the quality of meaningful physical activity.

Support examples: Actif face-to-face, Actif Anywhere, Mini-Movers (UWTSD), Healthy & Sustainable Pre-School Scheme...to ensure continuous development of knowledge, understanding and provision.

Cost implications

Limited implications envisaged re: governance and collaboration. However, accessing support, training and opportunities will have associated costs that will need to be considered. This is particularly pertinent when setting a minimum training level for settings and it can be foreseen that financial support will be required.

Recommendation Three

Focus Area: Primary School provision.

KEY ACTION: Ensuring a consistent offer across all Carmarthenshire schools. All schools to provide 2 hours of high-quality Physical Education per week, supplemented by a thriving extra-curricular activity programme.

The group felt that the evident disparity between schools should be analysed and addressed internally to ensure that children's experiences and health opportunities are positive, equitable, and not dependent on school leadership and culture.

Sub-Actions

Action 1 – All schools to complete the Sport Wales School Sport Survey and the Primary Well-being Surveys and use their school action plans, as a minimum – to address areas of concern and support curriculum design.

Action 2 – Education and Leisure to agree a menu of physical activity / development related training with minimum expected standards e.g. Physical literacy, SKIP, Actif Story Time, Toddlebikes.

Action 3 – All schools to ensure they provide a year-round, inclusive extracurricular programme that is accessible to every pupil and made up of i) physical activity sessions and ii) festivals / competitions, linking with the Carmarthenshire Sport Network / Actif.

Action 4 – Actif to ensure a connection between all primary schools and the local voluntary sports clubs in their area, through the online Sports Directory, Activity Finder, website, and/or transition sessions

Action 5 – Actif Sport & Leisure to develop and offer an endorsed staffing solution for schools that wish to buy in PE and/or extra-curricular sport deliverers, including PPA cover.

Action 6 – All schools to subscribe to 'Actif Anywhere for Schools' – CCC's online Resource, OnDemand and Livestreaming platform for physical activity for schools.

Action 7: All schools to engage with the Bronze Young Ambassador Programmes to ensure additional opportunities exist for children to be active.

Action 8 - All schools to engage with the School Health Research Network and allow Key Stage 2 pupils to complete the Well-being Surveys. Schools to analyse data focussing on Eating and Activity habits and act where necessary. Link findings with those from the School Sports Survey (see Action 1).

Cost

Setting a minimum training level for schools will result in financial support being required (potentially via external funding).

The creation and provision (by Actif) and buying in (by schools) of staffing support for PE delivery and/or extra-curricular sport provision, plus subscribing to Actif Anywhere (£365-£525 pa based on size of school), will have some associated cost. However, it is envisaged the provision of the model would be financially sustainable once established and 'live' and that the costs borne by schools would be payable for supply cover anyway and this would present a lower cost solution that is better connected to the local sport infrastructure with a greater role/emphasis on the whole sport system.

There could be a cost for a festival and competition programme which should be picked up by the schools as existing.

Recommendation Four

Focus Area - School Swimming and Community Sport

KEY ACTION: Confirm the authority's commitment to ensure that every child in Carmarthenshire is to be able to swim 25m by the time they leave primary school and reduce/remove the cost of school swimming to schools.

Additionally, community sport has a key role in preventing activity and health decline whilst trying to increase activity levels and good health. Carmarthenshire County Council should commit to support the Actif Communities Team and newly formed Carmarthenshire Sport Network, ensuring they have visibility and voice in the county's direction of travel.

Sub-Actions

Action 1: Endorse the Council commitment 'to ensure every child in Carmarthenshire is able to swim 25m by the time they leave primary school.'

Action (Option) 2a: Top slice cost of school swimming from delegated schools' budgets, whilst exploring alternative transport solutions e.g. Sourcing a fleet of electric minibuses for secondary schools (and use by catchment primaries / communities), with trained staff / volunteer drivers to reduce costs (example of [Dolen Teifi Community transport](#) bus being used by some Llanelli Schools at a fraction of normal bus hire costs). Transport solution also applicable to option 2b below.

