

Government progress with the Childhood Obesity Plan, October 2019

Response to the Health and Social Care Committee’s Childhood Obesity follow-up inquiry

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Executive Summary

- Government progress in introducing measures to tackle childhood obesity is largely incomplete, with the most progress made with the Soft Drinks Industry Levy and the sugar and calorie reduction programme proposals.
- Most proposals in the Childhood Obesity Plan and its Chapter 2 lack a formal evaluation process or timeline, making evaluating progress and impact difficult.
- The way the Childhood Obesity Plan is presented and the policies included do not always correspond directly to Chapter 2, further inhibiting the ability to evaluate Government progress as a whole.

Introduction and background

1. This submission responds to the first of the two areas requested by the Health and Social Care Committee’s ‘Childhood obesity follow-up inquiry’ 2019(1), i.e. Assessments of the Government’s progress in introducing measures to tackle childhood obesity.
2. For the second area (Views on the next steps that the Government should take) we provided substantive input to the former Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies’ report on childhood obesity(2). We therefore refer the committee to that report as a key source for their inquiry.
3. This response draws on current PhD research in the Centre for Diet & Activity Research (CEDAR) in the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge. The research is exploring the key influences on childhood obesity policymaking in the UK. Early work has included systematic analysis of published academic literature, Parliamentary documents and grey literature including public media reports.
4. The UK Government published its Childhood Obesity Plan (COP) in August 2016, Chapter 2 (COP2) in June 2018, and announced publishing Chapter 3 (COP3) in its 2019 Green Paper ‘Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s’(3–5).
5. COP aimed to “significantly reduce England’s rate of childhood obesity within the next ten years”(3); whereas COP2 was more targeted and ambitious, stating it aimed to “halve childhood obesity and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030”(4). Following the publishing of COP in 2016 a television programme by celebrity chef Jamie Oliver revealed that the plan had been ‘diluted’ by Theresa May’s Government. It compared a leaked

draft of the strategy developed under David Cameron's Government to the published plan and showed substantial differences in ambition and policies(6).

6. In 2017, Former Director of Communications to the Prime Minister under Theresa May wrote in The Times that in August 2016 Fiona Hill, the prime minister's joint chief of staff, had "singlehandedly drawn a red strike through the Government's anti-obesity strategy" including "scrapping curbs on the marketing of sugary foods to children"(7). This suggests that some of the policy proposals in the original strategy were omitted in the published version under Theresa May. Some were later resurrected in COP2. Furthermore there were policy areas proposed in COP (e.g. technology solutions) not followed up in COP2 without explanation.
7. This submission sets out the progress made on COP and COP2 policy proposals, and explores where most progress has been made and why. COP3 is not included because the green paper in which it is mentioned remains open to consultation until 14th October 2019(5).

Method

8. Data presented here was collected from gov.uk and parliament.uk, and Hansard online. The search term "childhood obesity plan" was used to identify the majority of data. To ensure documents related to specific policies were captured on gov.uk, policy-specific search terms were used¹.

Results

9. The searches produced 1151 relevant results, including key Government documents, Parliamentary debates, Commons Committee activities, and relevant meetings. COP and COP2 contain a number of policies presented differently in each document. In COP policies are presented in fourteen main areas, while in COP2 they are presented in five.
10. To assess progress on COP and COP2 all policies have been grouped together into thirteen main areas (summarised in **Table 1**) within which policies are most closely related. Although the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) is treated in COP2 as part of the Sugar Reduction programme, it has been included as a separate policy area due to it being a taxation measure rather than a voluntary programme.
11. **Table 2** summarises the policies and progress made. A traffic light rating system has been used to identify and rate progress: the policies in which all progress has been achieved are in green, those partially achieved in amber and those not achieved in red. There is one asterisk to indicate if the policy was in COP and two asterisks if it was in COP2.
12. **Table 3** sets out key Parliamentary activities by Parliamentarian.

