

**Title: Healthier Vending Guidance****Date: 14 September 2022****Service Area:** Public Health**Written By:** Cara Umney**1. Introduction**

The rising rate of overweight and obesity in adults is a national public health crisis. As a large employer and commissioner of services, the Council has an opportunity to be a role model for a healthier and more sustainable food environment.

The Council can take steps now to lead the way, which includes:

**1.1 Getting our house in order to:**

- I. ensure that vending machines on Council premises adhere to the healthier vending guidance delivering healthy and affordable options for staff.
- II. ensure we provide and promote healthy food options to staff across the catering provision on all Council Premises by pledging to the Healthier Workplace Standards and achieving the Gold standard.

**1.2 Lead the way by:**

- I. Adhering to the Healthier Vending Guidance in all commissioned contracts where food and beverages may be sold through vending machines.
- II. encourage commissioned organisations to pledge to the Healthy Workplace Standards. This will ensure we are providing and promoting healthy options through the catering provision across our services to the extended staffing network and residents accessing services.

**2. Background**

In England, approximately two-thirds of adults (63%) are above a healthy weight and of those, half are living with obesity (2020/21)<sup>1</sup>. Nearly a quarter of children in England (23%) are obese or overweight when they start primary school (2019/20)<sup>1</sup>. By the time they leave primary school at age 11 (Year 6), more than 1 in 3 children (35%) are overweight or obese (2019/20)<sup>1</sup>.

Overweight and obesity disproportionately affects children and adults from areas of deprivation, on low income, with disabilities and from some ethnically diverse communities<sup>2</sup>. Some of the reasoning for this is that people in deprived areas often face significant barriers to accessing affordable, healthy food and to taking regular exercise. The effect of this is that the inequalities gap is increasing ultimately leading to more acute health conditions in these groups.

The risks of being overweight and obese include increased risk of chronic conditions, poor health and reduced life expectancy. This has consequences for the wider economy in terms of NHS care, increased benefits and days lost in employment through illness. The UK-wide NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year<sup>2</sup>.

The primary and most significant risk factor for obesity is an unhealthy diet; followed secondly by physical inactivity<sup>3</sup>. However the causes of obesity are far more complex and multifactorial including environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and individual factors. Processed food is synonymous with high-fat, high-sugar and high salt diets. More than ever, we are relying on fast and processed food as it is more affordable, available and convenient<sup>2</sup>.

A collaborative 'whole systems' approach, including a health in all policies approach, is needed to help address obesity. The Council has a responsibility to employees, residents and service users to model and set expectations of good practice.

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#### References

1. <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/national-child-measurement-programme>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment--2>
3. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-07/Tackling%20obesity.pdf>

### 3. Healthier Vending Guidance

The following guidelines apply to all refreshments available for purchase in vending machines at council owned or council commissioned locations.

#### 3.1 Chilled drinks vending:

- At least 30% of the options available to purchase are identified as healthier items\*
- Plain water (non-carbonated) is always available to purchase\*
- Unsweetened fruit juices/smoothies are available to purchase with a serving size of less than or equal to 150ml serving size\*
- Lower fat milk drinks are available to purchase (1% fat, skimmed or semi-skimmed) and contain no more than 5% of total sugars\*
- All other soft and carbonated drinks available to purchase are sugar free and contain less than or equal to 2.5g of sugar per 100ml
- Fruit or vegetable still or carbonated drinks available to purchase contain at least 50% fruit juice and contain no added sugar
- All sugary drinks available to purchase are no more than 330ml in size (excluding hot drinks)

#### 3.2 Hot beverages vending:

- Automatically sweetened beverages are not available to purchase
- Tea and coffee without sugar or sweetener added is available to purchase, with sweetener available to add if required
- Avoid coffee machines with lots of sugar syrups

#### 3.3 Snacks and confectionary:

- At least 30% of the options available to purchase are identified as healthier items with a variety of products available to purchase\*
- All confectionary (including crisps, chocolate bars and packet sweets) are only available to purchase in the smallest single serving size available on the market – therefore:
  - Savoury snacks (including crisps) are available to purchase in a packet size of less than or equal to 30g
  - Chocolate bars and confectionary are available to purchase in a packet size of less than or equal to 50g
  - Cereal bars and flapjacks are available to purchase in a packet size of less than or equal to 30g