Action (Option) 2b: Remove the cost per pupil (£2.80 per swim session) to schools. Whilst this would create a financial burden to the Council (on Actif Sport & Leisure budget), implementation of Actions 5 and 6 of Recommendation 2 would go some way towards reducing the overall burden.

Action 3: Endorse the 3-week 'intensive course of swim lessons' due to it being an evidence-based means of effectively teaching children to swim. Modify the programme to 12 days (from 15) to reduce other impacts of schools and to release 3 days of pool programming to income generate and further offset financial burden of Action 2.

Action 4: Endorse the Actif Communities Team as a key council function that supports the sport and physical activity network for young people, including pre-school, school, and community. Seek solutions to mitigate the risk to annual external grant funding that currently underpins this work, recognising the social value return on investment being far more than investment required.

Action 5: Ensure diversification of the physical activity offer, e.g. family entertainment arena at the new 'Carmarthen Health & Wellbeing HWB' and connection to HWB offer countywide, to maximise promotion and uptake.

Cost

Circa £120k of income is collected from schools to fund the school swim programme currently. Should this be removed with no Council virements, the 'loss

of income' would be borne by Actif Sport & Leisure and create an immediate budget pressure.

Some of this pressure can be mitigated by Actions 5 and 6 of Recommendation 2 and action 3 of this recommendation but there will remain an immediate pressure likely to be over £70k pa.

Potential to further sell bi-lingual Active Anywhere online service to schools across Wales.

Recommendation Five

Focus Area: Healthy Eating Production, Provision and Promotion

KEY ACTION: Aligning and integrating actions with the Local Food Strategy and the Food Systems Development Project

“The Local Food Strategy can play a pivotal role in delivering: sustainably produced and healthy food for everyone; better livelihoods and economic security of local producers; and support a transition to environmentally regenerative food production”.

Sub-actions (to be endorsed and monitored as part of agreed Food Strategy)

Action 1: Promote county-wide “One Health, One Food System” activity in this area including the development of food knowledge, skills and nutritional literacy for targeted groups, prioritising pregnancy, and early years. Support and deliver food educational programmes and initiatives in schools by adopting a whole school approach in collaboration with stakeholders already identified and operating in the food system.

Action 2: Research the feasibility of ‘Social Prescription of Healthy Food Provision’ including but not exclusively the expansion and integration of a ‘Healthy Start Voucher +’ for key areas with direct access to fruit and veg shops/markets/community pantries/county-wide box schemes. Supporting the work of the Food Systems Development Project to establish a subsidised Carmarthenshire Veg-Box Scheme to be distributed through Community Food Initiatives across county.

Action 3: Create and promote a standardised Menu Development guidance document for Early Years settings and encourage the localised supply chains where access is given to Nutrient Dense Food. Including Breakfast Clubs with Healthy Eating Guidance/Menu Options.

Action 4: Support the definition, review, and phased removal of all ‘ultra-processed’ ingredients from all Public Sector menus across Hospitals, Care Homes, School Meals, Leisure Facilities (linking with new Healthier choices Food & Beverage strategy for leisure facilities) and supported Early Years settings.

Action 5: Review the existing food advertising environment under our direct control and Regulate (where possible) the promotion of ‘Un-Healthy’ Foods in and around school/early years settings.

Action 6: Scale-up successful delivery models already operating such as the Cwm Gwendraeth Model (see [Appendix A](#) pilot) to all of Carmarthenshire with additional engagement and delivery support from PSB partners and the local food partnership.

Action 7: Promote the 'Future Generations Menu' (when available) and the VegPower 'Eat them to Defeat Them' Campaign in all CCC settings, including resource links for school settings.