¹ Search terms: "childhood obesity plan"; "childhood obesity"; "soft drinks industry levy"; "sugar reduction"; "calorie reduction"; "nutrient profiling model"; "trailblazer"; "healthy start scheme"; "change4life"; "healthy schools rating scheme"; "primary pe and sport premium"; "school food standards"; "food labelling"; "early years" and "menus"; "health professionals"; "prevention" and "green paper"; "obesity policy research unit"

Table 1: Summary of new policies proposed in COP and COP2

Policies Proposed in COP	Policies Proposed in COP2
Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduce SDIL · Consult on technical details in 2016 and legislate in Finance Bill 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Consider including sugary milk drinks in SDIL in 2020 review · Consult in 2018 on banning energy drinks to children
Sugar and Calorie Reduction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Challenge industry to reduce sugar by 20% by 2020 across 9 food categories (and by 5% in year one) · Publish assessments at 18 and 36 months and interim reviews every 6 months · Start calorie reduction programme in 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Consider further use of tax system to promote healthy food
Supporting Innovation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Encourage innovation to create healthier, more sustainable products 	
Nutrient Profile Model (NPM), Advertising and Promotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review Nutrition Profiling Model (NPM) to ensure it reflects current dietary guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Consult in 2018 on and banning price and location promotions of unhealthy food and drink · Consult on NPM · Consult in 2018 on 9pm TV advertising watershed · Consider changes to advertising regulation
Public Sector and Local Areas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Support local authorities and Local Government Association to tackle childhood obesity including developing resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop trailblazer programme · Set out economic business case for healthy food environment · Publish “good” green infrastructure standards in 2019 · Consult in 2018 on GBSF
Healthy Start Scheme	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Re-commit to Healthy Start scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Consult on Healthy Start vouchers in 2018

Physical Activity and Sport	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Double Primary PE and Sport Premium · Develop new interactive online tool to support schools · Produce Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Invest over £1.6 million during 2018/19 to support cycling and walking to school · Review how the least active children are being engaged in physical activity in and around the school day · Promote national ambition for every primary school to adopt active mile initiative
Schools, Healthy Rating Scheme and School Food Standards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduce new voluntary healthy rating scheme for primary schools in 2017 to be included during Ofsted inspections · Involve parents in rating process · Run annual competition to recognise innovative schools · Ofsted to conduct thematic review on obesity in schools · Ofsted to develop new framework for September 2019 · Encourage all schools to commit to School Food Standards · Invest £10 million in healthy breakfast clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Update and publish guidance for School Food Standards
Food and Calorie Labelling	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review additional opportunities for food labelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Consult on in 2018 and introduce mandatory calorie labelling
Early Years Settings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop revised menus for early years settings by December 2016 to be included in voluntary guidelines for early years · Launch campaign to raise awareness about guidelines · Update Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ofsted to do research on “good” early years curriculum
Technology Solutions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Explore applications to support consumers’ eating decisions · Develop weight management support for children and families · Hold annual digital technology ‘hackathon’ 	

Health Professionals

- Provide resources for health professionals to help children and families tackle weight issues
- Review where health professional's materials can be strengthened
- Explore evidence-based healthy weight messaging can be introduced at other contact points

Additional

- Obesity Policy Research Unit launched (28th August 2019)
- Prevention Green Paper open to consultation (including commitment to publishing COP3) (22nd July 2019)
- Dame Sally Davies, outgoing CMO, published report recommending radical action on childhood obesity (10th October 2019)