### 3.4 Other considerations:

- That there are no 'duo' / 'king-size' / 'twin' / 'grab' snack sizes on offer or available to purchase \*

\*All of the healthier products must be predominantly placed at either eye level or at the top of a list and they should be competitively (positively) priced and be affordable for the customer

## 4. Healthy Eating Snack Recommendations

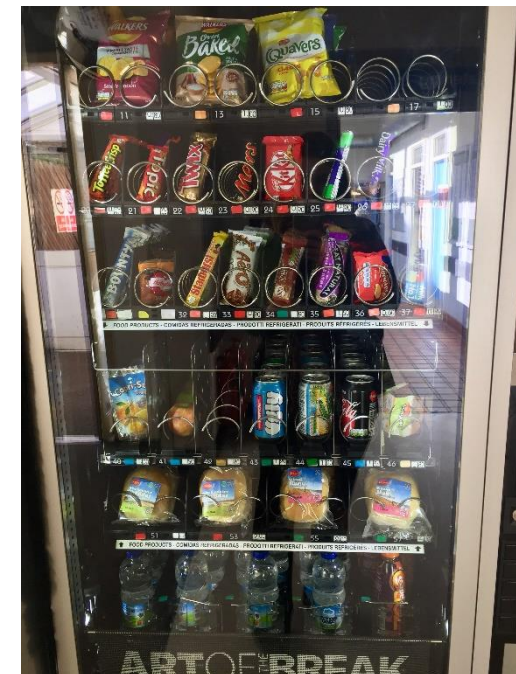
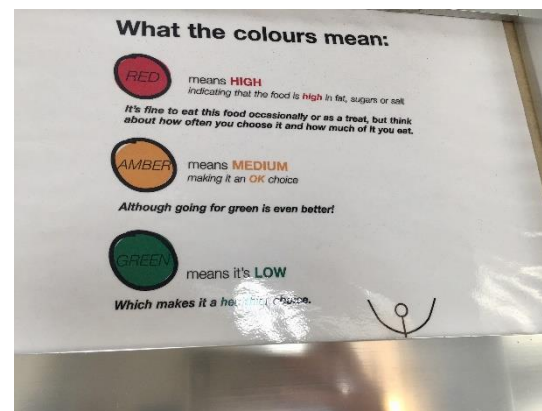
	Long shelf life Items	Short shelf life items
<b>Food</b>	Breadsticks Wholegrain crackers Plain popcorn/low calorie popcorn Rice cakes Raw and non-salted nuts – almonds, cashews, pistachios or mixed Seeds – pumpkin, sunflower, poppy or mixtures. Pretzels – 30 g Cereal pots – no added sugar options Porridge pots – have an option for plain oats so you can add water/milk/sweetener as wish Baked crisps – 30 g Crispbreads Vegan and gluten free snacks Malt loaf Oatcakes Cereal bars – low sugar Dried fruit/mixed with seed & nuts Flapjacks with natural fruit and no added sugar Sugar free sweets Plain biscuits – Rich Tea/Digestive/Oat	Teacakes Fruit breads Hot cross bun Low fat fromage frais Full fat natural yogurt with <5%added sugar Scones with/without low fat spread Fresh fruit and Fruit salads Salads Pasta mixes Vegetable sticks
<b>Drink</b>	Diet option fizzy drinks – smallest serving size Water Fruit/vegetable juices max 150 ml	Milk

## 5. Informed Choice

Providing your customers with information about the food and drink you sell will enable them to make informed choices. It is assumed everyone understands food labelling but that is not always the case. Helpful information can be displayed on boards in and around canteens and vending machines to help customers. Food items can also be traffic light labelled according to their status. See appendix for information on food labelling and the Eatwell Guide.

The positioning of items should also be considered, for example, healthier items should be displayed in more prominent positions i.e. eye level.