Action 8: Capture county-wide baseline data on School Food Waste, both 'avoidable' (plate) and 'un-avoidable' (kitchen). All schools to comply with the current Healthy Eating in Maintained Schools (Wales, June 2014) and Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure, 2009 & the regulations made under it. Collaborative working in relation to ensuring compliance.

Cost

Aligned with existing resources.

Recommendation Six

Focus Area: Addressing inequalities via Pentre Awel development.

KEY ACTION: Collaborate with local community and to address health inequalities in the locality using the Pentre Awel development as the catalyst for change.

Pentre Awel - Public Health Challenges

Health Needs Assessment and Health Impact Assessment

- HNA / HIA Project completed 2018
- Presented at The Lancet Scientific Conference in 2018 and Welsh Public Health Conference in 2019

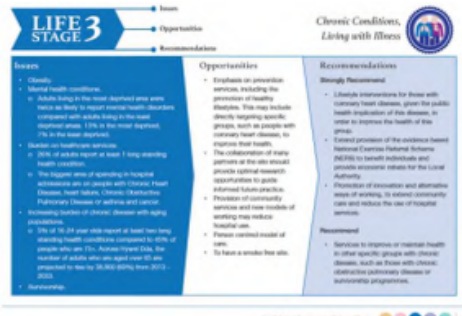
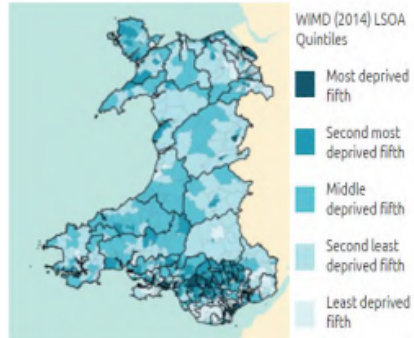
Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

- Pentre Awel sits between an affluent community and deprived community

Increased prevalence of risk factors:

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Overweight and obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Poor diet and nutrition
- Excess alcohol consumption

These risk factors are often linked e.g. obese individuals are 7x more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes, those overweight are 3x as likely to develop the condition as those of a healthy weight

Sub-Actions

Action 1: Ensure clarity and connection of work building on existing work and partnerships in and around Pentre Awel (linking with LHB endorsed social model for health & well-being targeting and transforming Ty-Isha ward) to maximise partnerships and programmes of intervention for the benefit of the population, e.g. £147k Shared Prosperity Fund project, and building on the success of the recent 'Beat the Street' initiative.

Action 2: Engage with local community to help to design physical activity spaces and programmes on and off-site, and to expose them to the current and future volunteering and employment opportunities in physical activity-related roles.

Action 3: Scope and enhance the physical activity opportunities for families and young people in and around Pentre Awel.

Action 4: link across with work on Food strategy and initiatives to support healthier eating in locality.

Action 5: Link with County Council Housing team to consider discounted health and fitness memberships for tenants as part of their agreement.

Cost

From existing revenue or external funds, but largely maximising resources through better collaboration.

Likely capital costs for the creation/development of active spaces. Could be sourced via grant/Council capital.

Recommendation Seven

Focus Area: Ensuring a ‘fit for the future’ infrastructure to enable children and families to be active.

KEY ACTION:. Ensure a thorough understanding of the current sport and physical activity infrastructure, informing planned and potential developments with funding routes in place or identified.

Sub-Actions

Action 1: All schools to ensure that their environment promotes and encourages Physical Activity / Physical Learning.

Action 2: Ensure all Council leisure facilities feature inspirational spaces for children, including facilities at Pentre Awel and the proposed Health & Wellbeing HWB in Carmarthen. Their use to be reviewed and enhanced to maximise positive impact on children.

Action 3: Robust spatial assessments to be in place that inform the Council, and other associated agencies, of the needs and wants of the county. Assessments to be utilised to plan and create a rich landscape of accessible activity spaces and facilities.