Table 2: Childhood Obesity Plan Progress (COP and COP2) 2016-19

Childhood Obesity Plan: "Significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within the next ten years"				Childhood Obesity Plan, Chapter 2: "Halve childhood obesity and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030"		Formal evaluation process?	Progress Rating			
Top Level Government Activities	2016	<p>July: Theresa May becomes Prime Minister. Jeremy Hunt remains Health Secretary. Aug: Delayed COP published</p>	2017	2018	2019					
<p>Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce SDIL* Consult on technical details in 2016 and legislate in Finance Bill 2017* Consider including sugary milk drinks in SDIL in 2020 review** Consult in 2018 on banning energy drinks to children** 		<p>April: Primary SDIL legislation included in Finance Act 2017* Oct-Dec: Technical consultation*</p>				<p>June: COP2 published July: Matt Hancock becomes Health Secretary</p>	<p>July: Boris Johnson becomes Prime Minister</p>	YES		
<p>Sugar and Calorie Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge industry to reduce sugar by 20% by 2020 across 9 food categories (and by 5% in year one)* Consider further use of tax system to promote healthy food** Publish assessments at 18 and 36 months and interim reviews every 6 months* Start calorie reduction programme in 2017* 		<p>Sept: PHE sugar reduction plans published*</p>				<p>Mar: Technical guidelines for industry* and salt reduction targets published* Sept: PHE interim review published*</p>	<p>Mar: Delayed details of calorie reduction programme published* May: First PHE assessment and technical guidelines published* Nov: PHE publish survey showing public support*</p>	<p>Jan: Supplementary technical guidelines published* May: PHE Spring 2019 update published* Sept: Delayed PHE Sugar Reduction report published*</p>	YES	
<p>Supporting Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage innovation to create healthier, more sustainable products* 							<p>Nov: Minister visit to see innovation in food factories*</p>		NO	
<p>Nutrient Profile Model (NPM), Advertising and Promotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review NPM to ensure it reflects current dietary guidelines* Consult on NPM** Consult in 2018 on 9pm TV advertising watershed** Consider changes to advertising regulation** Consult in 2018 on ban price and location promotions of unhealthy food and drink** 		<p>Sept: PHE NPM plans published* Oct: NPM Expert Group details published*</p>					<p>Mar –June: Delayed NPM consultation* Aug: Obesity Policy Research Unit (OPRU) meta-analysis published* Sept: NPM consultation responses published*</p>	<p>Jan-April: Delayed promotions consultation** Mar-Jun: Delayed advertising consultation**</p>	NO	

<p>Public Sector and Local Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local authorities and Local Government Association to tackle childhood obesity including developing resources* Develop trailblazer programme** Set out economic business case for healthy food environment** Publish “good” green infrastructure standards in 2019** Consult in 2018 on GBSF** 			<p>Feb: Updated government buying standards for food (GBSF) guidance published*</p> <p>Mar: Healthier ‘out of home’ guidance published*</p>	<p>Feb: Healthy High Streets research published*</p> <p>Sept: Trailblazer details published**</p> <p>Oct: Local authority guidance published. Trailblazer applications opened**</p>	<p>Feb-April: Trailblazer discovery phase**</p> <p>May-Aug: Delayed GBSF consultation**</p> <p>June: 5 councils selected for trailblazer programme**</p> <p>July: Updated healthy & safe communities guidance published. Whole systems guidance published*</p>	PARTIAL	
<p>Healthy Start Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-commit to Healthy Start scheme* Consult on Healthy Start vouchers in 2018** 						NO	
<p>Physical Activity and Sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double Primary PE and Sport Premium* Develop new interactive online tool to support schools* Produce Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy* Invest over £1.6 million during 2018/19 to support cycling and walking to school** Review how the least active children are being engaged in physical activity in and around the school day** Promote national ambition for every primary school to adopt an active mile initiative** 			<p>Mar: PHE review of ‘Everybody active, every day: two years on’*</p> <p>April: More funding for Change4Life sports services*. Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy published*</p> <p>Oct: PE and Sport Premium allocations published*</p>	<p>Feb: £7m cycling funding announced*</p> <p>Mar-June: Cycling safety consultation*</p> <p>Oct: Plans for a school Sport Action Plan announced*. Swimming support announced*</p> <p>Nov: Consultation outcome published. ‘Everybody active, every day’ updated*</p>	<p>May: Primary PE and sport premium funding details published*</p> <p>July: Details of School Sport and Activity Action Plan announced*. School Sport and Activity Action Plan published*. Primary PE and sport premium survey published*</p> <p>Sept: Cycle routes funding announced*</p>	NO	
<p>Schools, Healthy Rating Scheme and School Food Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce new voluntary healthy rating scheme for primary schools in 2017 to be included during Ofsted inspections* Involve parents in rating process* Run annual competition to recognise innovative schools* Ofsted to conduct thematic review on obesity in schools* Ofsted to develop new framework for September 2019* Encourage all schools to commit to SFS* Invest £10 million in healthy breakfast clubs* Update and publish guidance for SFS** 			<p>Mar: DfE breakfast club evaluation published*</p> <p>Oct: Breakfast club funding announced*</p>	<p>July: Ofsted report published*</p> <p>Mar: £26m funding for breakfast clubs launched*. Bid for holiday meals funding launched</p> <p>Nov: Results of breakfast club funding announced*</p>	<p>Mar: Updated School Food in England published**</p> <p>May: Summer holiday meals funding announced*</p> <p>July: Delayed Healthy Schools Rating Scheme published*</p>	NO	
<p>Food and Calorie Labelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review additional opportunities for food labelling* Consult on in 2018 and introduce mandatory calorie labelling** 		<p>Dec: Nutrition labelling mandatory for most pre-packaged foods</p>		<p>Sept-Dec: Calorie labelling consultation**</p> <p>Nov-Dec: Food labelling consultation**</p>	<p>Feb: Food labelling consultation responses published**</p>	NO	

