

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S  
REPORT TO HEALTH, WELBEING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY**

**3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024**

**Report Title:** J2 services to reduce child excess weight

**Submitted by:** Service Director – Commercial Services

**Portfolios:** Portfolio Holder -Leisure, Culture and Heritage

**Ward(s) affected:** All

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
To provide the Scrutiny Committee with information on the County Better Health Staffordshire programme and the contribution that J2 services make to supporting the child excess weight objective.			
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>			
To review the information provided and make any recommendations to the Portfolio Holder - Leisure, Culture and Heritage.			
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>			
Scrutiny Committee have asked to review this.			

**1. Background**

- 1.1** The County Council has a Better Health Partnership which seeks to address excess weight. It should be noted that this is the preferred term rather than obesity. The County identifies causal impacts on weight under the headings of Food, Environment and Exercise.
- 1.2** The Borough Council runs a range of services at J2 Leisure Centre in Newcastle, including provision of swimming pools, gym, wellness centre and studios.
- 1.3** The Council was successful in securing funding from the County Council in the form of a Health Inequalities Grant. This funding has been used to establish a 12 month programme of health-related exercise based at J2 and in the community.

## 2. Issues

2.1 There are a wide range of issues related to excess weight but exercise can have a positive impact on people's lives. In terms of child excess weight the County Council has identified the following:

- The proportion of reception age children living with excess weight in Newcastle borough is higher than the national average and the highest of its statistical neighbours.
- Levels of Year 6 excess weight in the borough remain similar to national levels but have increased in recent years in line with national trends and could increase over future years as recent Reception age cohorts reach Year 6.
- Healthy weight challenge for children mainly focussed in Kidsgrove & Ravenscliffe, Audley, Bradwell, Clayton, Cros Heath, Silverdale, Westlands and Wolstanton. Challenges and opportunities exist however across the borough and shift over time.

2.2 J2 hosts a range of sessions in the swimming pools from lane swimming through to learn to swim lessons. In term time, schools can bring their classes to J2 in the weekdays to school swimming lessons - there are currently 15 schools using this service who bring an average of 40 swimmers for 36 weeks a year. Outside of school hours, the Council offers a range of parent paid swimming lessons, there are currently 976 children learning to swim at J2. Family and public swimming sessions are also available throughout the week and are popular at weekends and school holidays.

2.3 The gym at J2 is open to children aged 12 years and above. There are specifically three children's dance sessions; upto 4 years, ages 5-8 years and ages 9-12 years.

2.4 The Borough Council has utilised part of the Health Inequalities Grant funding to develop a new scheme called "Activelife – referral programme". Referrals will be for a junior programme aged 12-16 years then an adult programme for over 16 years. Those on the junior programme will be able to access the specific junior classes, gym, swimming pool and climbing wall with a buddy of their choice whether it be a carer, parent or friend free of charge for twelve weeks.

## 3. Recommendation

3.1 To review the information provided and make any recommendations to the Portfolio Holder - Leisure, Culture and Heritage.

## 4. Reasons

4.1 J2 provides an excellent opportunity for the Council to support young people with their exercise journey.

## 5. Options Considered

5.1 There are no options proposed in this report as Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to review and make any recommendations to the Portfolio Holder.

## 6. Legal and Statutory Implications

6.1 There is no legal or statutory duty placed on the Council to offer exercise services to young people.

## 7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 There are no EIA implications arising from this report.

## 8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 There are no implications arising from this report, however should the Scrutiny Committee propose alteration to the services provided at J2 then the financial and resourcing implications will need to be assessed.

## 9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 Any risks would need to be considered from proposals made by the Committee.

## 10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 The services provided at J2 support the following sustainable development goals:



## 11. Key Decision Information

11.1 This is not a key decision.

## 12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 None.

## 13. List of Appendices

13.1 None.

**14. Background Papers**

**14.1** None.