



CABINET

Tuesday, 05 April 2022

Subject	Acceptance of funding from Suffolk County Council for management of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme for 2022/23 and the following two years.
Report by	Councillor Letitia Smith Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism
Supporting Officer	Nicole Rickard Head of Communities Nicole.rickard@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 07766998074 Joss Mullett Communities Officer Joss.Mullett@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 07920 380535

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval to accept funding of just over £520,000 from Suffolk County Council (via the Department of Education) for the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme in East Suffolk for the financial year 2022/23 and similar amounts in the following two years.

Options:

The programme was managed by Suffolk County Council in 2021/22. This is an option for the current and future years, but East Suffolk Council has worked closely with SCC on the programme, promoting the opportunity to deliver activities in the programme to potential providers and monitoring the impact of the programme. We believe that we can add value by managing the programme in East Suffolk, albeit still working closely with the team at the County Council.

The funding includes an element for staffing which will enable us to employ additional staff to co-ordinate the programme, working alongside the Communities Officer who currently leads on the HAF programme.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet agree that the Council should accept funding of £522,562 (£486,562 for delivery and £36,000 for staffing) from Suffolk County Council to administer the Holiday Activity and Food programme for East Suffolk for 2022/23 and the following two years (the funding amount in 2023/4 and 2024/5 may vary slightly).

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Regular meetings are held with Suffolk County Council to plan and monitor the HAF programme. The Cabinet Member receives reports on the programme at her monthly briefing meetings.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

The Council's Enabling Communities Strategy emphasises that *"We want to make sure that we do not just work with those who shout the loudest but find those individuals, families and communities who need our help the most. One way of doing this is using data and intelligence to help us to target our work to those areas that most need our support"*. The HAF programme targets families whose children are accessing free school meals, with the aim of ensuring that these children have opportunities to be active and engaged and be provided with at least one meal a day for four days a week in the three longest school holidays (Easter, Summer and Christmas).

Environmental:

There are no specific environmental benefits, although some of the providers may offer young people the opportunity to participate in projects to improve and enhance the environment.

Equalities and Diversity:

Age is one of ten Protected Characteristics identified by East Suffolk Council (the nine protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act plus deprivation/socio-economic disadvantage). The HAF programme supports young people in families on lower incomes and therefore has a positive impact on both the Age (Youth People) and Deprivation protected characteristics. There is separate provision organised at Suffolk level for young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (Disabilities protected characteristic).

Financial:

East Suffolk Council will manage the HAF programme in East Suffolk working closely with Suffolk County Council. As outlined above, just over £486k is available for allocation to providers for delivery of the programme, plus £36k towards staffing costs to manage the programme.

Human Resources:

The Programme will be overseen by the Head of Communities, Communities Manager and lead Communities Officer and a new, part-time post will be created within the Communities Team to act as Project Manager.

ICT:

None

Legal:

Advice has been sought from the Legal, Data and Procurement Teams in the development of the HAF programme around their specific areas of specialism.

Risk:

The programme consists of a range of providers delivering different activities across the District. The main risks are therefore:

- not securing sufficient providers to provide an attractive and varied offer across the District
- limited variety in activities in each location across the six weeks
- young people not having equal access to HAF provision in some parts of the District

These risks will be mitigated by a comprehensive marketing campaign, including through our Community Partnerships and via Community Action Suffolk both to secure providers and to attract participants.

External Consultees:

ESC is working closely with Suffolk County Council on the development of the HAF programme in the district. All organisations who delivered activities as part of the 2021/22 HAF programme have been asked to provide monitoring information so that learning can be captured from previous rounds of the scheme.