<p>Early Years Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop revised menus for early years settings by December 2016 to be included in voluntary guidelines for early years* Launch campaign to raise awareness about guidelines* Update Early Years Foundation Stage Framework* Ofsted to do research on “good” early years curriculum** 			<p>Nov: Delayed example early years setting menus published*</p>			<p>NO</p>	
<p>Technology Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore applications to support consumers’ eating decisions* Develop weight management support for children and families* Hold annual digital technology ‘hackathon’* 			<p>Jan: Change4Life ‘Be Food Smart’ launched* July: Change4Life ‘10 Minute Shake Up’ launched*</p>	<p>Jan: Change4Life healthier snacks campaign launched* June: Change4Life ‘Train Like a Jedi’ launched*</p>	<p>Jan: Change4Life ‘Make a swap when you next shop’ launched*</p>	<p>NO</p>	
<p>Health Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide resources for health professionals to help children and families tackle weight issues* Review where health professional’s materials can be strengthened* Explore evidence-based healthy weight messaging can be introduced at other contact points* 			<p>June: Guidance for health professionals published*</p>		<p>April: E-learning tools for health professionals published* May: PHE health professionals public health conference*</p>	<p>NO</p>	
<p>Additional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obesity Policy Research Unit (OPRU) launched Prevention Green Paper (COP3) 				<p>Nov: Government publishes ‘Prevention is better than cure’</p>	<p>July-Oct: Delayed prevention green paper consultation</p>		

