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| <b>Committees:</b>                                                                                                         | <b>Dated:</b>            |
| Port Health & Environmental Services Committee<br>Health and Wellbeing Board                                               | 14/01/2020<br>28/02/2020 |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Healthier Catering Commitment for Food Businesses in the City of London                                 | <b>Public</b>            |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Jon Avern, Director of Markets & Consumer Protection                                                  | <b>For Information</b>   |
| <b>Report author:</b><br>Christine Denington, Environmental Health Officer,<br>Department of Markets & Consumer Protection |                          |

### Summary

This report provides details on the delivery of an action area pledge the City of London Corporation made when they signed the Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food.

The pledge included the implementation of an accreditation scheme for local food retailers that incentivises a healthier offering. The Healthier Catering Commitment scheme recognises businesses in London that demonstrate a commitment to reducing the levels of saturated fat, salt and sugar in the menus / recipes of the food sold in their premises.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Note the contents of this report.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. This committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board received an annual progress review on the Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food in November 2019. The City of London Corporation is committed to pledges against six Action Areas through signing up to this declaration.
2. In the related Healthy Eating & Sugar Reduction Action Plan 2018-19, Action Area 4 aims to '*Support businesses and organisations to improve their food offer*'. This includes the implementation of an accreditation scheme for local food retailers that incentivises a healthier offering.
3. This report sets out the details of the scheme, which is an enhanced version of the London-wide Healthier Catering Commitment (HCC) scheme. The enhancements for the City include additional criteria that considers sustainability including the Plastic Free City initiative, a commitment to recycling waste and developing a food waste reduction plan. It also signposts participating businesses to 'Safety Thirst', the City of London's accreditation scheme promoting a safe drinking culture.
4. The Association of London Environmental Health Managers (ALEHM) developed the original Healthier Catering Commitment (HCC) scheme in autumn 2010 in response to

London Boroughs that wanted to help local businesses offer healthier options. The changes are simple enough for even the smallest of operators, but also scalable for larger businesses.

5. The HCC scheme recognises businesses in London that demonstrate a commitment to reducing the levels of saturated fat, salt and sugar in the menus / recipes of the food sold in their premises. The award is accredited by Environmental Health Practitioners and businesses are given a recognisable window sticker & certificate.



6. The HCC scheme is based on the principle that “small changes can make a big difference”; it’s not about selling different foods, it’s about small changes to the way food is prepared, cooked and served without compromising taste or trade.
7. Scoping and development work included reviewing criteria from other healthy eating schemes, the benefits of a tiered / graded system and meetings with head office representatives to gauge business interest. This was very positive with businesses coming up with additional ideas which we have incorporated in to the bespoke HCC assessment.
8. Since the launch of the London-wide scheme in 2011, it has been supported by the Mayor of London and the London Food Board. The Mayor of London’s Food Strategy 2018 details the GLA’s support for the scheme.
9. There is a website for both businesses and consumers [www.healthiercateringcommitment.co.uk](http://www.healthiercateringcommitment.co.uk) which explains the scheme, and which includes an interactive map showing the location of accredited HCC premises. To help businesses there are also guidance notes and fact sheets.

### What is the problem?

10. Diet-related conditions, including obesity, diabetes and heart disease, are some of the greatest health problems facing the UK today. More is spent on the direct medical costs of diabetes and obesity-related conditions than on fire and police services combined. And the total societal cost of obesity, including lost productivity, is second only to smoking.
11. Overweight, obesity and poor diet contribute to a wide range of health problems including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, some cancers and musculoskeletal problems.
12. In London, 13.5% of deaths can be directly attributed to diet and more than 3.8 million Londoners are overweight or obese.
13. Unhealthy diet causes one in seven deaths in Britain every year. Research published in *The Lancet*<sup>1</sup> in 2019 found lack of fruit and fibre is taking the heaviest toll, fuelling

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<sup>1</sup> Health effects of dietary risks in 195 countries, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)30041-8.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(19)30041-8.pdf)

diet related chronic conditions. In total, poor diet was found to be responsible for 90,000 deaths in the UK a year<sup>2</sup>.

14. Poor diet also contributes indirectly to further deaths through many of the metabolic risk factors (high BMI, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, high fasting glucose).
15. Food consumed outside of the home tends to be higher in saturated fats, salt and sugar than food freshly prepared at home and over-consumption of foods high in sugar, fat and salt, and sugary drinks is a major contributor to the problem.
16. The City Corporation has one of the highest numbers of fast food outlets of any local authority area in the country, 15th out of 326.

### Current Position

17. Twenty-three London local authorities are currently promoting the HCC scheme or related schemes with another 2 considering re-joining.
18. Most catering businesses (with the exception of schools, nurseries, care homes and hospitals that have specific nutritional guidelines) whose primary business is the supply of food products for consumption on or off the premises, are eligible to take part in the scheme provided that they are compliant in terms of food hygiene and are safe places to eat. They must have achieved a score 4 or 5 on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

### Further development of a City HCC scheme

19. We are focussing on small chains with less than 20 stores and independent caterers. To date 5 businesses with diverse menus have been signed up and an assessment visit has been set up with the Head Office representative of a small chain with 5 businesses within City of London
20. The HCC scheme is not too onerous for the businesses and in the City of London it is often not so much starting a conversation but continuing the conversation on healthier eating - e.g. some salads might not necessarily be the healthiest option on a menu.

### Corporate and Strategic Implications

21. Becoming overweight and preventing obesity is a focus of the City Corporation's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and also supports Departmental Business Plans, the Department of Community and Children's Services' Plan, which list as a priority that **"people of all ages enjoy good health and wellbeing"**.
22. The adoption of the Healthier Catering Commitment supports the aims and outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan 2018-23, helping to '**contribute to a flourish society**' by directly supporting the achievement of '**Outcome 2 – People enjoy good health and wellbeing**'.
23. It also directly supports the City Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy, specifically Priority 1: "**People's wellbeing**" within Outcome 1: "**Individuals and communities flourish**". It demonstrates how the City Corporation can embed responsible business practices into its works by using its convening power, '**to**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/climate-and-people/poor-diet-causes-one-seven-deaths-britain-lancet-finds/>

***highlight and advocate for responsible practices across its networks and partnerships’.***

24. Finally, Health features as a key area within the new Local Plan (City Plan 2036) currently in development.

### **Legal and Financial Implications**

25. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 the City of London Corporation has a statutory responsibility to improve and protect public health in the local authority among the resident, worker, student and rough sleeper populations and to reduce health inequalities.

### **Conclusion**

26. This report provides details on the delivery of an action area pledge the City of London Corporation made when they signed the Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food. The pledge included the implementation of an accreditation scheme for local food retailers that incentivises a healthier offering.
27. The Healthier Catering Commitment scheme recognises businesses in London that demonstrate a commitment to reducing the levels of saturated fat, salt and sugar in the menus / recipes of the food sold in their premises.
28. The enhanced version of the London-wide Healthier Catering Commitment scheme includes additional criteria that considers sustainability including the Plastic Free City initiative, a commitment to recycling waste and developing a food waste reduction plan. It also signposts participating businesses to ‘Safety Thirst’ the City of London’s accreditation scheme promoting a safe drinking culture.

### **Background Papers**

- Annual progress review on the Local Government; Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food; *Health and Wellbeing Board (22 November 2019) and Port Health & Environmental Services Committee (26 November 2019)*

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