

Report to Paul Wagstaff, Assistant Director (Education & Skills)

July 2022

Allocation of Funding for the 2022 Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Report by Derry Richardson, Head of Service – Commercial and Contracting

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

The Department for Education (DfE) have 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 (FSM). Referred to as the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) the funding provided is for the Easter, summer and Christmas Holidays; the County Council has an allocation of up to £1,746,440 for the 2022 HAF programme.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) have been received from a range of organisations in West Sussex to provide activities and food during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. Following an evaluation of these EOI a range of organisations were awarded funding for one week of the Easter holidays; this resulted in the expenditure of £291,172.

As the provision for the summer holidays will be for a 4-week period this will result in expenditure of over £500k, requiring an officer key decision. This report seeks approval to distribute the funding to organisations whose offer has met the required criteria and outlines the proposed arrangements for the remainder of the funding allocation the County Council will receive.

Recommendations

The Assistant Director (Education and Skills) is asked to approve:-

- (1) The award of Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme summer grants to the organisations identified in Appendix A up to a total value of £970,265.
- (2) The allocation of further HAF funds to the anticipated value of £30,000, to assist providers with delivering the food offer in specific circumstances and to ensure inclusivity for children with higher needs as described in paragraph 2.4 of the report.
- (3) The allocation of HAF funds to an anticipated value of £200,000 to providers for a programme for the Christmas holiday

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The government's [Holiday Activities and Food programme](#) has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children in pilot authorities since 2018 and expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The Department for Education (DfE) have 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 (FSM).
- 1.2 The HAF programme makes free holiday club places plus a meal 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. Organisations who run the clubs will also be able to offer additional places to fee paying families.
- 1.3 School holidays can be particular 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 more likely to experience social isolation.
- 1.4 The desired outcomes of the programme are to encourage children and young people:
 - a) To eat more healthily over the school holidays;
 - b) To be more active during the school holidays;
 - c) To take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and well-being along with their wider education attainment;
 - d) To be safe and not to be socially isolated;
 - e) To have greater knowledge of health nutrition;
 - f) To be more engaged with school and other local services.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 2021 was the first year that the County Council received funding for co-ordinating HAF. The Council invited organisations to make expressions of interest to deliver an offer of activities and food over the holiday periods and in July 2021 the Director of Education and Skills approved the allocation of funding to various organisations who met the required criteria (Decision [OKD10 \(21/22\)](#) refers).
- 1.7 The DfE evaluated the national 2021 HAF programme and found that children were more likely to participate in sporting activities and arts and crafts as a result of attending a HAF club.
 - 82% of children surveyed said the holiday club made them feel safe
 - 81% said that attending HAF helped them make new friends
 - 77% said they felt more confident

- 71% reported they learned something new
- 23% of children accessing HAF nationally had SEND

1.8 West Sussex County Council have been allocated funding of up to £1,746,440 for the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2022.

HAF Programme in West Sussex

1.9 Across West Sussex, there are in the region of 16,000 children who are potentially eligible to access holiday places funded by the HAF programme in 2022. This number fluctuates as families fall in and out of eligibility.

1.10 The council coordinated 2 holiday programmes in 2021, for the Summer and Christmas holidays, and 1 during 2022 for the Easter Holidays. The offer and range of activities has expanded over time and now includes skateboarding, forest and beach school, arts and crafts, computer coding, drama as well as outdoor pursuits and sports clubs.

1.11 It is parental choice to book places with clubs. This means that some children will attend multiple clubs for multiple days and others will just attend once. It can also lead to children being absent on the day of the club (defined as 'No shows') this could be due to sickness or down to a preference on the day.

	Summer 2021 (4 weeks)	Christmas 2021 (1 week)	Easter 2022 (1 week)
Provision			
No. of Providers	32	30	36
Total HAF Places	22,316	6,100	7,358
Total 'No shows' or absences	Not known	Not known	1,783

Children Attending			
No. of Unique children	1,990	695	1,790
No. of Unique FSM Eligible children	1,587	683	1,403
Average No. of days children attended	4.5	2.5	3

1.12 All providers have shared the positive feedback they received from parents and officers have carried out parent surveys to gather their opinions. Parents value the HAF programme for a variety of reasons including that their children were able to try something new. Providers were proud to be part of HAF and warmly welcomed new children. Three quarters of them will continue to offer HAF places during 2022.