*Policy in COP

**Policy in COP2

Fully achieved policy proposals

13. The most comprehensive progress has been achieved for the SDIL, and sugar and calorie reduction programmes. The sugar reduction assessments were largely delayed but everything set out in relation to the programme in COP and COP2 has been achieved. An article in The Times speculated that the 2019 sugar reduction assessment was delayed because of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's "scepticism about sin taxes" and his team prevented attempts by PHE to publish it earlier(8).
14. The voluntary sugar and calorie reduction programmes are not new policies. A voluntary calorie reduction programme was proposed by the recent coalition Government in their 2011 strategy 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England'(9). The aim was to reduce national energy intake by 5 billion calories a day. Several large chain supermarkets, food manufacturers, caterers and food outlets voluntarily committed to reducing calories in their products alongside other initiatives such as voluntary sugar, fat, saturated fat and salt reductions(10). The actions were not evaluated by Government but by the commercial organisations delivering the reductions through a self-reported process(11). Further voluntary sugar and calorie reductions were proposed in 2013(12,13), then in 2014 PHE published its report 'Sugar reduction: responding to the challenge', followed by the voluntary programme included in COP and COP2(14). There remains widespread scepticism about the effectiveness of voluntary measures, highlighted by independent evaluation of the Cameron Government's Public Health Responsibility Deal, although further evaluation is warranted(15).
15. In 2020 the Government plan to publish another sugar reduction assessment and consider additional taxation measures to promote healthy food and whether to include milk drinks in the SDIL. COP2 included a consultation on legislating to end the sale of energy drinks to children. The consultation has taken place and the prevention green paper commits to a ban(5), but the consultation responses and policy detail are yet to be published(16). The SDIL and sugar and calorie reduction programmes differ from other policies as they are set out with a clear timeline of actions and include a formal evaluation process.
16. In addition to the proposals set out in COP and COP2, the Obesity Policy Research Unit was launched in August 2017, which supports the delivery of policies and reviews the evidence base(17). It has since published a number of papers including a meta-analysis on the effect of TV advertising on children's diets, which found that children's short-term exposure to unhealthy food TV advertising increases immediate calorie consumption (18). The Government also published a prevention green paper which is out for consultation until 14th October 2019. The document states that the Government is 'publishing Chapter 3 of the childhood obesity plan as part of this green paper', including plans on 'infant feeding, clear labelling, food reformulation...and support for individuals to achieve and maintain a healthier weight'(5). A timetable for COP3 has not been issued. A detailed report by Dame Sally Davies, outgoing CMO, was published on 10th October 2019(2). It cites extensive current evidence and proposes a wide range of further policy measures aimed at reducing and preventing childhood obesity, providing an important potential input to COP3.

Partially achieved policy proposals

17. Most policy proposals in COP and COP2 have been partially achieved. The NPM, advertising and promotions consultations have been held with delays, and only the NPM consultation responses have been published(19–21). Following the NPM consultation PHE stated it would present the outcome of the 2018 review of the NMP later in 2018(21). This is yet to be published.
18. The public sector and local area proposals presented together in table 2 both include proposals on the Government buying standards for food and catering services (GBSF). The GBSF consultation was held after a five month delay and the outcome is yet to be published(22). The Obesity Trailblazers programme has been launched and five local authorities were selected in June 2019, almost a year earlier than planned(23,24). The programme includes 'evaluation support' but does not indicate a timeline or process(24). In July 2019 PHE published guidance for a whole systems approach to obesity(25) and local authority case studies implementing this. The case study authorities are not the same as the Obesity Trailblazer authorities. It is unclear why and where the whole systems approach

fits into the Government's plans for local areas(26). Obesity is a result of system failures and it is notable that Government, while commissioning the Foresight Obesity Report(27), appears to have neglected this understanding in subsequent policies.

