**00:00:00:00 - 00:00:16:08**

**Anna Cookson**

Teresa, thank you for being here. We have been in equal measured saddened and shocked by this. We've been hearing about all the health complications that you can store up in later life. And it's a high figure isn't it, in Medway, 23% of primary school pupils in the last year.

**00:00:16:10 - 00:00:39:06**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And it's not one that we're ignoring in any way at all. We've got lots of things happening to try to help children and families who find themselves in this position and in listening to, to the medical teams there. We don't want people to store up problems of the future. We want them to be as healthy as they can and achieve their full potential.

**00:00:39:06 - 00:01:02:23**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And listening to the young woman who spoke about the pleasure that she got from being helped to lose weight, we can see that when that does happen, it makes people really feel good. But equally, I don't want people who are suffering from, overweight to feel stigmatised. I want them to feel that there's lots of help out there for them to get to a healthy weight.

**00:01:03:00 - 00:01:07:19**

**Anna Cookson**

So you mentioned you are doing lots of things in Medway. Can you name some of them?

**00:01:07:21 - 00:01:33:24**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Yes, we've got our we've actually got our own programme, More Life, which is a clinical programme for those with severe problems. We're very lucky to have that. We've had that for the last two years and it's a community-based programme like the one that Darent but actually nearer to home. So, for those in the most difficulties that they've got that programme and they get referred through the school nursing service and, and through other parts of the NHS.

**00:01:34:05 - 00:01:59:16**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

But for everybody we've got our food for life programme. We're working very hard to get to a position where we have a sustainable food award, and I'll explain why that's important at the moment and we've got through public health two programmes, we've got the family weight management programme that people can self-refer or be referred through schools and the school nursing service and a healthy cooking programme.

**00:01:59:20 - 00:02:43:21**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And both of those programmes are really popular because, as we just heard, and there's a whole family approach to eating healthily and taking exercise, it makes it very hard for children to actually lose the weight that they need to. And part of that picture, of course, is schools. So, our food for life programme works with more than 25 schools in Medway, actually going into schools, doing fun exercises about where food come from, how food affects your life and, and your health and, and actually even doing growing programmes and farm visits to really help children get to grips with why eating healthy food is important.

**00:02:43:23 - 00:03:12:09**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Yeah. So, carry on. So, it's all those things are going on, but I'm very aware that we don't reach all of the families we need to. And when you look at all of the figures that were put together for your programme today, you can see that if somebody is poor and they live in a deprived area, they are twice as likely to suffer from obesity because their access to healthy food, their ability to cook, it is significantly reduced by them not having enough money.

**00:03:12:12 - 00:03:30:14**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

So, we've got to tackle this on all fronts, and I'll be looking forward to, to working with, our new government with Andrew Gwynne, who is the new Labour Minister for Public Health, to make sure that at both levels, at council level and at government level, we really work hard to get to grips with this issue.

**00:03:30:16 - 00:03:50:12**

**Anna Cookson**

Yeah. And it's interesting, isn't it, Teresa? Because some people would say, oh, you know, Nanny State, you should just let people do what they want to do as regards diet and exercise and everything like that. But it feels like that's not where we're at right now. And actually, it needs to be a multi-pronged approach. So yes, state intervention, but also schools and giving help to families to help themselves.

**00:03:50:14 - 00:04:11:17**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

It absolutely does. I'm not into a blame game. It's horrible for people. If they find themselves in a situation where their child isn't as healthy as they could be, and, and, and it's really worrying. So, this is that our programmes are about things that people can join, have fun doing it, that we're coming up to the summer holiday period.

**00:04:11:19 - 00:04:35:22**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Then tomorrow I'll be walking the Medway Mile with thousands of other people, which I'm really looking forward to doing. And at that event, we've got lots of information about healthy eating. We've now got an outdoor events food policy so that when we have events, we're not permitting there to be unhealthy food at those events. We've got strict rules about fat and sugar and fried food.

**00:04:35:22 - 00:04:59:00**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Now for the food that we offer at our events, and we want it to be a reasonable price for families to access as well. I'm not saying nobody can ever have a treat. Of course, they can. But it's about changing habits and we've got to really be leaders in there. So, So we've got the Medway Mile, we've got the Medway Go programme, which is for families on low incomes going on for four weeks of the summer holidays.

