

Report to Cabinet

12 January 2022

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| Subject: | Request to procure for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2022-2023 |
| Cabinet Member: | Cabinet Member for Children and Education Councillor Karen Simms |
| Director: | Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett |
| Key Decision: | Yes |
| Contact Officer: | HAF Lead Officer, Samantha Harman Samantha_harman@sandwell.gov.uk |

1 Recommendations





- 1.1 That the Director of Children and Education be authorised, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to undertake a procurement exercise for holiday activity provision via the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme 2022-2023 to a maximum value of £360,000.
- 1.2 That the Director of Children and Education be authorised to request an exemption to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to contract an existing schools catering provider for the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022-2023 to the maximum value of £144,000.



2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Department for Education has recently informed all Local Authorities (LA) in England that the Holiday Activity and Food programme will now be funded for an additional three years, 2022 – 2025. Sandwell has not received the grant determination letter detailing the indicative allocations, but we were assured by the DfE that these would be disseminated late Autumn and that LA's should start to plan for the 2022 programme accordingly with the assurances that the grants will be similar to that of 2021 when Sandwell was awarded £1,932,480.00. See Appendix 3 email from Programme HAF.
- 2.2 Approval is therefore requested to undertake a procurement process for holiday activity provision for centralised activity providers at a maximum value of £360,000 and to undertake an exemption to procurement procedures to contract an existing centralised meal provider at a cost of £144,000. Both decisions will require Cabinet approval in order to meet the procurement and contracting regulations in order to meet the timescales to enable live delivery for Easter 2022.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

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|  | Best start in life for children and young people The negative impact summer holidays may have potentially makes the HAF important in closing the outcomes gap between more and less disadvantaged children in Sandwell. |
|  | People live well and age well The involvement of families and children in accessing healthy food and enrichment activities will support families to live well. |
|  | Strong resilient communities Sandwell HAF is embedded within a community offer and delivered at a local level which aims to build resilience of children, families and neighbourhoods. |
|  | A strong and inclusive economy The use of local providers to support the delivery of the HAF reinforces Sandwell's ambitions for community wealth building. |



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The following was reported to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board on 29 November 2021. The Committee noted the report and thanked the author for her work.
- 4.2 The Holiday Activities and Food programme was expanded in 2021 so that children on benefit related free school meals in England could be offered free healthy meals and enriching activities over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. With an investment of up to £220 million delivered through grants to all local authorities.

Sandwell was awarded a grant of £1,932,480 for the period of the programme. The DfE have informed us that based on the success of the HAF21 programme further funding will be available year on year to 2025.

As yet we have not received the grant determination letter detailing the indicative allocations, but we have been assured by the DfE that these will be disseminated late autumn and that local authorities should start to plan for the 2022 programme accordingly with the assurances that the grants will be similar to that of 2021.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 There are no viable alternative options, as the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022 will continue investing through a grant making scheme to support the voluntary and community sector to deliver holiday activity in communities. Local VCS capacity is limited and will not meet the sufficiency of places that we are required to offer that exceed 17,500 children currently in receipt of benefit related free school meals.
- 5.2 A procurement process was undertaken for our current schools catering provider. It identified value for money, local jobs for local people and the provider has the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver against the School Food Standards which is a requirement of the grant.

6 Implications

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| Resources: | The HAF programme is a restricted grant for the purpose of restricted activity and cannot be used for any other purpose other than that set out in the grant determination letter. |
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| | The DfE have given us assurances that the indicative allocation will be in line with 2021's award of £1,932,480. |
| Legal and Governance: | The HAF Programme is DfE grant funded and it is restricted for the purpose of this activity only as set out in the grant determination letter. |
| Risk: | <p>There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from the content of this report.</p> <p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with - to identify and assess any significant risks associated with this decision/project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks. Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that no significant risk has been identified.</p> <p>Risk is continually monitored through the HAF steering group, reporting to the Children and Young People's Strategic Board. If the Cabinet report is not approved, the Council will fail to meet the requirements of the DfE grant and will be unable to provide sufficient places to eligible children.</p> |
| Equality: | An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) initial screening has been undertaken. The screening identified that there are no adverse impacts on people or groups with protected characteristics. |
| Health and Wellbeing: | <p>The HAF programme has a positive impact on all of those participating and will continue to do so.</p> <p>A sufficient supply of high-quality holiday activity and food provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables children and young people to eat more healthily over the school holidays. • Enables children and young people to be more active during the school holidays. • Enables participation in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables children and young people to be safe and not to be socially isolated. • Enables families a wider knowledge of health and nutrition and to be more engaged with school and other local services. |
| Social Value | The HAF programme encourages the use of private and voluntary sector engagement and is seen as a conduit to boost local business whilst seeking to ensure wider investment from other parties. |

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Evaluation report – draft

Appendix 2: HAF presentation (for context)

Appendix 3: email from Programme HAF to HAF Lead Officer for Sandwell

8. Background Papers

Source email: Programme, HAF HAF.PROGRAMME@education.gov.uk