Action 4: Adopt a long-term strategy regarding all weather pitches that considers the role they can play in increasing capacity, consistency, and positivity of experience balanced with the grass pitch landscape, environmental sustainability, and the financial viability in the short and long term.

Action 5: Using the Council’s innovative ‘Focus Sport’ approach (used for Cycling previously), review infrastructure development of focus and priority sports to date, using achievements and learning to create and deliver a forward plan of infrastructure development for the next 3-year cycle.

Cost

Whilst reviews will generally come at little or no cost, key will be the capital developments to enhance or install infrastructure. Explore / utilise external funding, S106 monies, potential ‘invest to save’ opportunities, as well as the potential to bid for limited Council capital gap funding, recognising current pressures.

It should also be recognised that the Council will not necessarily be responsible for all developments, and that strategic direction and decision-making may be the extent of the involvement.

7. Conclusion

Childhood obesity is a multi-faceted issue that requires a co-ordinated approach from numerous stakeholders. By implementing the recommendations contained within this report, Carmarthenshire can make significant progress in reducing childhood obesity rates, promoting healthier lifestyles for children 0-11 years old and improving the overall health and well-being of its population.

This task and finish report aims to serve as a roadmap for policymakers, healthcare professionals, educators, and community leaders to collaboratively address the challenges posed by childhood obesity in Carmarthenshire.

It is crucial to adopt a multi-sectoral approach involving government agencies, healthcare providers, educators, parents, and the community to ensure long-term impact and sustainability.

8 Bibliography / References

Reference	Link
Carmarthenshire County Council Well-being objectives	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/consultation-performance/well-being-objectives/
County Councils' Corporate Strategy 2022-2027	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/corporate-strategy-2022-2027/
Carmarthenshire play sufficiency assessment 2022-25	PLAY-SUFFICIENCY-SUMMARY-2022.pdf (gov.wales)
Dahlgren G and Whitehead M (1993) Model of wider Determinants of Health	Broader determinants of health The King's Fund (kingsfund.org.uk)
Welsh Government: Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales Strategy (updated 2023)	Healthy weight strategy (Healthy Weight Healthy Wales) GOV.WALES
School engagement matrix with health-related initiatives	Internal
Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)	Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)
Public Health Wales Child Measurement Programme (CMP) 2021-22	Child Measurement Programme - Public Health Wales (nhs.wales)

Figure 1 Ctrl+Click to follow the hyperlinks and read the documents

9 Appendices

Appendix A – Projects / Initiatives to help address Childhood Obesity

Service	Summary
Pre School / Primary School age	
Health Visitor EQLiP pilot project in Cwm Gwendraeth with Active Communities	Early Years integration group (Tina Taylor) – health visitor team, but multi-agency / collaboration key. Actif Sir Gar Co-ordinator linked in. EQLiP – enabling quality improvement in practice. Linking work of physical literacy and activity with training for health workers. EQLiP programme poster produced for HDHUB. There is a multi-agency team including CCC. There are 3 EYIT team members, Hilary from Active and PHW. • Delivery of “Movers and Shakers” weekly (physical literacy group for toddlers) • Delivery of an infant feeding/weaning group every other week. [The pilot Group were advised there was a risk that the pilot would not continue or be extended despite its success. The Group felt that due to the success of the pilot model it should be extended to the mainstream]
Healthy and Sustainable Pre-Schol Scheme	Set-up in 1999 to ensure that local healthy school schemes were established in health and education partnerships in each local authority area in Wales
Play Sufficiency Assessments / funding	Promotes and protects children and young people’s access to high quality play provision. Increasing play activity will increase children and young people’s physical activity and therefore contributing to a healthy weight and lifestyle, reducing sedentary behaviour.
Introduction to Play Training	Delivered via the Play and Childcare development assistants and offered to schools, childcare settings and communities. Encourages schools to develop Play Policies and to protect children’s playtimes and not use as a form of behaviour sanction thus allowing children the time and space to be physically active during the day.
Flying Start Service	Health Visiting • Promotion of Breastfeeding in the Antenatal period. • Promoting healthy lifestyles and eating in the antenatal period. • Encouraging parents to recognise early feeding cues. • Using the Behavioural states from the Health Visitor Observation and Assessment of the infant (HOAI) to educate parents on how to respond to baby and to discourage and pick baby up to feed when baby