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			
<p>The HAF programme is intended to fill a gap in support for lower income families in Suffolk during the school holidays, with a particular focus on the longer Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays.</p> <p>P07 talks about using data and intelligence to provide a <i>'better experience for individuals, families and communities. We will take a targeted, place-based approach to tackling, deprivation, hidden needs and the challenges of rural areas – helping communities to access the tools to identify and tackle their own needs'</i>. The premise of HAF is to provide children from lower income families with the opportunity to engage in stimulating physical activities and enable access to food for six weeks of the school holidays (one at Easter, four in the Summer and one – or 2 + 2 - at Christmas).</p>			

The description of P08 is *'We will provide the environment and opportunities for everyone to lead healthy, active, fulfilling and safe lives. We will connect communities together and help individuals and families to be more resilient, achieve their full potential and age well. We will ensure our communities are safe, helping communities to address issues as early as possible'*. HAF clearly contributes to this ambition in that it is about providing the opportunities for young people to be healthy and active through participation in a diverse range of activities and to access at least one healthy meal per day.

The HAF programme also contributes to P06 in that a number of the Community Partnerships have identified young people as a priority.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	<p>The Holiday Activity and Food programme was first introduced by the Government in 2019, with the aim of supporting families on low incomes by providing access to free, enriching activity and food to children of school age eligible for free school meals (FSM) meals during the school holidays. The timeline to date has been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 - Suffolk was one of eight pilot counties to deliver the HAF programme over the Summer • 2020 - second pilot year in Suffolk, for the summer holiday only, but seriously affected by covid • 2021 - national roll out covering Easter, Summer and Christmas • 2022 - the first of three years continued funding
1.2	<p>As outlined above, a partial programme ran in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and this was managed by Suffolk County Council. In 2021/22, East Suffolk Council was actively involved in promoting the opportunity for a range of providers to contribute to the delivery of the programme and for promoting the programme to local families once it was agreed, but Suffolk County Council vetted the providers, held the grant agreements and monitored the programme.</p>
1.3	<p>For 2022/23, East Suffolk Council has been offered the option of developing, managing and overseeing the whole programme for the District. West Suffolk Council held a similar role in 2021/22 for the programme in West Suffolk.</p>
1.4	<p>The role of ESC would include undertaking due diligence on providers, obtaining and checking key documentation (insurance, risk assessments etc), developing and agreeing grant agreements and managing payments to providers. Reporting to Government and overall responsibility would still sit with SCC</p>

2 Current position	
2.1	<p>The HAF programme guidance sets out the seven standards to be met by providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food provision - at least one meal a day (breakfast, lunch or tea). All food provided at the holiday club (including snacks) must meet school food standards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriching activity - holiday clubs must provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to develop new skills or knowledge, consolidate existing skills and knowledge, try out new experiences and have fun and socialise • Physical activity - all children and young people participating in the HAF programme should engage in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day. This does not have to be in the form of a structured activity session, and can include active travel, free play and sports, but should offer a variety of types and intensities of physical activity to develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength. • Nutritional information - provision must include an element of nutritional education each day aimed at improving knowledge and awareness of healthy eating for children. This could include activities such as getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, growing fruit and vegetables, taste tests, discussing food and nutrition, including food and nutrition in other activities • Signposting - HAF providers should be able to provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families • Policies & procedures - All providers must be able to demonstrate that they have in place relevant and appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding, including the recruitment of staff and volunteers, health and safety, relevant insurance policies, accessibility and inclusiveness • Food education for families and carers - HAF providers should make available weekly training and advice sessions for parents, carers or other family members e.g. advice on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food. This could be combined with the nutritional education aspect of the programme, for example, by inviting children and their families to prepare and eat a meal together.
2.2	<p>The dates to be covered by the HAF Programme in 2022 are as follows:</p> <p>Easter (minimum offer of 4 days) - 11th – 22nd April</p> <p>Summer (minimum offer of 16 days) - 22nd July – 31st August</p> <p>December (minimum offer of 4 days or 2+2) - 19th – 30th December</p> <p>Each 'day' must include at least 4 hours of provision in total.</p> <p>Some of the holiday dates in some of the schools close to the Norfolk border will vary but the HAF will be available for their specific dates (the ones above are for Suffolk only).</p>

