



**Report of Chief Officer Customer Access and Welfare**

**Report to Director of Communities and Environment**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Subject: Department for Education's Holiday Activity and Food funding for 2021**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- On 8 November 2020, the Government announced that the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF), which has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018, will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021.
- The programme will cover the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2021, with £220m being available to local authorities for the programme across the country. Leeds has been allocated £3,532,450.
- Leeds City Council and partners have significant experience of running Holiday Activities and Food programmes, having supported healthy holiday activities since 2018.
- The 2021 Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Leeds 'Healthy Holidays' will build on the success of previous years and follow the same mixed delivery model undertaken since 2018. This will involve Leeds Community Foundation focussing on third sector provision across the district, and the Council delivering through schools and community hubs. This will ensure all areas of the city can be reached in a coordinated and targeted way.

## 2. Best Council Plan implications (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

- The Department for Education's Holiday Activities Funding contributes to the Best Council Plan focus of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities, and achieving the council's ambition for a strong economy and compassionate city. The Healthy Holidays activities support the Best City Priorities of Safe, Strong Communities, Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing, Child-Friendly City, Age-Friendly Leeds and Housing.

## 3. Resource implications

- Leeds City Council has been allocated £3,532,450 from the Department for Education's Holiday Activities Funding to delivery healthy holiday activities targeting children entitled to Free School Meals across the district for school holiday periods in 2021.
- Payments will be made in the following instalments on completion and submission of satisfactory planning reports;
  - March 2021- £355, 240
  - June 2021- up to 50% of the remaining funding
  - November 2021- up to 30% of the remaining funding
  - February 2022- up to 20% of the remaining funding
- Funding will be allocated to deliver a mixed model approach through Leeds Community Foundation, Leeds City Council community hubs and schools, and for activities to be used across all settings.

## Recommendations

The Director of Communities and the Environment is requested to;

- a) Accept the £3,532,450 Holiday and Activities funding from the Department for Education for 2021.
- b) Agree to the mixed model delivery approach whereby Leeds Community Foundation commission third sector provision across the district, and the Council deliver through schools and community hubs.
- c) Agree the approach and funding for Easter 2021 provision.
- d) Exempt this decision from call-in, in order to receive funding from the Department for Education at the earliest opportunity.

### 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to accept £3,532,450 of the Department for Education's Holiday Activities funding to deliver healthy activities funding across the district for children in families entitled to Free School Meals.
- 1.2 In addition based on experience gained over the past 3 years of running similar schemes in the city to seek approval for funding to be allocated to adopt a mixed delivery model working closely across Leeds City Council departments, with Leeds Community Foundation, and other organisations supporting the infrastructure of the delivery of the programme for example food supply and activity packs.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The Council has supported Healthy Holiday programmes in the city since 2018 and has recognised the importance of this work at a cross-directorate level. This work has also brought together support from the third sector and private sector and is an example of how the city is coming together to tackle food poverty and insecurity and support families out of poverty.
- 2.2 Over the last 3 years LCC has worked in partnership with Leeds Community Foundation (LCF) in order to raise funds for Healthy Holiday initiatives to be delivered across the city. The City's commitment to this work, has resulted in successful applications to Department for Education's £9 million Holiday Activity and Food programme in 2019 (£507,000) and 2020 (£550,000). The total funding from the Council, private sector and government totalled £650,000 in 2019 and £840,000 in 2020.
- 2.3 Beneficiaries of the programme are children and families accessing Free School Meals (FSM), and those living in poverty. A healthy meal/food option is typically offered alongside a variety of activities e.g. educational, exercise, social opportunities.
- 2.4 This model has traditionally been delivered by LCF commissioning all 3<sup>rd</sup> sector/community group delivery, and with the Council complementing this with in house provision – delivered through Schools and Community Hubs. This collaborative approach has brought about many significant outcomes for Leeds.
- 2.5 During 2020, funding for Healthy Holiday Projects from the Department for Education, Leeds City Council and the private sector totalled approximately £840,000 with Leeds Community Foundation (LCF) managing the delivery of the programme. The Healthy Holidays Covid-19 Response delivery funded 51 projects that reached 15,489 unique children and 5,496 unique adults. The Healthy Holidays Summer delivery funded 51 projects which reached 4,995 unique children and 592 unique adults.

