Recommendations for Northern Ireland councils and their partners considering implementing a whole systems approach to obesity

This infographic reports the six recommendations for local councils and their partners in Northern Ireland interested in implementing a WSA to obesity based on findings from a process evaluation conducted between June 2024 and March 2025. A more detailed explanation of each recommendation can be found here, numbers L1-L6 under 'local recommendations'.

Local recommendations	System working behaviours facilitated by corresponding recommendations (see PHE guidance pp. 23-26.)
L1. Prepare for implementation Identify human, financial and physical resource requirements; seek well-connected and influential leaders.	Creating an environment for change Developing a shared aspiration and vision
L2. Optimise communications Create a communication plan; tailor to audiences; be open, honest and transparent.	Establishing effective communication Employing strategic learning Developing a shared aspiration and vision Implementing appropriate governance structures
L3. Generate commitment Identify key stakeholders and share how their priorities align with the WSA; use local data to demonstrate the case for the WSA; recruit stakeholders early.	Creating an environment for change Undertaking collective action Using systems thinking
L4. Enable valuable stakeholder contributions Provide safe and ample opportunities for input, tailor workshops to encourage input and maintain live documents for ongoing contributions.	Employing strategic learning Developing a shared aspiration and vision
L5. Strategically recruit and involve people with lived experience. Determine role requirements, and perform early, efficient and representative recruitment. Tailor involvement and provide support.	Engaging communities in a WSA Developing a shared aspiration and vision
L6. Facilitate a mindset shift Introduce the wider causes of obesity early and revisit at each phase.	Using systems thinking

Recommendations were formed based on data collected from three council areas that had completed up to phase 2 of the PHE implementation guidance; however some will be relevant to later phases or the entire implementation cycle.

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