

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	23 March 2022
Title:	Approval to Spend for 2022 - 2025 – Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to spend in relation to Hampshire County Council's expenditure on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme which has a value over £2,000,000, in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Constitution.
2. This report seeks to
 - Give information on the value and anticipated Council spend under the Framework;
 - Request approval to spend in line with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to spend up to £10.3m for a Holiday Activities and Food Programme contract for a total period of three years from 2022 and 2025. Payments under the contract will be made as and when individual school holiday provision is commissioned.

Contextual Information

4. On 8 November 2020, the Government announced that the HAF pilot programme, which had provided healthy food and enriching activities to low-income children since 2018, would be expanded across the whole of England from 2021. In October 2021 the Government announced that HAF will be funded for the three financial years from 2022-2025. Grant allocations and requirements were published by the DfE on 20 December 2021.

5. Hampshire County Council has been allocated funding of up to £3,421,210 for 2022. It is anticipated that the DfE will award similar sums in 2023/4 and 2024/5 to HCC. The Council is able to allocate 15% of funded places to other vulnerable children and young people who do not quite meet the criteria for benefits-eligible free school meals.
6. School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs (such as food and childcare) and reduced incomes. For some children that can lead to a holiday experience gap - with children from disadvantaged families less likely to access organised out-of-school activities; more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health and are more likely to experience social isolation.
7. Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue and evidence suggests that they can have a positive impact on children and young people. It also shows they work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities, when they offer more than just breakfast or lunch, and when they involve children (and parents) in food preparation.
8. The aim of the HAF programme is to make free places available to children eligible for free school meals for the equivalent of at least four hours a day, four days a week and for six weeks a year. This covers four weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Christmas holidays. Organisations will also be able to offer additional places to fee paying families.
9. Across Hampshire, there are currently 33,405 children who are potentially eligible to access holiday places on the HAF programme based on actual FSM eligibility numbers from school census information.
10. The desired outcomes of the programme are to encourage children and young people to:
 - To eat more healthily over the school holidays;
 - To be more active during the school holidays;
 - To take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider education attainment;
 - To be safe and not to be socially isolated;
 - To have greater knowledge of health nutrition;
 - To be more engaged with school and other local services.
11. The HAF programme also aims to ensure that the children and families who participate in the programme develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting as well as being effectively signposted towards other information and support for example health, employment and education.
12. In order to enter into timely and cost-effective arrangements with providers, the County Council intends to procure an open framework for the Holiday

Activities and Food Programme. A framework is an agreement with providers to establish terms governing individual contracts that may be awarded during the life of the agreement. An open framework enables providers to join during the life of the contract, which enables the Council to benefit from new entrants to the market.

13. Approval to procure the open framework on behalf of Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council will be sought from the Director of Children's Services, in accordance with the relevant schemes of delegation. The anticipated total contract value for both Hampshire and Isle of Wight Councils is up to £11.6m over three years (2022-2025).
14. As required by Hampshire County Council's Contract Standing Orders, approval to spend is sought from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for spend to be committed under the open framework to the total value of £10.3m over the three year period 2022-2025.
15. The funding is provided by DfE grant, which is used for the purposes of procuring these services. The total spend figure allows for an uplift in the DfE allocation, which could increase if the number of children increases that are registered for benefits-eligible free school meals.
16. Hampshire County Council Children's Services is commissioning Holiday Activities with Food schemes for eligible children and young people. The framework will enable the HAF team to commission individual places, bespoke or specialist schemes for eligible children and their families, with the knowledge that the providers on the contract have met minimum standards and quality requirements. The process for providers being appointed to the open framework will ensure that due diligence is undertaken in advance of service delivery. The open framework will mean that pricing per place or per scheme is agreed upfront, enabling officers to call off with confidence and without the need for case-by-case negotiation with providers, which is time-consuming for both parties and can lead to delays in service delivery.

Finance

17. Hampshire County Council has been allocated funding of up to £3,421,210 for 2022 by the DfE. It is anticipated that the DfE will award similar sums in 2023/4 and 2024/5 to HCC.
18. Hampshire County Council's anticipated spend under the framework agreement is therefore up to £10.3m.

Consultation and Equalities

19. Provider engagement throughout the development and delivery of the 2021 HAF Programme has been used to inform the procurement exercise in

order to ensure that the service is designed effectively to meet need and be fit for purpose.

20. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this recommendation and is included in full below.

Other Key Issues

21. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the Council as public authority 'to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts. The Social Value is either defined in the Service Specification for a contract, for example asking the provider to use apprentices or employ people from disadvantaged groups. Alternatively, during the tender process, the provider is asked how it adds Social Value to a service.
22. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires the Council to incorporate human rights due diligence within procurement practices and supply chains and establishing shared awareness and common goals with providers in tackling modern slavery.
23. The Council, as contracting authority, has an obligation to shape the tendering processes to allow small to medium businesses fair access to winning contracts.

Climate Change.

24. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does. The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tool were both considered but were deemed not applicable to this report because the projects detailed within will not have a carbon emissions impact and are not vulnerable to climate change.

Conclusions

25. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to spend up to £10.3m for a Holiday Activities and Food Programme contract for a total period of three years from 2022 and 2025. Payments under the contract will be made as and when individual school holiday provision is commissioned.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
HAF Grant Recommendations	22 February 2021
HAF Grant Recommendations	8 June 2021
HAF Grant Recommendations	10 November 2021
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Department for Education: Guidance: Holiday activities and food programme 2022	January 2022

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Name of project or proposal (required): Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Grant Programme

Is this project a Transformation project? (required): Neither

Name of accountable officer (required): Suzanne Smith

Email (required): suzanne.smith2@hants.gov.uk

Department (required): Children's Services

Date of assessment (required): 14/02/2022

Is this a detailed or overview EIA? (required): Overview

Describe the current service or policy. This question has a limit of 700 characters; approximately 100 words (required):

The Department for Education (DfE) has provided every local authority in England funding to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities, for children eligible for benefits related free school meals. The programme covers the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays from 2022-2025. Hampshire County Council has been awarded a total of £3,421,210. This EIA covers the period from 2022-2025.

Geographical impact (required): All Hampshire

Describe the proposed change. This question has a limit of 700 characters; approximately 100 words (required):

Hampshire County Council intends to distribute its funds under an open Framework Agreement for the period from 2022-2025, rather than via termly grant rounds.

Who does this impact assessment cover? (required): Service users

Has engagement or consultation been carried out? (required): Yes

Describe the consultation or engagement you have performed or are intending to perform. This question has a limit of 700 characters; approximately 100 words (required):

Market engagement was undertaken with a range of providers and with schools to ensure that they were aware of the opportunity for funding, HAF in general and could apply for a grant, if interested. Particular focus was given to areas with known gaps in provision, such as rural areas.

Successful applicants will receive a briefing on the HAF principles and other key topics, such as safeguarding and inclusion.

Age (required): Positive

Impact (required): Children and young people (and their families) will benefit from the HAF grant programme as the funding is directed at school age children and young people.

Disability (required): Positive

Impact (required): Organisations funded by HAF are expected to offer inclusive provision so that children and young people with additional needs can attend.

Sexual orientation (required): Neutral

Race (required): Neutral

Religion or belief (required): Neutral

Gender reassignment (required): Neutral

Gender (required): Neutral

Marriage or civil partnership (required): Neutral

Pregnancy and maternity (required): Neutral

Poverty (required): Positive

Impact (required): The HAF funding is directed at children who are benefits eligible for Free School Meals and at other vulnerable children, either with an EHCP, or SEND, or known to social care, including early help, on a child protection plan or looked after. The funding will mean that they will be able to access free holiday activities and food during the school holidays from 2022-2025.

Rurality (required): Positive

Impact (required): The HAF funding is to support holiday activities throughout the county. This includes rural areas where activity schemes may not have traditionally operated. Funding will be used to prioritise these areas to encourage organisations to deliver in pockets of the county where there is a lack of existing provision.

Any other brief information which you feel is pertinent to this assessment (optional): N/A

Please confirm that the accountable officer has agreed the contents of this form (required): Yes

Appendix One

Project Title	Contract term & start date	Anticipated Hampshire County Council value (annual)	Anticipated Hampshire County Council value (total)	Total potential framework value (includes IOW spend)	Approval required
Holiday Activities and Food Programme	3 years	£3.43m	£10.3m	£11.6m	Approval to spend