1.13 The programme in 2022 is following the same model used in 2021. The County Council will 'passport' the funding via a grant scheme to organisations meeting the HAF criteria.

1.14 A number of improvements have been made since last year including the provision of nutritious food, targeting the funds to areas of need and to support the take up of places by eligible families, as well as to administrative processes and data collection and analysis.

- 1.15 A HAF Steering Group brings together officers from across council teams and professions to support and challenge. Their focus is to identify further improvements for future HAF programmes.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The Council invited grant applications from organisations able to provide holiday activity and food schemes during the 2022 school holidays. Applications had to demonstrate they could deliver the DfE HAF programme outcomes identified in paragraph 1.4.
- 2.2 There are three submission windows to allow providers to make their application for funding for all or each of the holidays. Applications are looked at by an Evaluation Panel of council officers and follow up conversations are undertaken with organisations to ensure quality and best value. There is a recognition of health inequalities in certain areas of the County and the Panel seek to ensure that provision is targeted and accessible in areas of deprivation where a higher proportion of families will benefit.
- 2.3 The summer 2022 programme will offer 32,041 free places of holiday activities and a meal from 41 providers. The activities should cater for least 2,254 eligible children each day and will require a funding allocation of £952765. This has the potential to reach 12% of children eligible for benefits related free school meals in the county.
- 2.4 An additional £30,000 will fund the cost of meals for 8 providers who are unable to provide food themselves due to venue restraints. It will also act as a discretionary fund for providers to request monies from, thereby enabling them to support children with higher needs that may need additional supervision to access the programme.
- 2.5 The summer HAF Programme will also include places for children from refugee families in West Sussex funded by an additional £100,000 from the County Council's Communities Department.
- 2.6 Providers are required to report back to the Council on the delivery and outcomes of the holiday activities. This includes numbers of children and young people participating, provider evaluation, voice of the child evaluation and case studies to ensure that the funding is reaching the cohort that it is intended for.

Food and Nutrition

- 2.7 The council is working directly with two local catering companies, Little Tums and Pioneer Catering, to ensure that all providers have arrangements for hot food.
- 2.8 Chartwells, the schools catering contractor offer free educational resources to providers on health and nutrition.
- 2.9 Webinars are being offered by Public Health and the Free School Meal Team to underpin and expand provider's knowledge. Sessions cover key messages on diet and nutrition as well as support for the educational element and engagement with parents/carers. They are an opportunity to discuss the

challenges providers face on this aspect of the HAF Programme and help them to overcome issues.

- 2.10 Waitrose has chosen HAF as its '[Give a little love](#)' campaign, which aims to provide support for families in need within the community and a number of local stores would like to help. The council is exploring this partnership to support the delivery of lunches, allowing us to get more value for money from the DfE allocated funding.