19. The updated "good" green infrastructure standards do not appear to have been published. One media article in October 2018 reported that Ministers have been accused of "dragging their feet" on action related to the standards(28). It is also unclear whether the Government has formally set out the economic business case for a healthy food environment as indicated in COP2, although relevant guidance has been published(29–32). In June 2019, DEFRA launched a programme of work to seek evidence for and develop a new National Food Strategy, which aims to define policies to reconfigure the food system to simultaneously achieve health, sustainability, economic and social goals(33,34).
20. Several policy proposals related to physical activity and sport were set out in COP and COP2. The SDIL revenue is allocated to doubling the primary school PE and sport premium and to funding healthy breakfast clubs. In the Chancellor's original announcement, the SDIL was expected to raise £520 million in year one, which was reduced to £240 million when the levy came into effect. By October 2018 the revenue was £153.8 million(35). The Government declared that any decreases in the levy revenue would not affect the funding for schools and breakfast clubs(36), which was further confirmed in May 2019 guidance on how much PE and sport premium funding schools receive(37).
21. In July 2019 the Government's School Sport and Activity Action Plan was published, which set out a cross-departmental plan to 'ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities'(38). There have also been focuses on particular sports such as swimming in primary school(39). In 2017 the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy was published(40) and COP2 set out that £1.6 million would support cycling and walking to school. A number of relevant related policies have since been announced; however, the £1.6 million figure has been discussed in relation to supporting everyone, not just children, make cycling 'a seamless part of their daily journey'(41). COP2 also set out to encourage every primary school to adopt an active mile initiative. In December 2018 the Education Secretary called on leading sporting organisations to work in partnership with the Government to help achieve this(42). It is not clear whether an interactive tool has been developed to help schools deliver physical activity and sport programmes, or whether a 2019 report by PHE is the review on the least active that was promised(43).
22. The other schools based policy proposals have largely been achieved. In July 2019 the new Healthy Schools Rating Scheme set out in COP was published after an almost two year delay(44). It received criticism for being voluntary and because schools do not have to notify Ofsted of their rating(45). Ofsted published its thematic review on obesity in July 2018(46). It argued that obesity is an issue better tackled outside of school and that schools could not have a direct and measurable impact on childhood obesity. This was reinforced in Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman's second annual report published in December 2018(47).
23. COP stated it would encourage all schools, not just maintained mandated schools, to adopt the School Food Standards (SFS), and COP2 stated the School Food Standards would be updated. In March 2019 the Government published a set of resources related to SFS (although these are not updated standards), and its 'School food in England' provides guidance for governing boards(48). It is unclear whether parents were involved in the rating process or whether an annual competition to recognise schools running innovative programmes related to childhood obesity has been held as set out. Investment in healthy breakfast clubs has been achieved and further support to provide meals during summer holidays has been introduced(49,50).
24. The food labelling policy to explore opportunities after the UK leaves the European Union did not change between COP and COP2, without explanation or details of progress in the interim. The only proposal added was a consultation. Between November and December 2018 the Government held a consultation on amending food labelling laws when the UK leaves the European Union. The summary of responses was published in February 2019(51) and since then no further progress has been published.

25. The 11 month delayed guidelines for early years menus were published in November 2017(52). No further progress has been published. Between January 2017 and 2019 five Change4Life campaigns were launched: 'Be Food Smart', '10 Minute Shake-Up', healthier snacks campaign, 'Train Like a Jedi', and 'Make a swap when you next shop'(53–57). It appears that the annual digital technology 'hackathon' proposal is not new as these have been held by PHE before and after COP was published. For example, a hackathon to help tackle childhood obesity was held in Manchester in May 2016(58) and a Healthy London Hackathon was held in London in 2017 by the London Mayor and PHE, which could be related to COP plans(59).
26. For health professionals it is unclear whether materials or healthy weight messaging at different contact points have been formally reviewed. Materials to support health professionals have been published(60). In April 2019, PHE launched new e-learning tools to support health and care professionals in 'preventing illness, protecting health and promoting wellbeing', including "giving children the best start in life"(61).

Policy proposals not achieved

27. COP2 set out to consult before the end of 2018 on plans to provide additional support through the Healthy Start scheme. The consultation is yet to be held. COP also sought to support 'innovation to help businesses to make their products healthier'. In November 2018, David Rutley MP, Minister at the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs visited the Nestle York factory to learn about the company's 'innovative sugar reduction technique' and he said, "I am looking forward to continuing work closely with businesses from across the sector – and the whole of the UK – to champion our iconic food and drink products both at home and on the global stage."(62) However, the policies set out were not new initiatives, but ongoing, and no further progress has been published.

