

Report on	The Calorie Wise Scheme
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Contact Officer	

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the Calorie Wise Scheme and the recent Calorie Wise Workshop that was held for local businesses. Also to advise that Mid Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt was the first business in Mid Ulster and one of the first in Northern Ireland to have received the Calorie Wise award.
2.0	Background
2.1	On 9th March 2012, the then Health Minister, Edwin Poots launched a 10 year framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland ' A Fitter Future For All 2012-2022.'
2.2	The ten year strategy's intention was to seek to improve the health and wellbeing of people throughout their entire life, from new born to seniors.
2.3	6 out of 10 adults and 1 in 4 children in NI are classified as being over-weight or obese. It is well known that eating too many calories can lead to obesity. Obesity can also increase the risk of some types of cancer, as well as increasing the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.
2.4	With one in 6 meals being eaten outside the home in NI, businesses have an increasingly important role to play in the diet of consumers. One of the key outcomes of the 'Fitter future for All Strategy' was to improve the display of calories on menus and address portion sizes. To work towards addressing this, the Calorie Wise scheme has been developed by the Food Standards Agency in partnership with District Councils.
2.5	The Calorie Wise Scheme is free and it's purpose is to encourage food businesses to display calorie information on their menus. The scheme asks businesses to display calorie information clearly and prominently on menus and menu boards, for standardised food and non-alcohol drink items. This provides customers with the information needed to make healthier choices when eating out.
2.6	A Calorie Wise champion was nominated within Environmental Health to take the scheme forward within the Council and a seminar for local businesses was organised.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Calorie Wise Workshop took place on Thursday 8th March in the Cookstown offices of Mid Ulster District Council. Visits and phone calls were made to relevant businesses to advise of the Calorie Wise Scheme and to invite them to the upcoming workshops.
3.2	The Workshop was an opportunity for businesses to appreciate the strategic background to the scheme, find out more about Calorie Wise and the application process through the Council. There was also an explanation of the Menucal tool, which is a database that has been developed to help businesses effectively and easily calculate calorie information for menu items.
3.3	The Workshop was an opportunity to explain the following benefits of Calorie Wise to businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can increase profit due to standardisation of recipes and reduction of food waste. • Current food trends point towards a rise in demand by consumers for healthier food and products • A percentage of people want calorie labelling in all or some food outlets.
3.4	The workshop was also an ideal forum to award the first business in Mid Ulster with their Calorie Wise sticker after being successful in the audit process, which was carried out by the Calorie Wise Champion. Mid Ulster Hospital in Magherafelt was also one of the first in Northern Ireland to receive the award. At the workshop, the Council Chair, Councillor Kim Ashton congratulated Mark Irvine, Support Services Manager for Mid Ulster Hospital on his contribution to the scheme commenting that it was a remarkable achievement. “schemes like this have the potential to make a real difference in improving the health and well-being of our citizens, ultimately enabling them to enjoy longer and healthier lives.” It is hoped that more businesses will take forward the scheme in Mid Ulster and across Northern Ireland so to enable more people to make healthier choices when eating out, as well as encouraging food businesses to make healthier options more available.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u> Financial: The Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland committed additional funding to District Councils to support Calorie Wise activities in the 2017/2018 financial year. Human: Officer time.
4.2	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> None
4.3	<u>Risk Management Implications</u> None

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the work undertaken by the Environmental Health Team to date to promote the Calorie Wise scheme and continue to support these activities.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix1: Photos taken from the Workshop, including photo of the Chair with first successful business, Calorie Wise Champion, Principal EHO and Food Standards Agency Partners.

Appendix 1