Training

- 2.11 West Sussex County Council work with Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council to ensure HAF provision is of a consistently high standard across Sussex and to join up training opportunities.
- 2.12 As a minimum, sufficient safeguarding policies and procedures need to be in place. An online introductory course delivered by [Safety Net](#) has been made available in all authorities to providers and their staff, to ensure they have a clear understanding about their roles and responsibilities.
- 2.13 The council is partnering with Young Gamers & Gamblers Education Trust to deliver training on Gambling and Online Gaming addiction to providers. Our hope is that all HAF providers will have a good understanding of the support that is available to help families in need.
- 2.14 A process to track all training offered to HAF providers is being developed. Mandated courses include safeguarding, nutrition, food hygiene to ensure the quality of the provision is being met.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 The options to distribute HAF funding across the county have been limited and the HAF programme has been a catalyst for the council to have closer relationship with providers in the holiday club market.
- 3.2 After evaluating the 2021 programme, officers explored using a commissioning model or a Dynamic Purchasing System but on balance it was felt that grant funding was fit for purpose.
- 3.3 Distributing grant funding and inviting Expressions of Interest follows good practice and is in line with approaches by other local authorities. It has provided an opportunity to build on existing social capital and engage with the community and voluntary sector and schools at a local level and direct funding to meet the diverse needs in the county.
- 3.4 Consideration was given to innovative solutions, but they did not fit with the requirements from DfE for use of the funding. This included exploration of the 'West Sussex pound' to be used to buy food in local shops or cafes in return for participation in activities. However, the DfE advised that HAF funding should not be used to fund vouchers and this initiative would be too similar.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 Stakeholders have been engaged through a mixture of universal and targeted messages using existing circulation lists, targeted emails, newsletters, social media, and word of mouth
- 4.2 Specifically, communications about the opportunity to apply for grant funding went out to;
- Schools and colleges
 - Headteachers Letters
 - Early Years & Out of School Childcare settings
 - Parish & Town Councils Newsletter
 - District & Borough Councils
 - Health & Wellbeing / Leisure Providers
 - Voluntary Community Services Infrastructure
 - Youth Clubs & Organisations
 - Food Banks & Food Provision
 - School meal providers

5 Finance

- 5.1 The Department for Education (DfE) will provide the HAF grant funding to the County Council, under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, who will administer the scheme.
- 5.2 The County Council has been awarded a maximum indicative grant allocation of £1,746,440 from the DfE in 2022/23, which is to be used to cover the cost of the provision of free holiday places and the co-ordination of the programme locally. The council is able to use up to 10% of its total allocation to cover its administrative costs.
- 5.3 The Holiday and Activities Food Programme is ring-fenced and any unspent funding will need to be repaid to the DfE. Funding is being received by the County Council via a two-stage payment approach:
- In April 2022 the council received £1,397,152 (80% of the 2022/23 allocation), upon satisfactory receipt of a report detailing how the 2022/23 programme will work including a comprehensive plan for each holiday period in scope and details of how many children the Council expect to work with.
 - In February 2023 the council should receive up to £349,288 (20% of the 2022/23 allocation), upon satisfactory receipt of a report setting out the actual number of children the Council have worked with during delivery of the programme at Easter, summer and Christmas in 2022.
- 5.4 By paying the grant in two stages based on returns submitted to the DfE ensures that funds are being drawn down based on demand and that funding allocations are being spent within the time restriction. This will also enable the DfE to adjust the amount of the final payment accordingly. As a result, there is no financial impact on the County Council.
- 5.5 The county's HAF funding allocation for 2022/23 is currently planned to be spent as follows:

	Planned Spend
Easter programme – actual spend	£291,172

Summer programme – grant payments to providers as set out in appendix A	£952,765
Summer programme – potential further allocation to enable certain meal provision and to create a discretionary fund	£30,000
Winter programme – anticipated allocation	£220,000
Contingency, administrative costs including staffing and advertisement	£74,644
Currently uncommitted	£180,358
Total available spend	£1,746,440

5.6 All applications received for the Easter and summer programmes were evaluated by a panel of council officers, and good value was included as one of the key criteria. Follow up conversations were also undertaken where it was considered necessary.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
The total value of the HAF grant only provides around £4per FSM child per day for activities and food. This is clearly not sufficient to provide full access for every potentially eligible child for the full duration of holidays in 2022. The average cost of a HAF place is £35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and scrutinise daily cost per place across providers • Target provision in areas of most need • Signpost to Community Hub so families can access other forms of help • All families will be able to access food vouchers
Insufficient provision and lack of coverage for families eligible for FSM in part of the county leaving some children without a place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted engagement with providers to fill gaps; • Raising awareness to schools, District Council; • Signpost all families including those eligible to the Community Hub and other activities
Timescales mean that clubs may not be able to fill places or have waiting lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSCC to support with communications to eligible families through letters, social media and referral mechanisms • Working with colleagues across the council to support eligible families to access and take up their places.
Provision may not meet required DfE standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Assessment against policy and procedures as part of Grant Agreement • WSCC reserves the right to inspect and spot checks will be undertaken; • Information Advice and Guidance on training etc to help providers meet standards
Children may drop out of provision or don't turn up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSCC to monitor and create systems to track numbers of FSM children engaging and monitoring take up

