

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Licensing and Enforcement Committee	Date:	11 March 2014
Subject:	Healthy eating and health at work award scheme for businesses		
Report Of:	Head of Public Protection		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Health, work and well-being report 2012		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To outline a proposal for two separate, but linked, pilot award schemes for businesses aimed at promoting:

- (a) Healthy workplaces
- (b) Healthier food choices in catering establishments

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Licensing and Enforcement Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that the pilot schemes should go ahead

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 There is a wealth of evidence to demonstrate the impact that poor health and well-being has on both individuals and their employers. Most employers have a genuine concern for the welfare of their staff but can be equally resistant to regulation and “nannying”. Employers often recognise the benefits of a healthy and engaged workforce but want guidance and support on how to provide healthy working environments. This is particularly so for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

- 3.2 It is widely known that England has one of the highest obesity rates in Europe and there are stark health inequalities between the richest and poorest. In Gloucester, estimated levels of obesity are worse than the England average:

	Proportion of adults 16+ who are obese
England	24.2%
Gloucestershire	24.7%
Gloucester	27.9%

Source: APHO – Health Survey for England

Whilst we all need to take responsibility for the food we eat, these choices are influenced by the environment in which they are made.

- 3.3 It is proposed that two separate award schemes are piloted in Gloucester: one for workplaces and one for food establishments. Each would be piloted in ten establishments. The scheme will help equip businesses with the tools to improve workplace health and well-being and for food establishments to provide healthier choices.
- 3.4 There are existing tools that can be used/adapted to implement the scheme:
- (i) British Heart Foundation (BHF) Health at Work toolkit – this provides information on implementing a successful health and well-being programme and ideas for actions that can be put in place.
 - (ii) Public Health Responsibility Deal – business makes a pledge to take action on promoting healthier choices and toolkit to assist with this
- 3.5 Use of the BHF toolkit and promotion of healthier options in food establishments links in well with Gloucester being a BHF “Heart City”. There is also the potential to target fast food outlets in the areas of greatest need in the city – it has been shown that more deprived areas have a higher proportion of fast food outlets per head of population than others (Source: Healthy people, healthy places briefing – Obesity and the environment: regulating the growth of fast food outlets, Public Health England)
- 3.6 It is envisaged that the scheme would have little impact on resources as environmental health staff already routinely visit many SMEs and a large element of the scheme would be for businesses to carry out a self-assessment.
- 3.7 The pilot will be evaluated to ascertain:
- (i) Whether there would be sufficient interest from businesses
 - (ii) Whether a scheme would make businesses more likely to introduce changes
 - (iii) What would make an award scheme attractive to businesses
- 3.8 If the pilot scheme proves to be successful, consideration will be taken to roll it out formally, possibly on a county-wide basis. A bid for funding will also be

made to Public Health and, if secured, this will pay for additional materials, marketing, branding etc.

- 3.9 The Workplace Wellbeing Charter, referred to in a previous report (Appendix 1), is one example of a scheme that an organisation can use to demonstrate their commitment to the health and well-being of their workforce. It was the city council's intention to promote this scheme to businesses in the city. However, it is now proposed to follow the approach above using the tools in the BHF "Health at Work" toolkit as this focuses more on practical actions than strategies and policies.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The council could promote the Workplace Wellbeing Charter standards to businesses. However, since a county accreditation panel has not been set up, there is little support available to assist businesses to achieve the standard. Also, the Charter is more focused on policies rather than actions. Use of the BHF toolkit will provide more opportunities for staff involvement and, therefore, the programme would have a greater impact and be more sustainable.

- 4.2 Development of our own healthy eating award could be considered. However, this is not viable as it would be too time consuming. Tools are already available as part of the Responsibility Deal.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 Environmental health staff are well placed to engage with SMEs as they already routinely visit many. This can be built on to engage businesses with public health and help improve health in our communities.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 Piloting these schemes will help equip businesses with the tools to improve workplace health and well-being and for food establishments to provide healthier choices. The evaluation will establish whether there is sufficient interest and whether businesses would be more likely to introduce changes.
- 6.2 If the pilot scheme proves to be successful, consideration will be taken to roll it out formally, possibly on a county-wide basis.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 As environmental health staff already visit a number of SMEs, little additional resources will be required. The toolkits are free of charge. There may also be opportunities to bid for funding from external agencies if the scheme is formally adopted.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 None.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 None.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact. Therefore, a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 None

Sustainability

11.2 None

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 None

Background Documents: None