

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Communities) (Introduced by Executive Member (Early Intervention))	Executive Cabinet	Thursday, 23 February 2023

## 2023/24 Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

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

1. To give an update on delivery of Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF) 2022 over the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holiday periods.
2. To provide details of Holiday Activity Programme for 2023 and proposed delivery
3. To gain approvals to receive funding of £288,622 from LCC and undertake the delivery of HAF 2023 using identified delivery model.

### Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

4. To approve that Chorley Council, take on lead responsibility for the delivery of the Holiday Activity Food programme for 2023 within Chorley and receive £288,622 funding budget associated with the programme from LCC.
5. To approve that we commission the delivery of HAF 2023 to Chorley Inspire Youth Zone with a Chorley Council Officer within Communities Team whom will work closely alongside partners to oversee the programme, ensuring all expected delivery is on track and all intended monitoring is achieved.

### Reasons for recommendations

6. Lancashire County Council are keen to follow the same model of delivery as last year and work with Chorley Council to deliver the programme locally.
7. The relationship between Chorley Council and LCC worked well for HAF 2021 and HAF 2022 and it would be recommended to continue this model going forward. This ensures we have a level of control over delivery locally, can monitor provision and identify need across the borough.

8. There are strong links with Chorley Inspire Youth Zone, and they have been key to the successful delivery of the previous programmes, and we would recommend we continue with their commission for 2023. They have excellent relationships with targeted schools and many families. They have a vast knowledge of the subject area and provide existing provision that can add more value to the programme.
9. There are short timescales to deliver the programme and Inspire have the capacity to start delivery quickly and have already delivered the 2021 and 2022 HAF programme successfully. They have relationships with wider local organisations to benefit signposting and wider support around the families.
10. Grant agreements will be created between Chorley Council and partner which details all expectations and monitoring. An officer will monitor the programme, have regular dialogue to ensure all aspects of delivery are maintained and represent the Chorley HAF programme at county meetings. A local performance indicator has been created to monitor delivery and aid progress.

#### **Other options considered and rejected**

11. To reject LCC's preferred model of delivery within Lancashire and not take on lead responsibility for local delivery across Chorley. LCC will therefore carry out procurement of the service. This will result in Chorley Council having no control over ensuring delivery meets the needs of local families, that local partners are engaged to support delivery and that known vulnerable families are targeted with the opportunity. Easter provision will be extremely difficult to deliver with timescales available if an outside provider was awarded the contract. For these reasons, this option has been rejected.

#### **Executive Summary**

12. LCC have approached Chorley Council to deliver the HAF 2023 programme following the successful completion of delivery of HAF 2022. The delivery for 2023 would follow a similar model as last year and utilise our key local delivery partners within Chorley. Lessons learned will be implemented to build on the successes of 2022.
13. Chorley has 2588 children aged 4-16 receiving free school meals. The programme will help address child food poverty during the school holidays and help support many families who struggle during this time.

#### **Corporate priorities**

14. 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	<b>Healthy, safe, and engaged communities</b>

#### **Background to the report**

15. Lancashire County Council have received funding from the government's HAF Programme for 2023/24. The objective of the programme is to deliver a range of school holiday activities for children between the ages of 4 and 16 who are eligible for

free school meals. This is the third year that Lancashire has received funding under this programme.

16. Chorley Inspire Youth Zone has co-ordinated to delivery of the HAF programme on behalf of Chorley Council, through a cooperative approach for 2022. They are the most experienced locally in working with children and young people and provide high quality services. It is considered that they have the infrastructure, knowledge, and partnerships to deliver the programme.
17. Inspire Youth Zone are the co-ordinator, mapping provision to meet the free school meal needs across the borough, managing the day to day operations, seeking, recruiting and monitoring delivery partners, collating and reporting attendance figures to Chorley Council for submission to LCC.
18. A Chorley Council Officer from the Communities Team works closely alongside to oversee the programme, ensuring all expected delivery is on track, all monitoring is achieved, and the programme is continuously improved.
19. The programme helps address child food poverty during the school holidays and help support many families who struggle, financially and from a care perspective, during this time.
20. In line with national HAF requirements, delivery of activities will be one week during Easter holiday, 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.
21. Food will be provided for all children and young people who participate.
22. 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.
23. For 2022 delivery, Chorley had 2588 children aged 4-16 receiving free school meals (School Census October 2021).
24. Free school meals by ward residents, breakdown:

<b>Ward</b>	<b>4 to 7</b>	<b>8 to 11</b>	<b>12 to 16</b>	<b>Total</b>
Adlington & Anderton	46	52	44	142
Buckshaw & Whittle	52	75	61	188
Chorley East	80	127	98	305
Chorley North & Astley	86	106	97	289

Chorley North East	26	26	24	76
Chorley North West	48	44	51	143
Chorley South East & Heath Charnock	64	80	69	213
Chorley South West	113	117	135	365
Clayton East, Brindle & Hoghton	72	98	95	265
Clayton West & Cuerden	46	54	56	156
Coppull	61	72	66	199
Croston, Mawdesley & Euxton South	25	32	36	93
Eccleston, Heskin & Charnock Richard	19	21	17	57
Euxton	31	35	30	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>2588</b>

25. The target for the programme to support 30% of the borough's 2,588 children on benefits-related, free school meals (FSM), 777 in total, which would total 18,648 places (days/meals) over the year.

## **2022 HAF Delivery and Implementation**

26. Free school meal allocation data at ward level has been used to map out which areas will be prioritised and the number of places available in each area.
27. It has become clear that schools are the most suitable venue for delivery due to their facilities, security and availability matching the expectations of the programme.
28. Partnerships with schools has been fundamental in providing safe and affordable provision, however, some schools in key areas have been reluctant to join as a venue or had conflicting schedules of building maintenance / developments.
29. The programme was delivered at 14 locations for holiday camp style provision, spread across the borough.
30. Day time, 'holiday camp' style provision has proven to attract mainly 4-11-year olds so alternative, less structured opportunities have been developed to allow 12-16 year olds more freedom and independence to participate on their own terms. Single day trips to local attractions and outdoor activities, vouchers for Escape golf, bowling and food, alongside detached youth workers visiting parks in evenings, targeting areas of deprivation have all been successful. All opportunities must incorporate a food offer.
31. The targeting of provision was facilitated by schools and social / health services who promote the provision to families they can identify as eligible / vulnerable, promoting the offer and sharing booking instructions.

32. A 15% variance is permitted, under the funding agreement, so that children identified as vulnerable, who are not entitled to free school meals, that would benefit from attendance, can participate.

### Budget

33. The Chorley allocation for 2022 was £282,878 with an additional £22,000 made available mid-December. Of the initial allowance, 6.5% was permitted to be used for coordination of the scheme in Chorley. All the initial and additional funding was utilised.

### HAF figures

#### 34. HAF figures – Summary of Easter provision

	Primary-aged	Secondary-aged
FSM-eligible / Non-SEND	455	220
FSM-eligible / SEND	50	30
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND	20	40
Total number of HAF-funded attendees	525	290

#### 35. HAF figures – Summary of summer provision

	Primary-aged	Secondary-aged
FSM-eligible / Non-SEND	531	299
FSM-eligible / SEND	69	26
Non-FSM-eligible / non-SEND	43	30
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND	23	14
Total number of HAF-funded attendees	666	369
Total number of days attended	6324	2129
Average number of days attended, per young person	9.5	6

#### 36. HAF figures – Summary of Christmas provision

	Primary-aged	Secondary-aged
FSM-eligible / Non-SEND	393	203
FSM-eligible / SEND	57	62

Non-FSM-eligible / non-SEND	55	62
Non-FSM-eligible / SEND	33	22
Total number of HAF-funded attendees	538	349
Total number of days attended	1438	599
Average number of days attended, per young person	2.6	1.7

### 37. HAF figures - Lancashire Summer Comparison

	Number of FSM eligible young people	Children and young people attended
Lancaster	4333	1035
Wyre	2828	463
Fylde	1305	578
Preston	5530	1881
<b>Chorley</b>	<b>2588</b>	<b>1035</b>
South Ribble	2508	1342
West Lancs	2986	682
Burnley	4452	981
Pendle	3522	802
Rosendale	2239	788
Hyndburn	3488	1268
Ribble Valley	645	247

### Areas of success

38. The number of attendees has exceeded the targets during each delivery period.
39. The number of delivery venues and partners has increased, allowing more attendees to access the provision, more easily.
40. Opportunities for 12-16-year olds to engage with provision has increased with vouchers for local entertainment venues and group trips.
41. Opportunities for children with additional needs or disabilities have increased, by working in partnership with LCC's Children and Family Wellbeing Service.
42. With operational processes now underway, more focus has been possible around secondary outcomes such as; food and nutrition quality, nutritional guidance for parents & carers, targeted health messaging and signposting to other forms of support.
43. The delivery partnership has been developed and is working well. All coordinators understand their roles and regular meetings are scheduled to plan delivery, development, and reporting.
44. Unfulfilled places is an issue across the country, where a young person has a place booked, but does not show up. Chorley's booking process, with a telephone call or in

person booking via a receptionist at Inspire Youth Zone has improved the number of fulfilled bookings.