Discussion

28. The majority of proposals in COP and COP2 are made without a formal evaluation or timeline making evaluating progress and measuring impact difficult. The SDIL and sugar and calorie reduction programmes are formally evaluated and progress has been made on all proposals. Many policies are difficult to track, such as allocated funding, because they lack a formal evaluation and because responsibility lies with other or many Government departments. The most noticeable policies lacking progress are those subject to consultation. All consultations heralded in COP2 were intended to be held before the end of 2018. However, only three out of the seven were held in 2018, one has not been held at all, and no final policy details have been published. Despite this, the NIHR Policy Research Programme has sought to commission research to evaluate some proposals that have been consulted on to date(63). However, these projects are on hold pending policy decisions.
29. A BBC article in June 2019 speculated that delay to government decision-making is due to the Government focusing on how it will leave the European Union(64). The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health also raised concerns about Brexit affecting progress related to government action on childhood obesity in a 2019 report. It stated it remained "disappointed and gravely concerned" about the Government's lack of progress and that the UK's exit from the EU raises concerns about action relating to child health(65).

Relevant parliamentary activities

30. In addition to the governmental activities set out above, a number of other COP and COP2-related activities have taken place since COP was published in August 2016. There have been 41 debates in the House of Commons, 27 debates in the House of Lords, 1 Grand Committee debate and 14 Westminster Hall debates, in which COP or COP2 was discussed. Of these Parliamentary debates 26 were primarily focused on obesity or policies in COP and COP2. There were also 10 speeches by government ministers discussing childhood obesity; 83 meetings or events have been held between the food and drinks industry and government officials (including PHE); the Health and Social Care Select Committee published one follow-up report to their 2015 inquiry and report 'Childhood Obesity-brave and bold action'(66), and held another inquiry in 2018, which resulted in their report 'Childhood obesity: Time

for action'(67); and there has also been a report discussing COP published by the APPG on Obesity(68). Table 3 sets out the key Parliamentary activity by Parliamentarians (2016-19).

Conclusion

31. This submission demonstrates that for the majority of policy proposals in COP and COP2 progress has not been complete and because most proposals are made without a formal evaluation, progress and impact are difficult to determine. The Parliamentary activities identified demonstrate that several related activities continue to take place but more research is required to understand how this supports the Government to deliver its policy proposals.

Table 3: Key parliamentary activity by parliamentarian 2016-19

Parliamentarian	Role (if directly relevant)	Party affiliation	APPG Event	Commons Debate	Committee Events	Key Committee Correspondence	Parliament Event	Lords Debate	Westminster Hall Debate	Written Answer	Written Question	Written statement	Total
1. Steve Brine MP	Former Public Health Minister	Conservative		11	1	2			11	69		1	95
2. Baroness Nicola Blackwood	Former Public Health Minister	Conservative		6	1			2		23			32
3. Sharon Hodgson MP		Labour	2	11					3		11		27
4. Andrew Selous MP	Member of Health & Social Care Committee. Co-chair of APPG on Obesity	Conservative	2	5	3				4		5		19
5. Nadhim Zahawi MP	Former Education Minister	Conservative		2	1	1				12		1	17
6. Lord James O'Shaughnessy	Former Health Minister	Conservative						13		3	1		17
7. Baroness Anne Jenkin	Vice-chair of APPG on Obesity	Conservative	6					10					16
8. Jim Shannon MP	Vice-chair of APPG on Obesity	DUP	1	2					3		10		16
9. Maggie Throup MP	Former Member of Health & Social Care Committee	Conservative	4	3	1		1		4				13
10. Lord Clive Brooke		Labour						8			5		13
11. Dr Sarah Wollaston MP	Chair of Health & Social Care Committee	Liberal Democrat		4	3	3			2				12
12. Justin Tomlinson MP		Conservative		4					1		7		12
13. Margot James MP	Former Digital Minister	Conservative			1					10			11
14. Baroness Joan Walmsley	Vice-chair of APPG on Obesity	Liberal Democrat	2					9					11
15. Seema Kennedy MP	Former Public Health Minister	Conservative		2						8			10
16. Keith Vaz MP		Labour		2							8		10
17. Luciana Berger MP	Member of Health & Social Care Committee	Liberal Democrat		2	3						4		9
18. Robert Goodwill MP	Former Education Minister	Conservative		1						8			9
19. Tom Watson MP		Labour									9		9
20. Eleanor Smith MP	Co-chair of APPG on Obesity	Labour	7								2		9

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