

Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food Briefing



Introduction

The aim of the Local Government Declaration on Sugar Reduction and Healthier Food is to achieve a public commitment to improve the availability of healthier food and to reduce the availability and promotion of unhealthier alternatives. It should be endorsed by the elected leaders of London boroughs and relevant senior officers such as directors of public health.

To sign the declaration the local authority has to **commit to take at least six different actions across six key areas**. Action can include continuing support to existing initiatives as long as there is a commitment to new initiatives on some of the key areas. It can include areas controlled or influenced by the council. In addition, the local authority commits to report on progress annually.

From 2017 the declaration will feature as a measure in the [Good Food for London report](#).

What is the problem?

Overconsumption of foods high in sugar, fat and salt and sugary drinks is a major contributor to the health crisis. Unfortunately they are available at every corner, at every time of the day and night and strategically located near schools, in our high streets and in areas of higher deprivation. Consumption of unhealthy food is also actively promoted through advertising, sponsorship deals and price promotions.

The problems are even worse in London, where one in three children are overweight or obese by the time they start secondary school. If left unchanged, this situation will lead to serious health complications later in life, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers. In total more than 3.8 million Londoners are overweight or obese.

The steps to sign the declaration in your council

- Step 1** Identify the priorities in your borough and define the scope of the declaration
- Step 2** Take the proposal to your champion (e.g. elected member or director of public health)
- Step 3** Internal consultation (e.g. corporate management team)
- Step 4** Identify the route the council will take to sign up (full council or cabinet)
- Step 5** Sign up and celebrate
- Step 6** Don't let the declaration gather dust (e.g. annual progress report)

The six key areas of action

- Area 1** Tackle advertising and sponsorship (e.g. advertising and sponsorship policies)
- Area 2** Improve the food controlled or influenced by the council and support the public and voluntary sectors to improve their food offer (e.g. catering standards, tackle promotions, junk food near tills and queuing areas, vending)
- Area 3** Reduce prominence of sugary drinks and actively promote free drinking water (e.g. promote water, voluntary sugar tax)
- Area 4** Support businesses and organisations to improve their food offer (e.g. planning, licensing, favourable treatment of healthy businesses, healthier catering awards)
- Area 5** Public events (e.g. healthy food at event stalls, welcoming breastfeeding)
- Area 6** Raise public awareness (e.g. local or national campaigns, local champions, healthy eating programmes, training)



More information and resources

Available at www.sustainweb.org/londonfoodlink/declaration

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