2.3	<p>In terms of eligibility, the HAF programme is open to school aged children (from Reception to Year 11) who receive Free School Meals. Children in reception (years 1 & 2) must be eligible for Universal FSM and Benefit-related FSM.</p> <p>Local authorities have discretion to use up to 15% of their funding to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of benefits-related free school meals but who we believe could benefit from HAF provision. This may include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children assessed by the local authority as being in need, at risk or vulnerable • Young carers • Looked-after children or previously looked after children • Children with an EHC plan (education, health and care) • Children who have low attendance rates at school or who are at risk of exclusion • Children living in areas of high deprivation or from low-income households who are not in receipt of free school meals • Children in transition phases between nursery and primary school or primary and secondary school • Areas of concern (i.e. diversionary activities) <p>This list is not exhaustive, and it is open to ESC and SCC to decide which children should benefit from the 15% flexible funding element of their HAF funding.</p>
	<p>Activities Unlimited have been commissioned to deliver specific SEND provision across Suffolk which will target young people with complex needs. We are keen to ensure that the main programme and the Activities Unlimited programme closely align.</p>

3 How to address current situation

3.1	<p>The proposal is to allocate the East Suffolk funding by Community Partnership area, with 50% of the allocation divided equally between the eight areas and 50% allocated on the basis of the number of children on Free School Meals within the Community Partnership area. This formula should recognise both deprivation and the increased costs involved in providing activities in rural areas.</p>															
3.2	<p>The proposed allocation is therefore as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="300 1637 1331 2047"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="300 1637 836 1720">Community Partnership</th> <th data-bbox="836 1637 1123 1720">% Free Schools Meals in East Suffolk</th> <th data-bbox="1123 1637 1331 1720">Amount (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="300 1720 836 1803">Beccles, Bungay Halesworth and Villages</td> <td data-bbox="836 1720 1123 1803">11</td> <td data-bbox="1123 1720 1331 1803">£57,170</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="300 1803 836 1886">Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and Villages</td> <td data-bbox="836 1803 1123 1886">15.5</td> <td data-bbox="1123 1803 1331 1886">£68,118</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="300 1886 836 1968">Lowestoft and Northern Parishes</td> <td data-bbox="836 1886 1123 1968">39.5</td> <td data-bbox="1123 1886 1331 1968">£125,776</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="300 1968 836 2047">Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages</td> <td data-bbox="836 1968 1123 2047">6.5</td> <td data-bbox="1123 1968 1331 2047">£46,223</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Community Partnership	% Free Schools Meals in East Suffolk	Amount (£)	Beccles, Bungay Halesworth and Villages	11	£57,170	Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and Villages	15.5	£68,118	Lowestoft and Northern Parishes	39.5	£125,776	Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages	6.5	£46,223
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	Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsular	5	£42,574
	Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages	5	£42,574
	Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley	6.5	£46,223
	Felixstowe Peninsular	10.5	£55,467
		100%	£484,126
	<p>The remaining £2,436 would be used to purchase breakfast kits for the providers to enable them to offer a light breakfast to children who have not eaten before arriving at the sessions. This is based on feedback from the Christmas 2021 programme where a number of providers fed back that some children were struggling to concentrate and participate in activity sessions as they had not had breakfast that morning.</p>		
3.3	<p>A key aspect of a successful 2022/23 HAF programme will be promoting the opportunity to deliver sessions (ideally across all three holidays) as widely as possible to as many local providers as possible and encourage a range of different types of provision. Providers will be asked to outline their methods of outreach in their proposal e.g. school's portal, local networks (Integrated Neighbourhood Teams etc). As developed by ESC for 2021, there will be an interactive map providing an overview of all offers in the District.</p>		
3.4	<p>We are currently working with SCC to explore the option to provide FSM children with HAF vouchers/codes that they could use to sign up for courses to make it easier for parents and guardians to understand the range of options available in their area.</p>		

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	<p>The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme is an important element of the support available to children and young people from low-income families and provides them with an opportunity to access enriching activities to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing as well as at least one nutritionally balanced meal each day for four days a week during key holiday periods.</p>
4.2	<p>This provision is likely to be even more in demand in 2022 given the impact of cost-of-living increases combined with the end of the additional £20 per week Universal Credit payment and continuing low wages in East Suffolk on family budgets.</p>

Appendices

Appendices - None

Background reference papers: None