

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 27th September 2023

Subject: Summer Holiday 2023 Programme Evaluation

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Update members on plans to reduce holiday hunger and provide childcare support across West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) during Summer 2023 and;
- b) Inform and update members on the additional Scottish Government funding allocations, the governance of funding and impact of projects.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Educational Services Committee is recommended to note:

- (a) Progress and impact of authority wide plans by partners to reduce holiday hunger and provide childcare provision and;
- (b) Ways in which the fund has been administered and governed.

3. Background

3.1 In 2023 Council agreed to continue supporting the Holiday Hunger Fund to ensure the provision of meals and social activities for school children over holiday periods, throughout West Dunbartonshire. £100,000 per annum was committed to enable community partners to work together to address the challenges of holiday hunger and associated increased costs for families. This has proved successful and uptake and partnership working has been effective in meeting the needs of our children and families over holidays.

3.2 Scottish Government (SG) allocated an additional £84,000 to develop the 2023 holiday programmes. This was allocated at a very late stage in planning and as a result will allow the expansion of holiday support to other holiday periods which might otherwise not have happened in session 2023-2024.

3.3 SG suggested funding was allocated to 6 identified priority family groups with addition of local discretion. The following groups were identified as being eligible for targeted support:

- Children from those priority family groups identified in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: larger families; families with a disabled child or adult; young mothers; families with children under one; and minority ethnic families. Our additional focus was on Young Carers and care experienced children and young people.
- 3.4** In line with the guidance which was the same as that in 2022, Officers undertook liaison and planning with families, established Holiday Hunger partners who all delivered support.(Appendix 1)
- 4. Main Issues**
- 4.1** It is recognised that holiday periods add to the stress of poverty for families and result in less access to food and social activity for them than their peers. Resultantly, every summer session planned offered free access to activities and lunch or snacks as an integral feature.
- 4.2** A two pronged approach to planning was undertaken the first being our mainstream SHINE programme. This year saw increased numbers of applications and child places offered from our 21 community partners. This summer approximately 11,000 places were available for children and young people across the authority, accessing a range of activities delivered by 21 local not-for-profit partners. An additional 1,000 attended Fun in the Park activities.
- 4.3** Our SHINE partners represented communities from across West Dunbartonshire and included: YSort-It, Bellsmyre Development Trust, West Dunbartonshire Kinship Care, Flourishing Faifley, Tulloch, Centre81, Friends of Levensgrove, Haldane Youth Services, Awestruck and Golden Friendships. Attendees included vulnerable families targeted by schools.
- 4.4** The second strand was the ASN programme which ensured all of the children in our severe and complex settings were able to access holiday fun with transport provided over a four week holiday period. Planning with a range of partners to meet the needs of particular cohorts of children ensured effective and fun activities. The camp was staffed by familiar staff who were trained in providing additional support and personal care. This summer we supported 107 individual children from across WDC specialist settings over a 4 week period. On average pupils enjoyed 3 days of activities with 370 day placements delivered.
- 4.5** To ensure appropriateness of spend and scrutiny of projects, Officers visited projects and maintained regular contact with groups over the holiday period. They monitored the value for spend, procedures in place, numbers attending and spoke with staff, children, young people and families where they could. At time of writing, evaluations from partners are being collected and analysed. These will inform next steps.

4.6 This Summer SHINE Programme offered 223 free activity sessions and 3 park events open to local children and families. Over 11,000 lunches and snacks were provided these were particularly welcomed during the ongoing cost of living crisis. Attendees included vulnerable families identified by schools. Notable examples of support and highlights of the programme are:

- 250 local young people participated in gaming, music and art sessions provided by Awestruck Academy.
- Bellsmyre Digital held hugely popular virtual reality and drone building sessions with free places available to 140 local youngsters.
- Golden Friendships offered 15 sessions with 100 daily places for children and families with mornings of fun activities, fitness games, dancing, party games, arts and crafts and mini discos.
- 50 local boys and girls attended a week long football camp offered by Vale of Leven Football Academy.
- Clifftop Projects returned this year to continue their exciting arts workshops attracting 216 participants. Young people explored a range of art forms from paint to clay to performing arts, working towards creating their own gallery for display at the end of the week.
- Haldane Youth Services offered a series of local events including; breakfast clubs, family lunch clubs, BBQ's and fun activity sessions attracting over 1,000 participants.
- This year Flourishing Faifley Family Fun Camp provided 13 outdoor sessions aimed at bringing families together and strengthening the relationship between children and their parents/carers. Activities included outdoor games old and new, den building, nature hunts, arts and crafts projects and some skill based workshops.
- YSort-It offered 300 young people trips including Carbeth Camps, and Falkirk Activity Days. Further activities included Brunch Club sessions, Friday night Youth Café, Fishing (Y Hook It) & Streetbike sessions. Many attending are Young Carers or Care Experienced young people.
- Rock Community Church attracted 900 participants over 3 weeks of age specific Summer Camp' activities.

4.7 Feedback has been very positive from parents, carers, children and young people. At time of writing, the evaluation period is still open, however, below are some of the comments made by children and families:

- *Thank you for having my son on the Drones course. He has loved every single minute. He's already asking when the next one is. - parent*
- *I appreciate all your hard work in making all this happen for the kids and being understanding of their individual needs. - parent*
- *Can we do this every day? - child*

- *This is fun. I love science now - child*
- *I'm really proud of myself - child*
- *I liked to try new things and being creative - child*
- *I made new friends - child*
- *I feel brilliant - child*
- *Mya - has loved attending our Summer Club, her favourite thing has been decorating her own t-shirt and taking it home to show her mummy - parent*
- *Adam - he has enjoyed attending our Summer Club, the film was good and he enjoyed the treats, his favourite thing has been all of it and if he could say something positive to someone it would be to love and be kind - parent*
- *My little girl loves coming here and it doesn't matter what's on. Their favourite thing has been getting out of the house and being able to socialise with other people, she isn't shy when she is here and it feels like home. - parent*
- *My son loved every day of the football camp. He broke his wee heart when it finished today he didn't want it to end. Massive thanks to the staff involved. - parent*

4.8 Next steps include planning for October and Christmas school holidays in session 2023-2024 and thereafter session 2024-2025. This will involve meeting a range of WDC and third sector partners to feedback and evaluate progress and learning so far and further coordinate offers and sessions; taking due cognisance of feedback from all stakeholders and revisions to SG guidance.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications as a result of this report, however, these outcome focused plans aim to improve the life chances of children and young people

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 All activities related to the implementation of this policy are contained within the SG Summer23 Funding and WDC Holiday Hunger Fund.

6.2 Final costs are still being clarified. It is anticipated the SHINE cost will be approximately £82,000. There are additional plans for spend in the October and Christmas school holiday periods. Final figures will be clearer when the summer invoicing is completed.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for children, we will not be meeting their needs (Children and Young People Act 2014) (Equalities Act

2010)

- 7.2** If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for all children and young people, it could result in reputational damage.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** This fund and governance enhance the quality of the service provided to all children and young people and therefore can be seen to have a positive impact in terms of the equalities.

9 Environmental Sustainability

- 9.1** There are no environmental implications as a result of this report.

10 Consultation

- 10.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

11. Strategic Assessment

- 11.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Scottish Government Summer
2022 Guidance [Summer holiday food, activities
and childcare programme: guidance for local
authorities - gov.scot](#)
(www.gov.scot)

Background papers: Holiday Hunger Report Education Committee 5th June 2019

Wards Affected: All wards