## **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 On 8 November 2020, the Government announced that the Holiday Activities and Food programme, will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The £220 million programme will cover the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2021. Previously the £9m funding was only available through an application fund for the summer holiday period.
- 3.2 As was the case in previous years, the focus of the programme will be on children eligible for benefits-related free school meals. Local authorities are asked to ensure that the offer of free holiday club provision is available for all children eligible for free school meals (approximately 31,000 children in Leeds), though there is no expectation that all eligible children will participate. Free places must be made available for the equivalent of at least four hours a day, four days a week and for six weeks a year, covering four weeks in the summer and a week's worth of provision in each of the Easter and Christmas holidays in 2021.
- 3.3 The DfE have stated that the key objectives of the programme is for children who attend provision is 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 education attainment
- be safe and not to be socially isolated
- have greater knowledge of health nutrition
- be more engaged with school and other local service.

- 3.4 Full details of how the programme should be delivered and its remit including details on coordination, funding, eligibility, partnership and standards are attached in the guidance document in appendix one of this report. The guidance for the scheme is broadly in line with previous years and the best practice elements recommended have been adopted in Leeds over the last three years.
- 3.5 The funding received will require a significant scale up of the programme delivered over the past 3 years in Leeds. The experience gained places the Council and partners in a good position to be able to deliver the programme across the whole of the Leeds Metropolitan District, in every ward in the city. In previous years due to limited funding the scheme was concentrated in areas of greatest need.
- 3.6 Expanding the mixed model approach to delivery with Leeds Community Foundation focussing on third sector provision across the district, and the Council delivering through schools and community hubs, will ensure all areas of the city can be reached in a coordinated and targeted way.
- 3.7 Overall allocations of the funding throughout the year will be based on the programmes undertaken since 2018. Approximately 35% of funding will be allocated to Leeds Community Foundation, 35% community hubs and schools, with the remaining 30% of funding be made available for all projects to add provision and purchase services or activities which will be shared across the three elements of the programme.
- 3.8 Reports detailing the plans for delivery for each holiday period are required by the Department for Education, and will also be brought forward for approval through delegated decision making process. Funding breakdowns for each period will also be included within the reports.
- 3.9 Due to timescales the provision for Easter has been determined and is detailed in the appendix to this report. In terms of funding £220,000 will be allocated to Leeds Community Foundation to commission third sector providers. Community hubs and schools will receive £180,000 and additional funding of up to £115,000 is being made available for additional resources including activity packs which can be used across the three schemes. Any funding unspent and remaining will be rolled forward to the summer provision.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Strong partnerships have been the basis for the success of previous programs and will help shape 2021 programme. Key stakeholders include Catering Leeds, representatives from LCF, Children and Families, Active Leeds and Financial Inclusion Team. A steering group of relevant officers and partners is being established to oversee the development and delivery of the programme.
- 4.1.2 All relevant Executive Members have been briefed on the guidance and remit of the funding and the proposed approach for 2021.

4.1.3 Regular regional meetings with the Department for Education have been scheduled throughout 2021 to clarify approaches.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

4.2.1 A key focus of the Holiday Activity and Food programme is to support people suffering hardship, poverty and inequality, and therefore issues of equality, diversity, cohesion and integration are key aspects of this work. The programme is also reviewed annually as part of the annual Equality Improvement Priority updates.

4.2.2 According to evaluations of previous Healthy Holiday Programmes children participating in Healthy Holidays projects experience a reduction in social isolation and ASB as well as reduced risks of violence, neglect, grooming and crime. In addition the programmes were able to address hunger, isolation, inactivity and digital exclusion issues which specifically related to the Covid 19 pandemic for both children and their families.

4.2.3 Healthy Holidays helps to foster positive relations and community cohesion between people from different groups through participation in fun activities and projects as well as food provision.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The Holiday Activity and Food programme directly relates to many of the Best Council Plan priorities, including: tackling poverty, helping everyone benefit from the economy to their full potential, reducing health inequalities and supporting active lifestyles, making Leeds the best city for children and young people to grow up in, keeping people safe from harm and promoting community respect and resilience.

