

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Communities) (Introduced by Executive Member (Early Intervention))	Executive Cabinet	12 th October 2023

Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2023/24 Procurement

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. To request approval to commence a procurement exercise for a contract to manage delivery of the HAF programme from 2024-25 and for up to 3 years (subject to funds being secured).
2. To request approval to receive funding from LCC and undertake the delivery of HAF 2024-25 following a successful procurement exercise.
3. To outline proposed service specifications of the contract.
4. To request approval for delegated authority pending the commencement of the procurement exercise that the Executive Member for Early Intervention be able to authorise the evaluation and awards criteria employed in the procurement exercise.
5. To request approval for delegated authority following the completion of the procurement exercise that the Executive Member for Early Intervention be able to authorise the award of the contract to the successful bidder.

Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

6. To approve the commencement of a procurement exercise for the management of the HAF programme from 2024-25, and for the following 2 years, subject to funding being secured for each year.
7. To grant approval to receive funding from LCC to undertake the delivery of HAF 2024-25 following a successful procurement exercise.
8. To accept the proposed service specifications and make any relevant recommendations.

9. To grant approval for delegated authority that the Executive Member for Early Intervention be able to authorise the evaluation and awards criteria employed in the procurement exercise.
10. To grant approval for delegated authority following the completion of the procurement exercise that the Executive Member for Early Intervention be able to authorise the award of the contract to the successful bidder.

Reasons for recommendations

11. Completing this procurement exercise will ensure that delivery of the HAF programme complies with the Council’s statutory procurement responsibilities.
12. Completing this procurement exercise will add value (as outlined within the report) for Chorley residents to the delivery of the HAF programme for up to 3 years.
13. Granting delegated authority for the Executive Member for Early Intervention to be able to authorise the evaluation and awards criteria pending the procurement exercise, and award of the contract to the successful bidder following a successful procurement exercise complies with the Council’s Contracts Procedure Rules (5.4 – 5.6).
14. Granting delegated authority for the Executive Member for Early Intervention to be able to authorise the award of the contract to the successful bidder will expedite the approvals process and enable contract mobilisation to begin.

Other options considered and rejected

15. To not complete a procurement exercise would put the HAF programme delivery 2024/25 at risk of non-compliance with the council’s statutory procurement responsibilities.

Corporate priorities

16. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

17. The HAF programme was rolled out to upper-tier local authorities in 2021 to provide children eligible for free school meals (and other identified vulnerabilities) access to support through the school holiday periods.
18. Cost of living challenges make these children less likely to have access to nutritious meals, organised activity and social inclusion activity. The programme aims to provide structured, consistent and easy to access to enriching activity that includes access to a nutritious meal.

Rationale

19. Chorley has 2,727 children aged 4-16 receiving free school meals. The HAF programme helps to address child food poverty by providing free activity and meals for children during the school holidays, supporting many families who struggle during this time.
20. In line with national HAF requirements, 2024-25 delivery of activities will be one week during Easter holidays, four weeks over the summer holidays and one week at Christmas. The funding will cover a minimum of four hours of activities each day, four days a week. Food must be provided for all children and young people who participate.
21. The intended outcomes for the Lancashire HAF activities are for children who attend the provision to:
 - Eat more healthily over the school holidays
 - Be more active during the school holidays
 - Take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character, and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment
 - Be safe and not socially isolated
 - Have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition
 - Be more engaged with school and other local services.
22. The target for the programme in 2023-24 is to support 25% of the borough's 2,727 children on benefits-related, free school meals (FSM) per day, 682 in total. A discretionary 15% of these places can be allocated to children who are not FSM eligible but are identified by their education setting as having additional vulnerabilities or needs.
23. HAF 2023-24 summer delivery has been successfully completed. The total HAF funded attendees engaged over the summer holiday period is 1,409 (this total does not take into account how many sessions these individuals accessed each). There were 10,896 places secured for this delivery period, of which 10,728 spaces were booked and 8,819 places were filled (i.e. the booking was attended). This is an attendance rate of 82% and underscores a very successful delivery period.
24. Chorley Council has managed delivery of the HAF programme in 2022-23 and 2023-24. A model has been employed that has commissioned Chorley Inspire Youth Zone to coordinate the day-to-day delivery of the programme. Chorley Inspire Youth Zone have been instrumental in the success of the programme; forging stronger links with schools and families, applying their knowledge and relationships within youth provision networks, and utilising their existing infrastructure to respond to emerging demands.
25. Where the benefit of commissioning Chorley Inspire Youth Zone to coordinate the delivery of the HAF programme is clear, it has been identified as the programme has progressed that there is scope to provide additional value to Chorley residents, the VCFS sector and wider economy. By contracting a provider to undertake full management of the HAF programme - encompassing additional responsibilities, allocating specific resource, and committing to developing the programme beyond the DfE programme standards, the successful provider can contribute to the delivery key council priorities for its residents.

26. Council resource will then be allocated to oversee and manage this contract through regular contract management meetings with the successful provider to ensure deliverables are being met.
27. Completing this procurement exercise will ensure that delivery of the HAF programme complies with the Council's statutory procurement responsibilities.