	<p>may go back to sleep. • Following the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health 9(RCPCH) Child Measurement Programme. • Weighing and advising on healthy eating as per Healthy Child Wales Programme. • Staff attend the Nutritional Skills Training run by the Health Board Dietetic Department. • Advice on Weaning and discouraging early weaning. • Liaise with Hywel Dda Dietetic department re: weight issues</p>
SKIP Cymru	<p>Researchers at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David have created a programme to support the development of children's physical literacy and motor skills.</p>
Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (<i>Soon to be called the Welsh Network of Health Promoting Schools Scheme</i>)	<p>The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme has been established in Carmarthenshire since September 2001 and is a Welsh Government funded Scheme, managed by Public Health Wales.</p> <p>The main aim of the scheme is to ensure that all schools, including ALN establishments, take responsibility for maintaining & promoting the health of all who 'learn, work, play & live' within it by embedding a whole school approach across 7 Health Areas. One area being Food & Fitness.</p> <p>Schools are encouraged to Self-Evaluate themselves against 4 key areas: Leadership & Communication, Curriculum, Ethos & Environment & Family & Community Involvement. Healthy School Officers support schools on their Self-Evaluation journey, to identify areas of development and to produce action plans to initiate development.</p>
Making Every Contact Count (MECC)	<p>The MECC approach aims to empower staff working particularly in health services, but also partner organisations, to recognise the role they have in promoting healthy lifestyles, supporting behaviour change and contributing to reducing the risk of chronic disease.</p>
Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales	<p>This sets out Welsh Government's ambitious plans, over a ten-year period, to transform the way decisions are made in everyday life which impact upon our weight and wellbeing. The Strategy is set out across four themes: Healthy Environments, Healthy Settings, Healthy People and Leadership and Enabling Change.</p>
National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS)	<p>The National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) is a Welsh Government funded scheme. The Scheme</p>

	target clients aged 16 and over who have or are at risk of developing a chronic disease giving them access to high quality supervised exercise programme. Scheme historically has an U16 referral system called MEND but funding discontinued by WG
Holiday Playworks Grant	Delivering free open access play sessions – with particular focus on areas of deprivation and provides healthy snacks.
Well-being interventions in Tyisha	Lorena Alvarez • Introducing children to fruit: e.g. provide healthy fruit kebabs at community events • Cooking sessions for families in Early Years settings, making healthy quick affordable snacks • Free sports sessions in the community • Bike-ability sessions • Litter picks with schools- keeping them active and educating at same time. • Promoting healthy prizes e.g. family swimming passes at leisure centres
FOOD	
Food and Fun	<p>Food and Fun - Food and Fun is a school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions and healthy meals to children during the school summer holidays, targeting schools with 16% or higher free school meal eligibility. 'Food and Fun' School Holiday Enrichment Programme - WLGA All schools delivering Food & Fun must complete the Level 2 Community Food & Nutrition Skills course. In 2023, 6 primary schools delivered Food & Fun in Carmarthenshire, with the goal in 2024 for secondary school/s to also deliver the programme.</p> <p>Food and Fun is a school-based programme funded by WLGA that takes place across 12 days during the summer holidays.</p> <p>It provides Food and Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Enrichment Sessions and Healthy Meals. Eligible schools must have 16% or greater of Free School Meal Eligibility. Each school is allocated £11,000 per cohort of 40 pupils.</p>
Bwyd Sir Gar Food Partnership and Network	Empowering communities through a co-productive approach, Bwyd Sir Gâr Food's vision is to enable social, cultural, environmental, and economic

