

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17 OCTOBER 2024

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET INFORMATION ITEM

Councillor Bob Cook Portfolio – Leader of the Council

Here to Help ‘Going for Gold Family Fun Day’

SUMMARY

As part of the Councils commitment to tackle inequality and poverty in the borough a series of Here to Help events are planned throughout 2024/25. This report provides an overview of the successful summer **Here to Help ‘Going for Gold Family Fun Day’**, summarising key outcomes and learning which will be to be incorporated into future planning. Attached at **Appendix 1** is a detailed post event briefing.

REASONS FOR PRODUCING THIS REPORT

Help to Help events support the Councils Powering Our Futures Communities mission in terms of helping to build community capacity and community resilience and the Councils wider commitment to addressing inequality and poverty as detailed in ‘A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees: a strategic framework for tackling inequalities’ and the recently adopted Anti-Poverty Strategy.

DETAIL

1. On Saturday 20 July, a ‘Going for Gold Family Fun Day’ was held in Stockton town centre as part of the Here to Help programme of events. The ‘Going for Gold’ title and marketing drew inspiration from the summer Olympic Games. As noted above this event supported the councils wider Powering our Future Communities mission by providing access to:
 - Community support
 - Encouraging residents to help themselves by finding more about (and where appropriate) joining local community groups and/or volunteering in their community
 - Raising awareness & accessing support services provided by the extensive network of statutory and VCSE providers present at the event.
2. The aim on this occasion (unlike previous events) was to create a larger scale, weekend Here to Help event. Whilst open to all, the hosting of fun activities were specifically targeted at supporting families with children and the boroughs young people. Advice and support services included physical health, mental health, income maximisation, employability, money and debt, food and clothing. In addition the event was aimed at responding to the need for affordable school uniforms and hygiene poverty, two specific priorities detailed in the Anti-Poverty Plan

and to provide children and young people with the chance to take part in an event over the summer holidays a key priority of our Child Poverty Network.

3. Activities were held at several locations: High Street North, in the Parish Gardens, Stockton Library, Thirteen Touchpoint Store and Wellington Square. Key highlights included:
 - 1500 residents attending.
 - 300 preloved and 150 new school uniform items distributed.
 - 50 games and toys provided to local children.
 - 200 new and 300 preloved books given out.
 - 475 hygiene products distributed by Nite Light CIC.
 - 30 + support agencies attending, each engaging with up to 500 individuals.
 - 81 people visiting the library.
 - Over 100 families engaging with sporting activities via the MFC Foundation.

Attendee feedback:

4. During the day attempts were made to seek feedback from attendees. Page 6 of post event briefing (**Appendix 1**) provides a detailed overview of all feedback received. Highlights include the majority of those who attended welcoming the range of activities and support services available. It is also worth noting that whilst the event was 'anti-poverty focused' there was NO reference by any of those who attended to 'stigma' in terms of accessing the support services available.
5. Attending support partners and organisations all noted they were kept very busy throughout the event in terms of delivering activities and providing important advice and support services. All completed post event surveys and praised the event for high footfall, levels of engagement and event organisation. Vitally they reported that the event provided an excellent opportunity to engage with our communities. For example:

Family Action said, "It was lovely to just chat with members of the public. We were able to talk about various things including our Holidays Are Fun provision and volunteering. We were also engaging with the community about other topics as we were talking and giving out the leaflets that were next to our stall"

Foster NorthEast noted, "For us we felt it worthwhile to have a presence at an event which is at the heart of the community. We spoke to 5-6 of our fostering families who attended, and we gave out 30 of our tote bags and had a short conversation with everyone who took one about who we are, raising awareness of fostering. Looking around the event, I thought it was very well organised and set-up. The info and freebies being given out could make a real difference to some people. With the market on, I thought the event and the town had a real buzz about it".

Future events:

6. The success of this event has affirmed that that larger scale events with a wider support and engagement 'offer' is a more effective way to reach residents and maximise partner attendance rather than the previous locally based events. As this allows our communities to engage with a wider variety of activities, access a range of support services and connect with each other.
7. Several points of learning will be incorporated in the development of future events including engaging as early as possible with our local business community to secure monies to support events (via working with Catalyst and the Corporate Social Responsibility network) and engaging with a wider network of both statutory and VCSE partners (as detailed on page 7 of **Appendix 1**).

8. Our next Here to Help event, is due to take place on the 28th of November at Thornaby Pavilion. This event will focus on the boroughs older population focusing on health, income maximisation and preparing/supporting over the winter. In addition to working with a range of partners (statutory and VCSE) wider local community groups will also be invited to attend. For example, the Thornaby Warm Welcome group have agreed to have a stall, to talk to other community members about how they got started and offer their support. An example of how we are using peer support and learning to help build community resilience and encourage others to establish similar community support networks.

Name of Contact Officer: Jane Edmends

Post Title: Assistant Director of Housing & Fairer Stockton-on-Tees

Telephone No. 01642 527552

Email Address: jane.edmends@stockton.gov.uk

Name of Contact Officer: Karen Jessop

Post Title: Project Co-ordinator (Fairer Stockton-on-Tees)

Telephone No. 01642 527554

Email Address: karen.jessop@stockton.gov.uk