**00:04:59:00 - 00:05:21:03**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And every day on that programme, children get a hot and healthy meal and there's lots of, healthy, healthy cooking. And obviously physical exercise is going on in our parks. In my local park, for example, I've got a community hub bed that the children help me plant on a fun day that we had last summer. That's in great shape.

**00:05:21:03 - 00:05:42:15**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Now we've got way markers to tell people how far they're walking is that as they go around the park and encourage them to push and do a lot more healthy walks going on every day. I was over in Hoo last week with a group of people who were walking three miles in the morning and then sitting down for a cuppa afterwards with support from our public health team.

**00:05:42:15 - 00:05:59:20**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

So, there's lots going on. I hope everybody will look on our website and get the help and support that they need. And more than that, you know, I don't want people to feel isolated or feel that we don't care about them. As I said at the beginning, I know I want everybody to be as healthy and well as they can.

**00:05:59:22 - 00:06:04:21**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And there's lots of things that are happening to make sure that we can get them into that position.

**00:06:04:21 - 00:06:18:10**

**Anna Cookson**

Good stuff. And we started the conversation by talking about the fact that, you know, 23% of people in the last year of primary school were living with obesity in Medway. It feels like from what you're saying and what you're doing, crucially, you can get that number down.

**00:06:18:12 - 00:06:39:23**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Yes, it is possible. I'll be looking forward to the figures that come out for, 23/24. They'll be out in November, and we'll be looking at those very carefully to see where we've made an impact, importantly, where we haven't made an impact, and working very hard with schools so that they join in with all the things that we're doing.

**00:06:39:23 - 00:07:01:10**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

I don't want anybody to feel left out. I want people to feel that they can achieve a healthy weight for them. And in February, we'll be having our healthy weight summit again. This year, we had over, 70 people from different partnership organisations, the NHS, the voluntary sector schools join now Healthy Weight Summit thinking about the things that we can do together.

**00:07:01:12 - 00:07:23:01**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And lots of actions have come out of that, including, working towards the sustainable food policy. Got our new leisure centre at Cozerton Park opening next week for everybody, which again can help families with physical activity and the cafe. There is going to be a healthy cafe that over time will be fed by the community allotments nearby.

**00:07:23:02 - 00:07:23:22**

**Anna Cookson**

Nice.

**00:07:23:24 - 00:07:41:21**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

So, it's that time of joining stuff up, and showing that everybody, you know, there's something for everybody. I do, you know, I like walking, I like gardening, I'm not a runner. I'm not a cyclist. But, you know, there are things that I can have a go at, and I want everybody to feel that they're in that position.

**00:07:41:21 - 00:07:43:19**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And importantly, they don't have to do it on their own.

**00:07:43:19 - 00:07:54:05**

**Anna Cookson**

Good stuff. Theresa, listen. Thank you. Busy times then for Medway. And we'll obviously talk about this again. It would be good to chart the progress final. A quick question. Otherwise, we'll be late for travel. But very quickly. Is it coming home.

**00:07:54:07 - 00:08:21:02**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

Absolutely. I love the football. Last night just listening. yeah. To the article to the article there. And one of the things I would say about that, actually, and the BBC have done a great job on this. I was watching the local news yesterday, and your colleagues went along to some of the primary schools that some of that team went to, and the children there were so motivated and excited by the fact that they were playing on the pitch, as they said, by somebody who was in the England team.

**00:08:21:06 - 00:08:48:12**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

And all power to this. England teams’ elbow, because many of those, younger players are really philanthropic and generous with their time. going back to their primary schools, you know, talking, talking to young people, being really lovely to the mascots as they walked out onto the pitch last night. So, I'm very proud of them. Yeah, I'm really looking forward to Sunday and we're going to fly the England flag over Medway Council tomorrow morning.

**00:08:48:14 - 00:08:49:13**

**Cllr Teresa Murray**

You're welcome to come along.

**00:08:49:17 - 00:09:08:00**

**Anna Cookson**

Perfect. Listen Theresa thank you. Great to talk to you Theresa Murray, deputy leader of Medway Council talking about yes England, but also what her party has described as a childhood obesity crisis and crucially, what they're doing about it in Medway. What did you make those ideas? Do you feel heartened? You feel like we can.