4.3.2 The scheme brings together partners from all sectors building successful effective partnerships for the benefit of the city and its residents. This integrated approach to delivering services also contributes to the city's strategic priority of delivering joint action in order to build safe and strong communities.

4.3.3 This work supports the delivery of the Inclusive Growth Strategy, one of the three pillars that underpin the Best Council Plan, and reduces the impact of poverty and inequality. Additionally, the work supports the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4.3.4 Although the key participants in all aspects of the programme are children in deprived areas, the aim of the project is to be inclusive to all - sustainable funding will allow future projects to be planned, delivered, resourced and promoted to support even more families throughout the city. The long term ambition is to have consistent and co-ordinated provision for the school holidays.

### Climate Emergency

4.3.5 A key aspect both in relation to poverty and the Climate Emergency is the redirection of surplus food to foodbanks. Waste food is a contributor to climate change as it results in methane emissions which have a greater impact on climate change than the equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub>.

4.3.6 Food Provision for Healthy Holidays is provided in conjunction with Fareshare, and Rethink Food which work to redistribute surplus food in the city.

4.3.7 In 2020, Healthy Holidays projects have collaborated with the Uniform Reuse project coordinated by Zero Waste Leeds, to help more families access free, good

quality second hand uniform. In Leeds, 4000 tonnes of clothing is sent to household waste bins every year. 163,000 kg of CO2 could be saved if every new starter in primary and secondary school in Leeds this year had one second-hand skirt or pair of trousers.

#### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 4.4.1 Leeds City Council has been allocated £3,532,450 from the Department for Education's Holiday Activities Funding to delivery healthy holiday activities targeting children entitled to Free School Meals across the district for school holiday periods in 2021.
- 4.4.2 Payments will be made in the following instalments on completion and submission of satisfactory planning reports;
- March 2021- £355, 240
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  - November 2021- up to 30% of the remaining funding
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- 4.4.3 Funding will be allocated to deliver a mixed model approach through Leeds Community Foundation, Leeds City Council community hubs and schools, and for activities to be used across all settings.
- 4.5 Reports detailing the plans for delivery for each holiday period are required by the Department for Education, and will also be brought forward for approval through delegated decision making process. Funding breakdowns for each period will also be included within the reports.

#### **4.6 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.6.1 The Council has funded Leeds Community Foundation to deliver a Healthy Holiday Programme since 2018. Council support has helped Leeds Community Foundation leverage match funding through the private sector and Department for Education's Holiday Activity and Food Programme and recognises how healthy holiday projects help engage whole families in wider support networks, beyond food - to help break the poverty cycle. Leeds Community Foundation is therefore a key partner in this programme. A legal agreement setting out the terms and conditions of the funding will be put in place between Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation for the 2021 Healthy Holiday's programme.
- 4.6.2 Call-in is being waived in this instance in order that the Council is able to receive the first instalment of funding from the Department for Education at the earliest opportunity.

#### **4.7 Risk management**

- 4.7.1 Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation will ensure that all activity undertaken closely follows the guidance outlined and measures implemented by the National Government and Public Health with regards to COVID-19.
- 4.7.2 Although welcome the significant increase in funding from 2020 means that careful consideration needs to be given to the legacy and sustainability of the programme

for future years. To date no indication has been given to whether the funding levels for 2021 will be maintained in future years.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The expansion of the Holiday Activity and Food programme by the Department for Education, will ensure that more children eligible for Free School Meals across the city have access to enriching activities and healthy food over the holiday periods in 2021.
- 5.2 Leeds City Council and partners have significant experience of running Holiday Activities and Food programmes, having supported healthy holiday activities since 2018. The 2021 Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Leeds 'Healthy Holidays' will build on the success of previous years and follow the same mixed delivery model undertaken since 2018.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director of Communities and the Environment is requested to;
  - a) Accept the £3,532,450 Holiday and Activities funding from the Department for Education for 2021.
  - b) Agree to the mixed model delivery approach whereby Leeds Community Foundation commission third sector provision across the district, and the Council deliver through schools and community hubs.
  - c) Agree the approach and funding for Easter 2021 provision.
  - d) Exempt this decision from call-in, in order to receive funding from the Department for Education at the earliest opportunity.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 Department for Education Holiday Activity and Food programme guidance for local authorities
- 7.2 Briefing note on Easter provision

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.