

Subject:	Holiday Activity and Food Programme	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	16/06/2021
Report of:	Director of Communities	Portfolio Holder:	Health and Leisure
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet agree that the 2021/22 Holiday Activity and Food Programme be delivered by Rossendale Leisure Trust and a Memorandum of Understanding between Rossendale Council and Lancashire County Council be signed to facilitate this.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To outline the government funded Holiday Activity and Food Programme and seek permission for the work to be delivered by Rossendale Leisure Trust through a Service Level Agreement between the Trust and Lancashire County Council. Rossendale Council are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Lancashire County Council to accept these arrangements.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 8 November 2020, the government announced that the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) was to be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The programme has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018.

The programme will cover the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021. Easter provision has already been provided online, centrally by Lancashire County Council.

3.2 Around £220 million has been made available nationally to upper tier local authorities to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities. The programme will be available to children in every local authority in England who receive free school meals and are aged 4 – 16. Lancashire County Council expect each district to deliver its own bespoke programme. Rossendale is to receive c£200k in funding to deliver the programme.

3.3 The expectation is that there will be 4 days of activity per week, providing a minimum of 4 hours daily, for 4 weeks during the school summer holidays and an additional week of activities during the Christmas holiday break. A meal (this can be hot or packed lunch) that meets school meal nutritional standards must be provided with each activity.

3.4 The programme will primarily provide free activities and food to children in receipt of free school meals. 85% of places must be taken by children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). Currently there are 2,306 children in Rossendale in receipt of Free School Meals. The funding is based on expected take up of the scheme which is 35%. Lobbying is taking place nationally to increase the funding to cover all children on Free School Meals. Work is ongoing with Food Banks to see what additional provision can be made for

children on FSM that do not want to participate in the activities and those others not on FSM but who may not have enough food.

It is expected that the programme will also deliver places for other children by linking closely with any existing or planned provision (15% of HAF provision can be filled by children not on FSM). The Council do not have the required capacity or skills to deliver the programme in house. Many Lancashire councils are partnering with their Leisure Trusts to deliver the scheme. Rossendale Leisure Trust currently deliver similar holiday programmes, a significant school and holiday coaching programme. They are perfectly placed to deliver this scheme on behalf of the Council. It is therefore recommended that RLT deliver the programme on behalf of the Council and LCC are instructed to assign lead body status to RLT, to ensure successful delivery.

- 3.5 The Trusts proposal for the delivery of the scheme is to be agreed with the HAF Steering Group, which is newly established to support the programme. Currently, the District Coordinator and Head of Partnerships at RLT are using evidence and insight to prepare a recommended delivery model involving community partners and delivery by RLT coaching team, and locations for delivery. Cllr Ashworth is joining the group along with the Council's Communities Team. There is a draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Group which outlines its purpose and responsibilities
- 3.6 Due to the fast pace and expectations to deliver a complex programme, RLT has had to recruit the required District Coordinator at risk. The staff member has been seconded from within RLT. All fellow districts have had to do the same due to the tight timescales attached to the programme. In addition, RLT with RBC support, have had to start the coordination of the programme to ensure the programme is as effective and far reaching as possible.
- 3.7 It is recommended that the Trust deliver the work on behalf of the Council and that Lancashire County Council enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Leisure Trust directly. This benefits the Council in that it will not be the accountable body for the delivery of the scheme and the Council is not required to enter into two separate legal agreements; one with Lancashire County Council and the other with the Trust. Instead the Council will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Lancashire County Council to agree to the Trust being commissioned directly by Lancashire County Council to deliver the scheme. There will be council officers and an elected member included in the working group to ensure Council input and oversight.
- 3.8 It is important to note that for those Children that are not in receipt of Free School Meals, our excellent local food banks will continue to support families in need at all times and especially during the school holidays. The Council will continue to support this work.

4. RISK

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- Not delivering the programme would result in around 800 children not receiving activity and food support in Rossendale
 - The above arrangement makes Rossendale Leisure Trust the accountable body and responsible for any non-delivery.
 - The Council will have suitable oversight through the working group arrangements

5. FINANCE

- 5.1 The Rossendale HAF programme is allocated £201,946.73 for delivery and an additional

£9,000 to pay for a part time District Coordinator (salary and oncosts) for 2.5 days per week from 1 May to 31 October 2021.

5.2 The District Coordinator role ends before the HAF programme has completed delivery. It is understood that all districts with LCC, are making a case to government for additional funding to cover this essential role for November and December 2021 to complete delivery and evaluation.

5.3 Currently there are no pre-determined KPIs attached to HAF, but LCC are seeking 30-35% of children in receipt of FSM, to access the programme.

5.4 Whilst the Council are a signatory to the tripartite Memorandum of understanding along with LCC and RLT, LCC are paying the grant direct to RLT with the Council having no accountability. However the MOU states that if the Council participates in any aspect of the Project it will become accountable.

6. LEGAL

6.1 The Council will be required to sign a Memorandum of understanding with Lancashire County Council and whilst this is not legally binding, the Council will make best efforts to comply with this.

6.2 Rossendale Leisure Trust will enter into the Grant Funding Agreement with Lancashire County Council, however council officers and members will sit on the HAF steering group to ensure robust governance arrangements are in place and contribute to a successful implementation and delivery of the scheme.

7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The scheme will be delivered in strict accordance with National Government Guidance which has considered equalities implications. Using Free School Meals as the key criteria may exclude some children that are still considered in need. We will continue to work with our local food banks to support all families.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The delivery of the HAF programme will contribute to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for many young people in Rossendale. The Trust are well placed to deliver a successful programme given their experience. The Council do not have the necessary staff capacity or experience to deliver such a programme. It is recommended that Rossendale Leisure Trust deliver the programme on the Council's behalf and the Memorandum of Understanding signed to facilitate this.

No background papers.