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
National coverage and media campaigns may create additional demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Communications plan created to keep up to date lists of provision. • Allow providers to bid for funding for additional places
Demand for the HAF programme exceeds the total DfE funding available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value of successful bids will be capped at the total value of the grant. • Schemes will be prioritised to ensure that provision is targeted to the areas in most need
Cost of Living crisis increases cost of provision as food prices go up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor cost and agree tolerances for costs • Negotiating with providers to come to a reasonable cost to safeguard places • Target provision in areas of highest need

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 In West Sussex the local programme supports the priorities set out in [Our Council Plan 2021-25](#) as shown below;
- a. **Keeping people safe from vulnerable situation** as providers will be advised how they can help signpost children and families to support agencies and services embracing a 'whole family' approach and multi-agency early help in the widest sense. Being engaged with local services is a key aim nationally.
 - b. **A sustainable and prosperous economy** as West Sussex has aimed to create an inclusive opportunity for all providers and organisations to access this funding to support parts of the economy like hospitality that have been hardest hit by the pandemic.
 - c. **Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential** as HAF in West Sussex has intended to build on existing initiatives in the community and collaborate with schools to maximise the positive impact for our children and young people whilst supporting local groups.
 - d. **Making the best use of resources** as all expression of interest have been evaluated in terms of Best Value recognising the costs involved to provide a range of enriching activities.
- 7.2 Provision of HAF is not a statutory duty, but the funding has been clearly ringfenced to meet a set of outcomes from the DfE. Legal and Procurement have advised to 'passport' the funding under Grant Agreements that set out conditions of the funding and the legal implications and standards that are expected to be followed as a condition of the grant.
- 7.3 The funding has been distributed in an open and transparent way in line with the Equality Duty, and WSCC will monitor, and quality assure the delivery to ensure that there is no discrimination, equality of opportunity is promoted and good relations are fostered.
- 7.4 All providers have completed Self-Assessment of standards to meet, this includes support of the environment and climate change by using sustainable resources responsibly.

- 7.5 The HAF programme supports public health aims and the participation in clubs and activities and receiving nutritional meals caters for children that lose the support that they get during term time. This assists in supporting their health and wellbeing.
- 7.6 The Expression of Interest and subsequent Evaluation has been conducted in a transparent way and within an ethos of social value.

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Appendix A Recommended providers for Grant Awards

Background Papers None

Appendix A- – Recommended Providers for Grant Awards

Organisation Name	District	Age Range	Venue	Number of Places per day	Number of Places in the summer
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Adur	Primary	Sompting Village Primary School	32	800
Southeast Kids Camp	Adur	Primary	Quayside Youth Centre	70	1120
Activ8 For Kids Ltd	Arun	Primary	St Margaret's School	45	720
Albion in the Community	Arun	Primary	White Meadows Primary Academy	25	75
Bersted Green	Arun	Primary	Bersted Green Primary School	58	464
Crimsham Farm CIC	Arun	Both	Crimsham Farm, Bognor Regis	60	960
Freedom Leisure (Day Camp)	Arun	Primary	Littlehampton Wave	16	256
Freedom Leisure (Day Camp)	Arun	Primary	Arun Leisure Centre	16	256
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Arun	Primary	The Angmering School	40	1000
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Arun	Primary	Barnham Community Hall	40	800
South Coast Sports	Arun	Both	Bishop Tufnell Primary school	20	320
South Coast Sports	Arun	Both	St Mary's RC Primary School	20	320
Sussex Forest Activities	Arun	Primary	Furzeffield Scout Campsite	10	200
UK Harvest	Arun	Both	Bognor Youth and Community Centre	30	120
West Sussex Fire and Rescue	Arun	Secondary	Bognor Fire Station	12	108
West Sussex West School Sports Partnership	Arun	Both	The Regis School	195	1560
Woodland Wonder Forest School	Arun	Primary	Littlehampton Beach	25	200
Woodland Wonder Forest School	Arun	Primary	Warbertons Primary School	25	200
Absolute Sport	Chichester	Primary	Sidlesham Primary School	24	480
Busy Lizzie's Nursery	Chichester	Primary	Kingsham Primary School	20	320
Chichester College	Chichester	Both	Chichester College	20	571
Chichester Forest School	Chichester	Both	Lavant House School	12	108
Chichester Forest School Family Days	Chichester	Both	Lavant House School	12	24
East Wittering and Bracklesham Council	Chichester	Primary	East Wittering Primary School	24	480
Fit For Sport	Chichester	Primary	Westgate Leisure Centre	20	320
South Coast Sports	Chichester	Both	Tangmere Primary School	20	160