	<p>regeneration. It aims to work in a culturally sensitive, forward-thinking and inclusive manner through education, communication, and access to opportunity, for the promotion of a thriving, resilient and nutritious local food system supportive of nature recovery, as well as health and wellbeing. The partnership is supported by Carmarthenshire County Council, Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services, Hywel Dda Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, University of Wales Trinity St Davids, Coleg Sir Gar, Public Health Wales, Natural Resources Wales, Social Farms and Gardens, Carmarthenshire Public Services Board and Carmarthenshire Food Network (CFN).</p> <p>Bwyd Sir Gâr Food works closely with members of CFN to provide a platform for grassroots operators in the food system to shape the future of food in the county. CFN is comprised of cluster groups which include community growers, horticultural businesses and farmers, chefs championing local food, community food providers and wider community support organisations. CFN facilitates work within and between the cluster groups, providing opportunities for skills and resource sharing, training opportunities, and working towards a connected food system across the county.</p> <p>The Partnership Strategic Steering Group meets monthly, and the Partnership has a dedicated Sustainable Food Place Coordinator</p>
<p>Big Bocs Bwyd</p>	<p>Pan-Wales Initiative for Schools.</p> <p>Creating a vision and action to tackle food poverty, address food waste and supporting children in becoming food literate.</p> <p>Bringing passionate people together to help achieve your vision and at the same time promoting community cohesion. Supported with Growing, Cooking and Sharing activities.</p> <p>The installation of Big Bocs Bwyd explicitly links in with the new Curriculum for Wales' 4 purposes.</p> <p>Currently 4 operating in Carmarthenshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ysgol Bro Banw, Ammanford.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llandeilo Primary School, Llandeilo. • Ysgol Cymraeg Dewi Sant, Llanelli • Ysgol Trimsaran, Llanelli <p>Supported by the Learning Partnership Wales with funding from Welsh Government</p>
<p><u>Nutrition Skills for Life</u></p>	<p>Overall aim is that the people in Wales have the skills, opportunity and confidence to access healthy, affordable and sustainable food for themselves, their families and their communities. Offer of accredited nutrition training to ensure evidenced based nutrition messages are shared through food-based activities. About Us – Nutrition Skills for Life®</p> <p>In 2023, 16 front line community staff from Carmarthenshire attended Level 2 Community Food & Nutrition skills training.</p> <p>Ran by Hywel Dda University Health Board, Community Health Improvement, Dietetics Team.</p>
<p>Food Systems Development Project (CCC and Partners)</p>	<p>The Project is led by Carmarthenshire County Council, supported by the Bwyd Sir Gar Food Partnership and delivery with 4 additional ‘Third-Party’ Partners – Hywel Dda University Health Board, Social Farms and Gardens, Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services and Food Sense Wales.</p> <p>Secured funding until 31st December 2024 under Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>The Food Systems Development Project acts simultaneously at key intervention points (weaknesses) in the local food system: production, processing, and provision.</p> <p>Economic, Environmental and Social Regeneration - improving Local Business, Communities, People and Skills. <i>For ‘a healthier, wealthier and greener Carmarthenshire’</i></p> <p>Three interconnected strands of project delivery -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connected Communities and Community Access to Healthy Food <p>Create, sustain, and train community food initiatives with increased local sustainable supply.</p>

