

Children and Young People Select Committee
Holiday Activities and Food Programme known locally as Holidays Are Fun (HAF)
Scrutiny Review
Outline Scope

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Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

Supporting 'our people' to live healthier lives:

- Raising aspirations of our children and young people to achieve economic wellbeing
- Supporting the local economy using local providers to deliver.
- Supporting schools to work during holiday periods, supporting their local communities offering healthy meals and activities to children and young people
- Offer specific and focused provision for children and young people with special educational needs.
- Supporting vulnerable groups such as, children in our care, children in need of help and support, children with additional needs and young carers.

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

HAF is a DfE funded programme that provides activities and healthy meals to children and young people during holiday periods, predominantly for those on benefit related free school meals. It is delivered in partnership through SBC and Catalyst. It involves a range of providers, including schools, delivering a variety of activities.

The programme is aimed at those most in need. Holiday times can be difficult for families especially under the current cost of living crisis. Offering a safe place to go, with fun activities alongside a healthy nutritious meal will help families during long and difficult times of the year. Therefore, it essential that the funding allocated is maximised and provides value for money. The programme is delivered alongside longer term, appropriate support for families.

The money is allocated as a grant for a specific purpose and spend is monitored by the DfE. The programme should offer the opportunity to help more families at an early stage offering help and support beyond the holiday periods leading to short- and longer-term savings. Having a safe

place for children to go during holiday periods helps parents who are working to reduce childcare costs, and it also offers the opportunity to work with families who need support to return to work. The Scrutiny Committee could consider if HAF is inclusive of and attended by those families who most need it and the impact that the programme has had on family health and social and economic wellbeing. Other considerations could include:

- How the programme can maximise the involvement of schools and education providers
 - How elected members can promote and encourage eligible members of their communities to engage with the programme
- If the programme is offering value for money as it moves into its final year of national funding

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- What target groups is the HAF Programme aimed at reaching? Who is participating and how can we maximise attendance by these groups? How can we ensure that the programme is inclusive and maximise impact for children that need it most?
- What are the barriers to the children with the most need attending?
- Are we achieving Borough-wide reach? Do we have the right provision in the right area?
- How can the programme maximise the involvement of schools and education providers?
- How can elected Members promote and encourage engagement with the programme?
- What impact has the programme had? What does feedback from families tell us?
- How are providers chosen? Do we have the right providers and how is this assessed?
- What feedback has been received from providers, families and children?
- Do contract management arrangements provide value for money? Could the contract be managed differently?
- What, if any, improvements should be made to the booking system?
- How is the programme funded and what are the options for future delivery should central government funding cease?
- Can the programme support other Council objectives, for example, the promotion of lifelong learning, career aspirations, links to future employment and making sure our young people are work ready?
- Can our young people, including children in care and care leavers be involved in delivery?
- Are agencies working together to provide help and support for families who access HAF outside of holidays?
- Are paid for places making the scheme sustainable and are charges appropriate?

Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

Cabinet, key partners.

Expected duration of review and key milestones:

Five months:

Scope and Project Plan agreed – 13 November 2024
Evidence gathering – November 2024 – February 2025
Draft Recommendations – 12 February 2025
Final Report – 12 March 2025
Submission to Cabinet – 17 April 2025

What information do we need?

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

DfE Returns

Annual Reports
 Feedback from children, parents and providers

New information:

Further parent feedback (including survey, face to face consultation, interviews and SPCF)
 Further provider feedback including provider survey (60-70 providers)
 Feedback from staff across Children Services on impact (questionnaire)
 Feedback from education settings including schools on impact (face to face consultation, interviews)

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)

What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?

Council Officers

Overview of HAF Programme

Catalyst

Impact on children and young people

Providers

Provider Feedback

Families and children (FSM)
 Families and children (Non FSM)
 Families and Children (SEN)

Child and Parent /Carer Voice

School staff

School perspective

How will this information be gathered? (e.g. financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)

Committee meetings, surveys, interviews.

How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?

As above.

How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?

The Equality Act 2010 protects everyone from discrimination on grounds of nine Protected Characteristics, including Disability.

The Council is under a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The review will contribute towards meeting the Council's requirements under this Duty, particularly in relation to the outcomes for more vulnerable children.

Completion of an Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) will be integral to the Select Committee review.

How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, or the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

Stockton-on-Tees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023:

All children and families get the best start in life.

All people in Stockton-on-Tees live well and live longer.

All people in Stockton-on-Tees live in healthy places and sustainable communities.

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:

- To increase the number of individual children and young people on the uptake of HAF
- To improve offer of the HAF programme ensuring that eligible young people are enabled to attend and are offered fun and appropriate activities, along with a balanced nutritious meal
- To maximise the role of schools and education settings in the planning and delivery of the HAF programme
- To ensure the project is value for money and develop a plan for sustainability beyond current funding
- To ensure provision covers the whole borough and offer is accessible by children in rural areas
- To increase provision for eligible children with additional needs
- To improve provision for eligible young people aged 13 years and over
- To understand how agencies are working together to provide help and support for families who are eligible and accessing HAF, beyond the holiday periods

Project Plan			
Key Task	Details/Activities	Date	Responsibility
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	October 2024	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	29 October 2024	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member, Director, Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Scope and Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	13 November 2024	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Not applicable		
Obtaining Evidence	Introductory presentation Equality and Poverty Impact Discussion Public Health Catalyst Family Hubs 0-19 Service Eastern Ravens Trust School Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mill Lane Primary • High Clarence • Tilery Provider Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOSI?? • Five Lamps • Roseberry Consortium • Tees Active Leisure 	13 November 2024 11 December 2024 15 January 2025 Interactive Session	Select Committee
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations Parent Feedback Children & Young People Feedback	12 February 2025	Select Committee (Informal Session)
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	February 2025	Scrutiny Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss findings of review and draft recommendations	TBA	Select Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, Cabinet Member, Director, Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Final Agreement of Report by Select Committee	Approval of final report by CYP Select Committee	12 March 2025	Select Committee, Cabinet Member, Director
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny	Consideration of report	18 March 2025	Executive Scrutiny Committee

Report to Cabinet/Approving Body	Presentation of final report with recommendations for approval to Cabinet	17 April 2025	Cabinet
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