

Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management, and Operational Assets
Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling

Leisure, Culture & Communities

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REFERENCE: PHLLFMOA-01-24

HOLIDAY ACTIVITY AND FOOD PROGRAMME 2024 GRANT ACCEPTANCE

Purpose of Report

Wiltshire Council has been awarded £1,128,750 from the Department for Education to continue the delivery of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme in 2024.

The funding is awarded to enable free provision of enriching activities, nutritional meals and nutritional education for children eligible for benefit related free school meals across during the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays. There are 10,710 children who are eligible for benefit related Free School Meals in Wiltshire.

The Easter holiday programme should commence on 8th April 2024 and will require the programme to be published in good time to allow families to secure spaces for their children.

The Department for Education issued a grant determination letter on 16th February 2024 comprising of Annex A - Annex C. The grant determination letter has previously been received in the December preceding a programme year.

- **Annex A** states the allocation of funding to each local authority
- **Annex B** outlines the core objectives of the programme that need to be adhered to by the local authority including purpose of programme, payment and reporting methods, data collection and financial procedures.
- **Annex C** states GDPR clauses of the programme.

The terms and conditions stated have been read and reviewed by the relevant officers and they are confident these can be met and adhered to.

This report seeks approval for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme Manager to sign the online form issued by the Department for Education. This will accept the funding and the associated terms and conditions stated within the grant determination letter issued February 2024. It will also enable plans for the 2024 Programme commencing at Easter to be progressed and published for families to secure places.

Consultation

The HAF programme established a steering group when the programme launched in 2021, to support implementation and delivery outcomes. This was made up of a wide range of local bodies including wider council services, public health, local police, youth organisations, social services, charities and the voluntary sector.

The programme has been delivered to date through a combination of contracts and agreements for activities, food provision and nutritional education. Contracts and agreements have been awarded under Invitation to Tender exercises and grant awards.

In Summer 2023 the contracted activity provider for the HAF programme ceased trading and a number of community organisations were awarded funding to deliver the programme for Summer and Christmas 2023.

Based on feedback from families and community groups, it is proposed that the 2024 programme will also be delivered through a range of accessible, community-based activities.

In 2023, nearly 18,500 meals and activity places were provided for children across the County during the school holidays. Evaluation of the impact of the HAF programme for 2022 showed that 87% of respondents found the provision of a meal to be beneficial. 60% reported that their child was more physically active as a result of attending a HAF activity and 82% reported that their child had made new friends and was less socially isolated during the school holidays as a result of the HAF programme.

Options Considered

If the council does not accept the funding from Department of Education and associated terms and conditions stated within the grant determination letter, the HAF programme would not be available to eligible families in Wiltshire, leaving children and young people at risk of the triple inequalities of holiday hunger, physical inactivity and social isolation faced by families with a low income.

If Wiltshire Council decline the available funding, there is also an additional risk of reputational damage.

Reason for Decision

The HAF programme directly delivers the following elements of the Wiltshire Council missions in the Business Plan 2022-2032:

Empowered People:

- We get the best start in life
- We stay active
- We are safe

Thriving Economy:

- We have vibrant, well-connected communities
- We have the right skills to prosper

Resilient Communities:

- We ensure decisions are evidence-based
- We live well together

The intended outcomes for HAF activities are that children and young people will:

1. Eat more healthily over the school holidays.
2. Be more active during the school holidays.
3. Be safe and less socially isolated.
4. Engage in enriching activities which support personal development and wellbeing.
5. Have greater understanding of health and nutrition.
6. Be more engaged with school and other local services.

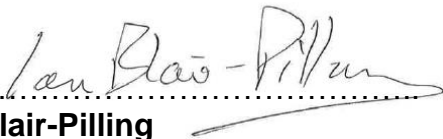
The HAF programme therefore has the potential to meet all four of the council's guiding themes; 'Prevention and early intervention', 'Improving social mobility and tackling inequalities', 'Understanding communities' and 'Working together'.

DECISION MADE

I approve the signing and acceptance of the grant from the Department for Education for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme.

The following report and appendices are attached:

Grant Determination Letter



Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling
Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management, and Operational Assets

1 March 2024

Date:.....

In accordance with Part 8 of the Constitution the Chairman of the Council has agreed that it is reasonable in the circumstances for the decision to be treated as a matter of urgency, and therefore not subject to the call-in procedure