



Subject:	Calorie Wise Scheme
Date:	10 October 2017
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	In N.I. approximately 60% of the population are overweight or obese. This has led to a significant increase in Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, certain cancers, high blood pressure and stroke. It has been estimated that overweight and obesity costs the Northern Ireland economy £370 million each year.
1.2	Environmental Health Northern Ireland (consisting of Environmental Health Managers from all 11 Councils) has agreed to a proposal for a partnership initiative with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and District Councils in NI in respect of the Calorie Wise scheme. The main aim of the scheme is to encourage the voluntary display of Calories on menus in catering

	premises in Northern Ireland so customers can have the information they need to make healthier food choices.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree Council to support and participate in the scheme.
2.2	It is anticipated that officers will prioritise considering suitability in catering operations in Council's own premises and rolling out calorie wise were appropriate.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The food we eat outside the home makes up an increasingly important part of our diet in Northern Ireland with one in every six meals eaten out of the home. Whilst calorie labelling in UK and Ireland is still in its infancy there is a demand for calorie labelling with 96% of consumers wanting calories displayed in restaurants (FSAI, 2012). The current research surrounding the provision of calorie information on restaurant menus indicates a complementary effect by way of encouraging a different choice of food together with an improved understanding of calories. Food businesses have a major role to play in terms of providing healthier choices, appropriate pricing and accurate calorie labelling of menus. However, it is clear that food businesses need encouragement at a local level to display calories on menus to achieve and fulfil the above objectives.
3.2	In 2012 FSANI piloted a scheme to display calorie information in small-medium sized catering businesses at the point where consumers choose what they want to eat. The independent evaluation of the pilot concluded that more support was needed for businesses to obtain calorie information and to provide healthier food items. Subsequently FSA developed and launched MenuCal in September 2015 a free online tool to help food businesses to manage allergen information and calculate the calories in the food they serve.
3.3	It is now proposed, with the support of Councils, to roll out the Calorie Wise scheme to encourage businesses to display calorie information clearly and prominently at the point of consumer choice i.e. on menus and/or menu boards, for standardised food and non-alcoholic drinks. Any restaurant, takeaway, café, pub, sandwich shop, staff restaurant or other outlet where people eat out, can join the scheme. Calorie Wise aims to inform and enable people to make healthier choices more often when eating out, as well as encouraging food businesses to make healthier options more readily

3.4

available.

EHNI and FSANI believe Calorie Wise will not only be good for consumers it will also help businesses as:

1. It can help to standardise recipes which can reduce food waste and increase profits;
2. Current food trends all point towards a rise in consumer demand for healthier foods and products
3. Research has shown that 90% of people want calorie information in all or some food outlets

3.5

Council support and participation in the scheme will involve significant and ongoing resources in officer time. Council officers are expected initially to hold workshops to promote the scheme. On an ongoing basis participating councils will be required to carry out one to one visits with the business to provide assistance with the use of the Menucal tool and progress towards the requirements of the scheme, carrying out assessment audits, reassessment audits every other year thereafter, and administering the awards. This will initially require approximately 0.5 FTE Food Safety Officers to provide the desired outcomes, including a minimum of 20 Food Businesses in Belfast displaying calorie information by March 2018. However it is anticipated that this will be funded within existing budget by reprioritising. An application has also been made to FSA for additional funding for the remainder of 17/18.

3.6

To be considered for the award, the business must:

- Complete accurate nutritional analysis of menu items to identify Kilojoule (Kj) and calorie content using a tool such as menucalni.co.uk
- Display energy information according to the following 4 principles:
 1. Energy information is provided for ALL standard food and drink items sold
 2. Energy information is displayed clearly and prominently at the 'point of choice' for the consumers
 3. Energy information is provided per portion or per meal
 4. Information on how many Kj and calories an average person needs in a day is given to help consumers 'make sense' of calories on menus
- The business must also display the award on the door of the business or nearby to inform customers that calorie information is provided and commit to reviewing the accuracy of energy information at least every 6 months.

When the business is ready, it may apply to the Council for assessment, a verification audit

3.7	<p>will then be carried out by a Food Safety Officer before making an award. Revalidation inspections are required every two years.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Belfast Agenda</u></p> <p>With 60% of our population overweight or obese it is clear that healthier food choices are essential if Belfast is to be a City “where everyone experiences good health and wellbeing”. Calorie Wise aims to help achieve that key outcome of the Belfast Agenda and to contribute towards a 33% reduction in the life expectancy gap between neighbourhoods.</p>
3.9	<p><u>NI Programme for Government</u></p> <p>The FSA’s programme on Food Product Improvement which includes dietary health initiatives with catering including Calorie Wise was accepted and included in the delivery plan under outcome 4 “<i>we enjoy long, healthy, active lives</i>”.</p>
3.10	<p><u>NI Obesity Prevention Strategy</u></p> <p>The Department of Health cross- government 10 year obesity prevention strategy for NI ‘A Fitter Future for All’ includes a commitment to the roll out of the Calorie Wise campaign across Northern Ireland and improved display of calorie content on menus through the promotion of the ‘Menucal’ calculator.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>This will initially require approximately 0.5 FTE Food Safety Officers to provide the desired outcomes, including a minimum of 20 Food Businesses in Belfast displaying calorie information by March 2018. This will be funded within existing budget by reprioritising and an application has been made to FSA for additional funding.</p>
3.12	<p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - Leaflet for food businesses</p>