South Coast Sports	Chichester	Both	Northchapel Primary School	20	160
Wittering Pre-school	Chichester	Primary	St Annes Church Hall	20	320
Woodland Wonder Forest School	Chichester	Primary	Parklands Community Primary School	25	100
Woodland Wonder Forest School	Chichester	Primary	Aldingbourne Centre	25	100
Activ8 For Kids Ltd	Chichester	Primary	Chichester Free School	25	400
UK Harvest	Chichester	Both	Sylvia Beaufoy Centre	30	120
UK Harvest	Chichester	Both	St.James Church	30	120
Active Stars	Crawley	Primary	Milton Mount Primary School	45	720
Active Stars	Crawley	Primary	Maidenbower Primary School	45	180
Albion in the Community	Crawley	Primary	Broadfield Primary Academy	25	75
Code Kids Surrey	Crawley	Primary	Bewbush Academy	40	400
Healthy Happy Kidz	Crawley	Both	St.Andrews Primary School	50	800
Premier Education	Crawley	Primary	Seymour Primary School	60	960
Shalom Childcare Project T/A Totz2teenz	Crawley	Primary	Ifield Community Centre	110	1320
Southeast Kids Camp	Crawley	Primary	Pound Hill Junior School	70	1120
Sports Plus	Crawley	Primary	Gossops Green Primary School	40	640
Summer Adventure Camp	Crawley	Both	Blacklands Farm	48	960
Crimsham Farm	Horsham	Both	Ridge Hill Forest Academy	40	640
Horsham Sports Service	Horsham	Both	The Bridge Leisure Centre	50	1350
Next Thing Education	Horsham	Primary	Arunside Primary School	45	360
Next Thing Education	Horsham	Primary	St Mary's C Of E Aided Primary School	45	360
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Horsham	Primary	Chanctonbury Leisure Centre	32	800
Little Lambs	Mid Sussex	Primary	Jubilee Community Centre	14	280
Pioneer Childcare	Mid Sussex	Primary	Halsford Park School	35	700
Pioneer Childcare	Mid Sussex	Primary	Harlands Primary School	35	700
Pioneer Childcare	Mid Sussex	Primary	Manor Field Primary School	35	700
Pioneer Childcare	Mid Sussex	Primary	St. Wilfrid's Catholic School	35	700
Places Leisure	Mid Sussex	Primary	The Triangle Leisure Centre	20	320
Poponin	Mid Sussex	Both	94 High Street, Hurstpierpoint	4	64

Sussex Tuition Centre	Mid Sussex	Primary	Sussex Tuition Centre	20	320
South Coast Sports	Mid Sussex,	Both	Handcross Primary School	40	640
Cherrytree Child Care	Worthing	Primary	Vale School, Findon	20	320
Albion in the Community	Worthing	Primary	Thomas a Becket Junior School	15	150
Helen O'Grady Drama Academy	Worthing	Both	Durrington High School OR Davison CE High School for Girls	40	400
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Worthing	Primary	West Park Primary School	40	1000
SB Sports Coaching Ltd_Prem	Worthing	Primary	Our Lady of Sion Senior School	40	1000
South Coast Skate Club	Worthing	Primary	Chesswood Junior School	10	160
The Sid Youth	Worthing	Secondary	Sidney Walter Centre	28	448
Worthing Table Tennis Club	Worthing	Both	Thomas a Becket Junior School	12	192
Total				2,254	32,041