

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: 22 September 2021**

Subject: Summer Holiday 2021 Programme Evaluation**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to update members on plans to reduce holiday hunger across West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) during Summer 2021 and to update Members about the additional Scottish Government (SG) funding allocations.

2. Recommendations**2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended:

- (a) To note the progress and impact of authority wide plans by partners to reduce holiday hunger and
- (b) To note the associated administration and governance of the funds

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 (to be reviewed in 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** In response to the pandemic, Scottish Government (SG) allocated an additional £256 000 to WDC to support 2021 holiday programmes from their Get Into Summer funding. The funding criteria required multi-agency planning and implementation to ensure it supported the intended cohorts of children, young people and families to have fun, engage with others and enjoy the summer.
<https://www.gov.scot/news/get-into-summer/>
- 3.3** The SG guidance recognised that for various reasons, the wellbeing of some children, young people and families has been impacted more by the pandemic than others. It recognised therefore that holiday programmes should aim to involve and engage these children and their families. This was reflected in WDC plans for implementation.

The SG criteria identified the following groups as being eligible for targeted support.

- Children from low income households
- 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
- Children from families who have been shielding during the pandemic and whose ability to engage in activities and socialise will have been very limited
- Children with a disability or additional support need
- Care experienced children and young people
- Young Carers
- Children in need of protection
- Children supported by a child's plan
- Children who have undergone significant transitions during lockdown or will experience them this year, including starting in ELC, starting primary school, moving to secondary school and leaving school.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** One in four (260 000) of Scotland's children are officially recognised as living in poverty. Sixty-eight percent of these children live in working households. Experiencing child poverty can undermine the health, wellbeing and educational attainment of children.
<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Social-Welfare/IncomePoverty/povertytable>
- 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. Resultantly, every WDC summer session planned offered free access to activities and lunch or snacks as an integral feature.
- 4.3** WDC implemented a two pronged approach to planning an extended and developed summer programme supported by the additional funding. One strand developed a Summer Extravaganza which was open to all children and young people for five weeks of the summer holidays. The extravaganza also provided 600 targeted places to those who needed it most. The other strand was to plan targeted support with a range of partners to meet the needs of particular cohorts of children, young people and families.
- 4.4** Multi-agency partnership planning resulted in a five week Summer Extravaganza programme led by fifteen different community partners, nine WDC partners and held in a range of twenty two council and community venues including three parks. In total eleven thousand and thirty eight free places were offered at three hundred and thirty seven events across WDC. (Appendix 1 Summer Extravaganza Brochure)

- 4.5** WDC Early Years Team and Integrated Children's Service partners such as the Youth Alliance and Social Work Services were supported to develop and extend existing summer plans; targeting particular cohorts of young people and families such as: young families, 12-18 year olds, Young Carers, shielding families and those with additional needs or care plans.
- 4.6** To address the additional challenges of the pandemic on planning events which kept staff and participants safe, all partners were provided with robust Health and Safety supporting documentation which aligned with SG guidance. Eventbrite was used as the main booking system for the Extravaganza as this provided an effective platform to support potential track and trace activities.
- 4.7** To date partner evaluations are ongoing however some key highlights to note of the many successful events are:
- 180 children learned to ride or improve their bike skills through bike ability sessions;
 - 2273 children in our early years settings received Summer fun rucksacks which included books, bubbles, water bottles and toys;
 - 103 families of children in early years; including 43 registered with a disability, 40 who are care experienced and 15 shielding families, accessed a time for fun fund which enabled them to plan days out accessible to them. These included a first ever zoo trip for two families; trips to the seaside and trips to the safari park;
 - 18 families including children in Kinship Care and with additional support needs participated in art and design sessions together;
 - Approximately 50 children and their families engaged in a range of family fun events in Golden Friendship's Halls three times per week. They played party games and were entertained by a range of magicians, puppeteers and entertainers. Organisers noted a welcomed increase in attendance of local minority ethnic families;
 - Clifftop Projects were able to employ 6 freelance artists to support the 505 children who took part in the broad range of creative arts activities they provided;
 - The overwhelming success of Benview's broad programme of activities such as yoga, football and gymnastics, was the visit from a mini-zoo;
 - Families of the 686 children participating in the range of arts, crafts and activities happening at Bellsmyre Trust were very appreciative and complimentary about the free lunch provision and structure of programmes available;
 - The three Children's Houses in WDC used funding to provide a range additional fun summer activities and day trips for children and young people;
 - Social workers worked with families in Kinship care, children with disabilities and vulnerable families to support a range of summer help such as play equipment, day trips to zoos, seaside and safari parks and with opportunities such as swimming and football

- lessons. Some families were also able to access short breaks;
- Y-Sort-it supported Young Carers with a range of day trips and cycling activities;
- Working 4U enhanced their summer programme to include weekly overnight trips for young people and provided family food packs to replicate cooking learned at outdoor activity sessions in Mugdock Park.

4.8 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 staff, children, young people and families when they could. Information gleaned will inform change and improvement as necessary in line with the funding available.

4.9 At the time of writing final costs are still being clarified. It is anticipated the Extravaganza cost will be approximately £92 000 and costs attributed to partners will be approximately £110 000. There are additional plans for spend in the October and Christmas school holiday periods. Final figures will be clearer when all summer invoicing is complete.

4.10 Next steps include planning for the October and Christmas school holidays in session 2020-2021 and thereafter session 2021-2022. 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 SG Get Into Summer Funding and WDC Holiday Hunger Fund.

6.2 Actual expenditure to date on the holiday programme funding mentioned in paragraph 3.2 is £185, 00 although not all expenditure has been captured yet.

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 arrangements 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 Extravaganza
Brochure



1 Summer
Extravaganza 21 Fin

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

Wards Affected: All wards

