

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 28th September 2022

Subject: Summer Holiday 2022 Programme Evaluation

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

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 2019 Council agreed 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 until 2023 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 Building upon their response to the pandemic, Scottish Government (SG) allocated an additional £256, 000 to develop the 2022 holiday programmes. The guidance required multi-agency planning and implementation to ensure it supported the intended cohorts of children, young people and families. It aimed to help them continue in work, training and education with access to childcare support tailored to suit their needs. Guidance and funding supported Councils to transition programmes from holiday support to wrap-around childcare support, with this year being a bridge between both. This is in line with SG Childcare Expansion Plans. (App.1 Summer 2022 Guidance)

3.3 Eighty-five percent of funding was allocated to identified targeted

groups with the remaining fifteen percent determined with 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, Officers undertook liaison and planning with families, established Holiday Hunger partners and local childcare providers who all delivered support.

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 three pronged approach to planning was undertaken. A childcare programme was implemented which supported 1500 children and young people to access care from 9 partner providers. This support was targeted in collaboration with parents, partners and schools to ensure those who needed it most were able to access it. Our successful community partners' programme SHINE ensured approximately 10000 places were available for children and young people across the Council to access a range of activities delivered by 18 partners. The final strand, the ASN programme ensured all of the children in our severe and complex settings were able to access 2 days per week of 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.

4.3 To ensure appropriateness of spend and scrutiny of projects, Officers visited projects over the holiday period. They monitored the value for spend, procedures in place, numbers attending and spoke with staff, children, young people and families when they could. At time of writing, evaluations from partners are being collected and analysed. These will inform next steps.

4.4 Notable examples of support and highlights of the programmes supported are:

- Support was provided to a family of 4 children under 9 who were taken into emergency care. This ensured carers could maintain the

placements and the family were provided with fun childcare activities;

- 1,910 children and their families engaged in a range of family fun events in Golden Friendship's Halls. 3 sessions a week were offered including breakfast and a packed lunch. They played party games and were entertained by a range of magicians, puppeteers and entertainers. Attendees included targeted vulnerable families. Organisers noted that families welcomed the opportunity for free activities bringing children together over the holidays. Breakfasts and lunches were particularly welcomed during the current cost of living crisis.
- Clifftop Projects were able to employ 3 local freelance artists to support the 205 children who took part in a full week of creative arts activities including inventions and a 'Dragons Den'. Feedback from children and parents was overwhelmingly positive.
- ISARO'S summer programme brought together over 40 children from various backgrounds, supporting them to make new connections including children from Syrian families and new Afghan families.
- Vale of Leven Football Academy (VOLFA) took part in the summer programme for the first time, offering a week long football camp for boys and girls. 100 local children took part including 7 targeted families. The camp was at full capacity throughout the week and VOLFA volunteers were delighted with the results.
- Rock Community Church offered a range of activities and meals at The Phoenix four weeks during the summer. Attendance was 1,831 way above their estimates with feedback from children and parents hugely positive.
- Bellsmyre Digital Community ran a unique programme of extremely popular virtual reality gaming sessions and 3d printing workshops for over 200 children and young people.
- Flourishing Faifley has established a community garden and engaged with 30 local families during the summer providing lunches along with outdoor arts and crafts, including making bird houses and local wildlife activities such as bug hunts.
- Families of the 531 children enjoyed packed lunches and participated in a range of a wide range of activities, games, sports, arts & crafts, outdoor and indoor play at Bellsmyre Cutty Sark.
- Funding supported YSort-It to coordinate a 6 week summer programme attracting 1,098 attendees. The activities includes 37 trips for young

people, a Friday night Youth Café, 7 youth clubs per week and a 2 day camping trip at a festival dedicated to Young Carers.

- A child in the care of his grandparents accessed full-time childcare when his grandfather died suddenly. The grandmother has subsequently been in touch to thank Council for the 'invaluable support';

4.5 Evaluation feedback has been very positive from parents, carers and children and young people. At time of writing, the evaluation period is still open, however, initial feedback shows:
93.3% of parents said their child/children enjoyed all or most of the activities or child care. (85% enjoyed all activities)
98.3% of parent rated activities or child care as very-good or good. (83.3% rated very-good)
90% of parents felt activities met all or most of their child/children's needs.
95% of parents rated the breakfasts or lunches as very good or good.
95% of parents said that activities/child care was near or fairly near to home.
95% of parents felt they themselves benefitted from their child's participation in activities/child care with 80% saying it gave them time free or time to work/study.

Additional Comments from parents:

Positive:

****** attended gaming and 3d printing. He has Asperger's and ADHD, he really enjoyed attending these clubs and would love to go back to them. ***** and ***** attended goalzone and loved going to it, they spoke about their lunches and trying new stuff plus they got on lots of outings from going to the local park to the safari park which was great.*

*The multi sports camp held at SPTA was great. ***** thoroughly enjoyed the multi camps, she said it was great fun hanging out. Coaches were fantastic, shout out to Tommy, Clair, Erin, Declan and all the other coaches and big thank you for the sports camps being fun.*

Kathleen who ran the 3D printing club and gaming club in Dumbarton was lovely. Very friendly and made my daughter feel very welcome. My daughter loved the clubs, she enjoyed meeting new friends and being able to do things in the holidays. Thank you

The staff at Studio2 in Dumbarton are absolutely amazing and I'm so glad they are so close to my home and provide an excellent after school care service. I cannot recommend them highly enough

****** had a great time, better than previous years which made my break even better. My only wish is she gets to do it again thanks *****(grandad)*

****** loved being at the childcare in Duntocher, the staff were really lovely. They made his time fun and enjoyable.*

I wanted to thank you so much for everything you did and gave to our children during the summer holidays

- 4.6** Next steps include planning for October and Christmas school holidays in session 2021-2022 and thereafter session 2022-2023. 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 Summer22 Funding and WDC Holiday Hunger Fund.
- 6.2** Final costs are still being clarified. It is anticipated the SHINE cost will be approximately £77 000. 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 – Summer 2022 Guidance

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

Wards Affected: All wards