

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE
18th September 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Progress Report on the 'Your Choice to Healthy Living' Initiative
Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

SUMMARY

This report is to inform members on the progress of the Your Choice to Healthy Living initiative and the newly revised Your Choice Implementation Plan.

1.1 The Programme of the Highland Council

1.1 The Your Choice Initiative contributes to the delivery of Programme outcomes:

1.11 We will give a high priority to Highland's children being healthy and active and implement the Highland Play Strategy and

2.7 We will work with the Scottish Govt and our partners, especially NHS Highland, to meet the health and care needs of our population and reduce inequalities in health. This will include reducing alcohol and drug misuse, smoking cessation, reducing obesity and tackling poverty.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Education, Culture and Sport Service and NHS Highland have been working in partnership through the 'Your Choice to Healthy Living' initiative for several years. It was developed in response to the paper 'Towards a Healthier Scotland' in 2003. The "Your Choice" implementation plan brings together all the school meals and nutrition, physical activity and other health related initiatives into one comprehensive plan.

2.2 The title, logo and branding for 'Your Choice' are an important corporate livery. It originated through consultation with young people and has been adopted by any Service signed up to the initiative. It now symbolizes healthy choices and good quality in Highland and this includes, oral health promotions, health promotion campaigns, active schools, voluntary sector, libraries, youth centres, websites, museums, leisure centres, the list is very broad and demonstrates the wide range of partners involved.

3. Progress 2007/2008

3.1 Emerging data demonstrate that there are significant impacts in improving the Health and Wellbeing of people in Highland, particularly young people. There has been a focus on healthy eating in schools and an increase in physical fitness

through fitness testing carried out by our Active Schools Coordinators. There are also more opportunities for all to access opportunities for physical activity.

- 3.2 Travelling to school by cycling or walking has improved by creating safer routes to school. Each school has developed a 'school travel plan' for communities to collectively improve the journey to school.
- 3.3 The Scottish Alcohol and Lifestyle Schools (SALSUS) survey demonstrated that there have been significant reductions across Highland in drug and substance misuse by young people. In particular, there have been significant falls in the number of 13 and 15-year-olds using alcohol or drugs.
- 3.4 The 'Your Choice to Healthy Living' initiative has developed a dedicated website that provides support to any one wanting to develop a healthy activity. The website also contains an online photo gallery to demonstrate the wealth of activities that took place throughout Healthy Highland Year. The 'Your Choice' group has secured external funding to maintain this for a further year. The website is www.healthyhighland.com
- 3.5 The 'Your Choice' group has produced guidance in Gaelic and English to primary schools for drinking water, school snacks, breakfast snacks, sporty snacks and an interactive lunchbox guidance activity. A specific 'School Food and Health Policy', that shows how schools should implement Hungry for Success in a whole school community approach by developing school nutrition action groups has also been developed by the group. This will now ensure the authority is in a good position to be compliant with the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007.
- 3.6 Oral Health Promotion initiatives have been successful in Highland through partnership working. Schools in areas with highest levels of tooth decay have received support to include tooth brushing at the meal time. Identified schools received funds for Tooth Brushing support workers whilst The Highland Council increased water facilities and facilitated links with the schools' Head Teachers to implement tooth brushing.
- 3.7 In 2005, all schools were officially accredited as a 'Health Promoting Schools' (HPS), this achievement was recognised at a national level when The Highland Council received a Scottish education Award for making a difference to the lives of young people. The HPS school scheme would not have been effective without the partnership work developed through 'Your Choice'
- 3.8 The High Life Scheme which provides affordable access to leisure for families and individuals in Council and supported community facilities, continues to flourish and increase year on year. Our Library Services continues to develop providing access to information on health improvement to all age groups.

4. Your Choice to Healthy Living Implementation Plan 08/09

- 4.1 The Your Choice Implementation Plan has been fully revised for this financial year to demonstrate compliancy with the new School Act and support the implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Experiences.
- 4.2 A full copy of the new Your Choice Implementation Plan can be located on <http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrensservices/healthyliving>

5. Resource Implications

5.1 No identified additional resource implications at present

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Members are asked to note the progress of the Your Choice to Healthy Living Initiative.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 3 September 2008

Author: Louise Jones, Health Promoting Schools Manager