An example of traffic lighting in vending machines:



## 6. Appendix/ Useful Information

6.1 Government Buying Standards - [Government Buying Standard for food and catering services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

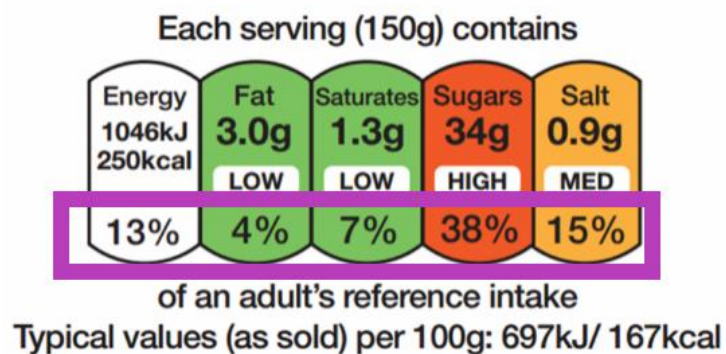
### 6.2 Food Labelling Guide

Information can be found at the following sites:

- NHS – [Food Labels](#)
- The Food Standards Agency – [check the label](#)
- The Food Standards Agency – [guide to creating front of pack nutrition label](#)

The Foods Standards Agency has developed a traffic light system that provides independent expert scientific dietary advice to help you and your customers make healthier choices quickly and easily. They are found on the front of most packaged food items and show you at a glance if the food you are thinking about buying has low, medium or high amounts of fat (including saturated fat), salt and sugar.

Example:



## What do the colours mean?

**RED** – means **HIGH** indicating that the food is high in fat, salt or sugar. Its fine to eat this food occasionally or as a treat but think about how often you choose it and how much of it you eat.

**AMBER** – means **MEDIUM** indicating that the food is high in fat, salt or sugar making it an ok choice as part of a balanced diet. Although going for green is even better!

**GREEN** – means its **LOW** indicating that the food is high in fat, salt or sugar, which makes it a healthy choice.

## Food

**Step 1:** Check the PER PORTION nutrition information

Per Portion	
Fat	>21g
Saturates	>6.0g
(Total) Sugars	>27g
Salt	>1.8g

**Step 2:** Check the PER 100g nutrition information

	Per 100g		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Colour Code	Green	Amber	Red
Fat	3g or less	3.1g to 17.5g	17.6g or more
Saturates	1.5g or less	1.6g to 5g	5.1g or more
(Total) Sugars	5g or less	5.1g to 22.5g	22.6g or more
Salt	0.3g or less	0.31g to 1.5g	1.6g or more



## Drink

**Step 1:** Check the PER PORTION nutrition information

Per Portion	
Fat	>10.5ml
Saturates	>3ml
(Total) Sugars	>13.5ml
Salt	>0.9ml

**Step 2:** Check the PER 100ml nutrition information

	Per 100ml		
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Colour Code	Green	Amber	Red
Fat	1.5ml or less	1.6ml to 8.75ml	8.76ml or more
Saturates	0.75ml or less	0.76ml to 2.5ml	2.6ml or more
(Total) Sugars	2.5ml or less	2.6g to 11.25ml	11.26ml or more
Salt	0.3ml or less	0.4ml to 0.75ml	0.76ml or more

### 6.3 The Eat Well Guide

Information and images of the Eat Well Guide can be found at:

- [NHS – Eatwell guide](#)
- Gov – [Eatwell Guide](#)

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health. This means eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.



This eat well guide covers healthy eating advice for the general population. People with special dietary needs or a medical condition should ask their doctor or a registered dietitian for advice.

The Eatwell Guide shows that to have a healthy, balanced diet, people should try to:

- eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day (see 5 A Day)
- base meals on higher fibre starchy foods like potatoes, bread, rice or pasta
- have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks)
- eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein
- choose unsaturated oils and spreads, and eat them in small amounts
- drink plenty of fluids (at least 6 to 8 glasses a day)
- If you're having foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar, have these less often and in small amounts.
- Try to choose a variety of different foods from the 5 main food groups to get a wide range of nutrients.
- Most people in the UK eat and drink too many calories, too much saturated fat, sugar and salt, and not enough fruit, vegetables, oily fish or fibre.
- The Eatwell Guide does not apply to children under the age of 2 because they have different nutritional needs.
- Between the ages of 2 and 5 years, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family in the proportions shown in the Eatwell Guide.

**Please note that there are now alternative versions of the Eat Well guide tailored for other cultures and diets.**

#### **6.4 Healthy Workplace Award**

<https://www.healthyworkplaceaward.org.uk/>