45. Communication with delivery partners has improved, with group workshops, debrief meetings and 1:1 discussion about capacity and key areas for improvement.
46. Food provision has improved significantly this year, with all delivery partners providing hot, healthy meals which meet the food standards criteria, at Christmas.
47. Working alongside a local charity who provide peer support and social activities for families with children who have additional needs, a series of activities were provided where the whole family could participate. This was a different approach to improving SEND provision which will be further developed in the future.

### **Areas for Improvement**

48. Quality assurance visits to delivery venues during activities have highlighted areas for improvement in the form of centrally developed session plans which include enrichment, nutrition and wellbeing education through activities and take home resources for parents / carers providing information on health, wellbeing and resilience support.
49. With the programme extension for up to 3 years and having overcome the initial criticism from some members of the public about lack of support for non-FSM children, wider promotion has been better received and further reach/communication can now be planned.
50. More responsibility will be applied to delivery partners, to be proactive in reminding their booked attendees of their place in the lead up to delivery periods.
51. The opportunities for children with complex additional needs remains a nationwide challenge, with increased supervision costs and gap in capacity for skilled, experienced, staff to deliver provision.
52. Chorley Council were required to make interim payments before having confirmation of the legal agreement as there was significant delay between Chorley and LCC solicitors. New funding agreement between LCC and CBC needs to be processed and signed/sealed at the earliest opportunity so that the council can continue to develop and deliver the HAF programme.

### **Delivery of HAF 2023 and Recommendations**

53. The number of eligible children has increased to 2727 (schools census October 2022), an increase of 139.
54. The total amount of funding allocated for Chorley HAF 2023 is £288,622.20. 10% of this can be used for coordination, with 90% used for delivery and scheme improvements, as per the grant agreement.
55. To maintain safe staffing ratios and good quality food, the cost per place has increased due to the rising cost of living; as such the target number of places available per day will be reduced from 30% to 25%, which will equate to approx. 700 places per day.
56. Improvements to the booking system funded in the 2022 programme, will allow parents / carers more flexibility with booking places. They will be able to book the full 4 days

per week if they wish, but also single dates for families who have other plans during the holidays. This will help to reduce no shows and increase the number of individuals able to access support.

### **Climate change and air quality**

57. The work noted in this report has no impact on the Council's Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

### **Equality and diversity**

58. HAF is a government initiative by Department of Education with delivery aimed at a pre-defined cohort of school aged children who receive benefits-related free school meals.
59. However, were feasible, the programme will attempt to identify activity provision for children not receiving free school meals, who can pay to attend. This may be through gathering provision across the borough to easily communicate with families or providing a mixed arrangement of FSM places and paid for places depending on the local supply and demand for provision.
60. The programme will develop high-quality provision for children with SEND or additional needs who are in receipt of Free School Meals. This may be through making sure that activity providers plan how they will accommodate children with SEND or additional needs or making sure that those with more complex needs are able to access suitable provision, for example, by working with Special Schools.

### **Risk**

61. Below are some of the risks that are associated with the programme. However, as we have delivered the programme successfully in 2022 and delivery is planned to follow in a similar model, the likelihood of these risks occurring has been decreased. Risks would be:
- Ability to deliver Easter programme if all approvals, contracts, and agreements do not stay within planned timescales
  - Key partners which we propose to work with to deliver are unable to fulfil agreement due to unforeseen circumstances within their organisations
  - Poor uptake on the programme from FSM children
  - Difficulties securing activity partners/staffing to fulfil required places to be made available
  - 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**

62. The continuation of HAF funding has been confirmed by LCC. The funding is received by the Council as a grant via LCC and distributed as detailed with a small amount retained for co-ordination. The proposal here is to continue to distribute funds in the model which has proven to be successful in the current year. As such there should be no net impact upon Council budgets.



### Comments of the Monitoring Officer

63. There are no concerns with what is proposed from a Monitoring Officer perspective. An appropriate Legal agreement will need to be entered into with LCC.
64. The contracts for delivery of the HAF programme are to be awarded as per the report and members can see from the delivery that this can demonstrate best value due to the local delivery and services provided.

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