

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 4 September 2020

Subject: Summer Programme Evaluation

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- (a) Update members on impact of plans to reduce holiday hunger across West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) during Summer 2020 in light of COVID restrictions and;
- (b) Inform and update members on the governance of funding allocations, spend 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;
- (b) ways in which the fund has been administered and governed.

3. Background

3.1 The Council agreed the Holiday Hunger Fund to increase the provision of meals and social activities for school children over holiday periods throughout West Dunbartonshire. The Council committed £100,000 per annum (to be reviewed in 2023) to enable existing groups in our communities and new groups to apply for money from this fund to establish new provision in areas where there is unmet need.

3.2 Officers were asked to bring an update report to Educational Services Committee as soon as practicable, informing how the fund had been administered, monitored and its related impact on children, young people and the community.

4. Main Issues

4.1 The strategic needs analysis for West Dunbartonshire conducted by Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has identified that 33% of our children and young people live in poverty with 27.4% of children in receipt of free school meals.

4.2 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. Foodbanks report increased demand during holiday periods.

- 4.3** Taking cognisance of COVID restrictions, plans were put in place for a revised and reduced Holiday Programme supporting our most vulnerable families, for Summer session 2020. The programme ran every day of the holidays until the 4th of August. These plans ensured a programme which was targeted at our most vulnerable children and young people; as identified in collaboration with HSCP and partners. We established 6 Hub settings in each of our high schools and Kilpatrick School and offered support to the Local Learning Community and those with significant additional support needs. To ensure we adhered with health and safety expectations, we did not engage in family activities this year. Health and safety requirements necessitated the need for smaller groups, reduced numbers of partners and limited social contact and activities. Education staff liaised with partners who were able to offer support, to identify need, timeframes and spend required. This resulted in 6 holiday projects across the authority delivering fun activities with a packed lunch included. (App1)
- 4.4** To ensure appropriateness of spend and scrutiny of projects, Officers visited all projects over the holiday period. They monitored the value for spend, procedures in place, numbers attending and spoke with children, young people and families to gauge impact. Information gleaned will inform change and improvement as necessary should we continue to be in a COVID situation at our next holiday period.
- 4.5** Evaluation tells us that at time of reporting, a total of 1524 children places were supported by core Education staff, 4 partners and notably someone from the volunteering network. Included in this figure is 96 places for children and young people with significant additional support needs who we supported to also access activities with appropriate specialist supports. We worked with 6 community partners who provided 6200 lunches across the period. All spares were returned to be shared via the local community links.
- 4.6** At time of writing, approximately £78,000 of the £100,000 allocated has been spent on Easter and Summer Holiday Hunger Projects to enhance existing projects by partners or develop new projects. There are additional plans for spend in the October school holiday period. Final figures will be more clear when all summer invoicing is completed.
- 4.7** Next steps include planning for October and Christmas school holidays in session 2019-2020 and thereafter session 2020-2021. 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.

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 additional Holiday Hunger Fund.
- 6.2** For session 2020-2021, £78, 000 approx. has been spent on projects across the authority provided by a range of partners. The remaining budget will enable partners to plan for projects in additional holiday periods over the session.

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 with this report.

10 Consultation

- 10.1** Legal and Finance Services 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 – Programme overview and
evaluations for Summer 2019

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

Wards Affected: All wards