	<p>2. Strategic Land Management for Public Goods</p> <p>This project will put in place infrastructure, equipment, and skilled staff for the development of a model market to field-scale sustainable fruit and vegetable production site on a local authority holding. The aim will be to demonstrate that Carmarthenshire can produce a wide range of high-quality, sustainable (agroecologically produced), seasonal vegetables. The development of a new and innovative model on a county land asset as a mechanism for delivering multi-policy objectives and securing the long-term commercial viability of assets.</p> <p>Directly Linked to the Future Generations Menu Development Project as noted below.</p> <p>3. Communications</p> <p>Building a ‘good food movement’ accessible to all by - Creating awareness and raising the profile of BSGF as well as all related activity and projects and empowering mass participation and encouraging all stakeholders (individuals, businesses, organisations etc) to engage.</p>
<p>Future Generations School Menu Development (CCC)</p>	<p>Pilot Project funded by WG Innovation Fund (and supported by the Backing Local Firms Fund Community of Practice with 9 Projects spanning Wales across Private, Public and Third Sector) - Managed by CCC Education Dept, funding for a specialist 1 FTE Staff over 18 Months to develop and implement 80+ Recipes within 3 x 3 Week Rolling Menus for each term time based on local, seasonal, and sustainable ingredients.</p> <p>Working within the FG Menu Report Parameters. This will then be piloted in 2 Primary Schools (up to 500 children) starting in Autumn Term 2024 collecting evidence on food waste reduction, take-up of meals, customer feedback, associated carbon emissions reductions and impact on foundational and circular economy.</p> <p>Also included in the funding is training for catering staff, engagement activities with key stakeholders e.g. parents, teachers, children, and governors, and an extra 20-30% uplift of budgets for ingredients. All</p>

	<p>Recipes and Menus created will be 'open source' and publicly available for all local authorities in Wales.</p> <p>The produce to supply this project will be grown and aggregated by the Food Systems Development Project as above.</p>
Cook24 (Coleg Sir Gar)	<p>Funded by Shared Prosperity UK Gov until Dec 31st 2024.</p> <p>County-wide mobile and bespoke Cooking Skills Delivery to targeted Community Groups, delivered by highly trained local chefs.</p> <p>Also currently exploring Teacher Training Delivery of Food Leadership available to all CCC Schools.</p>
National Healthy Eating Guidance for Schools	<p>Guidance currently under review as 10 years old.</p>

Appendix B – Task & Finish Group Meetings & Attendance

Meeting	Councillors Present	Officers Present
18 th May 2023 Committee Room 1, Spilman St (Scoping)	H.A.L. Evans (Chair) M. Donoghue R.E. Evans M. James J.P. Jenkins H. Jones B.A.L. Roberts	C. Daniels I. Jones C.L. Rees E. Bryer
19 th June 2023 Committee Room 1, Spilman St (Scoping)	H.A.L. Evans (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James H. Jones	I. Jones C. Daniels C.L. Rees M. A. Jones E. Bryer
19 th June 2023 Committee Room 1, Spilman St (Scoping)	H.A.L. Evans (Chair) M. Donoghue R.E. Evans M. James H. Jones B.A.L. Roberts	I. Jones C. Daniels M. A. Jones A. Cook E. Bryer
26 th September 2023 Democratic Services Committee Room, County Hall	G. H John (Chair) B.A.L. Roberts	I. Jones C. Daniels C.L. Rees M. A. Jones A. Cook E. Bryer
14 th November 2023 Virtual Meeting	G. H John (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James H. Jones	I. Jones C. Daniels C.L. Rees H. Jones M. A. Jones A. Cook E. Bryer
13 th December 2023 Virtual Meeting	G. H John (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James H. Jones B.A.L. Roberts	I. Jones C. Daniels M. A. Jones N. Thomas E. Bryer
23 rd January 2024 Virtual Meeting	G. H John (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James B.A.L. Roberts	I. Jones C. Daniels C.L. Rees M. A. Jones A. Cook E. Bryer
20 th February 2024 Virtual Meeting	G. H John (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James	I. Jones C. Daniels C.L. Rees

	J. Tremlett (Cabinet Member)	M. A. Jones A. Cook E. Bryer
19 th March 2024 Virtual Meeting	G. H John (Chair) M. Donoghue M. James H. Jones B.A.L. Roberts	I. Jones C. Daniels E. Bryer