Proposed Approach

28. Where there are specific outputs and outcomes that will need to be included within the contract specifications to ensure programme delivery is aligned with DfE programme standards, opportunities have emerged over preceding years of HAF delivery to add additional value to the programme. These considerations have been captured in the table below:

Measure	Benefit
Developing the booking system to introduce booking codes	Develop a commitment to safeguarding spaces for eligible children (FSM eligible, identified vulnerabilities, SEND) to allow the programme to be communicated confidently across the schools' network, and exploring other engagement opportunities, to ensure maximised reach across eligible households.
Invest in recruitment of a Chorley HAF Programme Coordinator	Coordination costs will not be absorbed into existing staffing costs to ensure an appropriate level of resource is allocated to programme delivery.
Better links to wider support	HAF provides a tangible link to families that could benefit from additional support through a broad range of support pathways. Partnerships could be developed (supported by Chorley Council) to create opportunities for parents to explore and engage with these support pathways.
Community embedded delivery structure	The successful provider must work in partnership with local charities, CICs, social enterprises and businesses to deliver a programme that is well embedded in the communities it services and benefits the wider local economy.
Demonstrate prior knowledge	A successful provider that has prior knowledge of local young people and family's networks, partnerships, provision and education settings will be much better situated to mobilise delivery of the programme in an agile manner and provide the best experience for Chorley residents.
Green delivery	The food and drink element particularly of the HAF programme generates a lot of plastic waste. The successful providers will be required to consider alternative solutions to provide the food and drink element of the programme in a more sustainable and responsible way.
Volunteering and Time Credits	Embedding volunteering and time credits into the programme provides opportunity for young people and their families who may be experiencing multiple vulnerabilities to benefit from the virtuous cycle of

	volunteering, and the health and wellbeing improving opportunities that earning time credits can provide. The successful provider should have demonstrable experience of managing high quality volunteering programmes.
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Finance

29. While the level of funding for 2024-25 has not yet been confirmed it is expected to be similar to the level of funding for 2023-24, £288,622, meaning the potential value of the contract over a possible 3 years would be likely to exceed £865,866. Of the total amount of funding allocated for Chorley HAF in 2023/24, 10% of this is allocated to resource the council's coordination of the programme, with 90% used for delivery, as per the grant agreement. It is proposed that this 10% continue to be allocated to Chorley Council to support the continued management of the contract, subject to the grant agreement with LCC.
30. Following approval at Executive Cabinet, a high value procurement exercise will be employed with the intention to secure a successful provider by February 2024, for mobilisation of the contract and delivery of the HAF programme in April 2024.
31. Following approval at SSMT on 20th September 2023, approval will be sought by Council to receive funds for the HAF 2024-25 programme.

Climate change and air quality

32. The work noted in this report has an overall positive impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.
33. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
 - a. net carbon zero by 2030,
 - b. energy use / renewable energy sources
 - c. **waste and the use of single use plastics**,
 - d. sustainable forms of transport,
 - e. air quality,
 - f. flooding risks,
 - g. green areas and biodiversity.
34. The following mitigation measures have been undertaken to limit the environmental impact: the successful provider will be contractually obligated to consider alternative approaches to delivery of the food and drink element of the HAF programme with specific intent to reduce or remove single use plastics.

Equality and diversity

35. Under the contract and in the delivery of the service, the Council will require the successful provider's compliance with its policies and statutory requirements including Equality and Diversity.

Risk

36. Completing this procurement exercise will ensure that delivery of the HAF programme complies with the Council's statutory procurement responsibilities.

37. The terms of the contract will stipulate that delivery timescale of the contract is subject to funding being secured from LCC.
38. The contract will stipulate that the successful provider will have financial reserves to a minimum of £300,000 to ensure the programme can be delivered should funding be delayed.
39. The contract will be managed by an allocated officer to ensure deliverables are being met and to safeguard against reputational harm to the council.
40. Below are some of the risks that are associated with the programme. However, as we have delivered the programme successfully in 2022 and 2023, commencement of the procurement exercise will take place in a timely manner following approvals, and the contract specifications have been written by, and will be managed by allocated officers with HAF programme delivery experience, these risks have been managed appropriately:
 - Ability to deliver Easter programme if all approvals, contracts, and agreements do not stay within planned timescales to allow for contract mobilisation to take place.
 - Activity delivery partners capacity diminishes due to unforeseen circumstances within their organisations.
 - Poor uptake on the programme from FSM children
 - Programme will provide activity provision for approx. 25% of FSM children – additional support may be required depending on uptake and need (although we do have very strong support networks in place in relation to emergency food provision)

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

41. This report seeks approval to undertake a procurement exercise for a contract to manage the HAF delivery programme in 2024/25, and potentially for 2025/26 and 2026/27, depending on confirmation of funding.
42. The HAF grant allocation for 2023/24 is £288,622 and it is anticipated that the grant allocation from 2024/25 through to 2026/27 will be similar. It is to be noted that HAF funding beyond 2023/24 has not been confirmed; if funding is not confirmed then the contract will not proceed.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

43. The proposal is to seek authority to commence a compliant procurement exercise for the delivery of the HAF programme for 3 years commencing 2024/2025 (this is subject to the requisite funds coming through). Clearly it makes great practical sense to try and sort out a partner for this scheme for the next three years. There are no concerns with what is proposed from a Monitoring Officer perspective.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

There are no Appendices for this report.

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This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.