

Report of:	Director of Public Health: Mark Adams Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health: Councillor Dorothy Davison Director of Education, Prevention and Partnerships: Rob Brown Executive Member for Communities and Education: Councillor Mieka Smiles
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Submitted to:	Executive - 16 March 2021
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Subject:	Acceptance of the Holiday Activities Fund 2021 Grant
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Summary

Proposed decision(s)
That the Executive approves that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegated authority is granted to the Director of Public Health to accept the Holiday Activities Fund 2021 grant. The Director of Public Health in consultation with the Director of Education, Prevention and Partnership, Executive member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and Executive Member for Communities and Education, receives delegated authority to sign off future implementation plans and allocate funding up to £150,000 per provider to deliver the Holiday Activities Fund programme.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Executive	Yes – over £150,000 and more than 2 wards will be affected.	This report is not confidential.	For the purposes of the call-in procedure, this report is not urgent.

Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan		
Business Imperatives	Physical Regeneration	Social Regeneration
		The proposed recommendations are in line with the ambitions of the social regeneration strategy

Ward(s) affected
All

What is the purpose of this report?

- The report provides detail on the Holiday Activities Fund 2021 (e.g. the delivery requirements) and asks that Middlesbrough Council accepts the grant on offer.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

- The decision is required as the grant is over £150,000 and affects more than two wards.

Report Background

- School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes – some children from lower-income families are more likely to experience ‘unhealthy holidays’ in terms of nutrition and physical health and are less likely to access fun

activities. Parents from food insecure households report greater stress levels during the school holidays, impacting on mental wellbeing.

There is also evidence for greater learning loss during the school holidays (particularly summer) in children from lower-income families, particularly around spelling.

Over recent years, the Government has piloted a range of approaches to delivering school holiday activities with the aim of providing free healthy meals and fun activities to disadvantaged children. In November 2020, they announced that Local Authorities would be allocated a share of £220 million to expand the Holiday Activities Fund (HAF) programme in 2021 so that it is available for every child and young person eligible for free school meals (FSM).

The grant being made available to Middlesbrough Council is listed below, alongside the other Teesside Local Authorities.

Local authority name	2020/21 FY	2021/22 FY	Total indicative allocation
Hartlepool	£63,000	£563,500	£626,500
Middlesbrough	£105,340	£942,130	£1,047,470
Redcar and Cleveland	£69,990	£625,960	£695,950
Stockton-on-Tees	£91,500	£818,350	£909,850

Broadly, the requirements of the HAF programme 2021 are:

- Healthy (hot) meals to School Food Standards
- Enrichment activities
- Physical activity and nutrition education
- Signposting and referrals to services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families (e.g. Housing Support Officers, Affordable Warmth Advisors)
- Inclusive and accessible provision
- At least 4 hours for 4 days a week – for 4 weeks in the summer, and for a week in Easter and Christmas
- Ofsted registered providers where appropriate

The free holiday club places must be targeted at children and young people who are eligible for and receiving benefits-related free school meals (8,393 in Middlesbrough at October 2020 half term).

If we can show that we are offering the programme across the geographical area and fully meeting demand from free school meal eligible children in the area, then with permission from the Department for Education up to 15% of the funding can be used to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of benefits-related free school meals but who are considered by the local authority as vulnerable or in need of this provision.

The Department for Education have confirmed that 10% of the local grant can be allocated to the management and co-ordination of the HAF programme.

The Easter provision will likely need to be remote delivery (e.g. food parcels and guided learning), whilst the Department for Education are hopeful that face-to-face delivery will be possible from the summer onwards.

The HAF programme will need to link with and complement wider, relevant activities such as summer catch up activities which are the responsibility of other partners (e.g. schools) to deliver. The responsibility of the Local Authority in delivering the HAF is to coordinate free holiday provision - including healthy food and enriching activities - for children who receive benefits-related free school meals.

A further update paper will be provided to the Executive in June 2021.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

4. Permission is sought to accept the HAF programme grant and implement the activities.

Why is this being recommended?

5. Poverty is a significant issue in Middlesbrough, with 31.4% of children living in low income families. The school holidays pose additional stresses on these families. The provision of the HAF programme locally – alongside other holiday hunger and wider food poverty work – will alleviate some of these stress and benefit our most in need children, particular in terms of holiday learning loss.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

6. Given the scale of the issue, no other options are likely available.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

7. The HAF programme will have a variety of positive impacts on local children, young people and their families – for example, improved/sustained physical activity and nutrition during the holiday periods and a reduced risk of learning loss.

Equality and Diversity

8. There will be no negative, differential impact on diverse groups and communities associated with this report.

Legal

9. Relevant procurement and legal requirements will need to be met.

Financial

10. See section 3.

Policy Framework

11. The proposed action has no impact on the Council's policy framework.

Equality and Diversity

12. Equality Impact Assessments may be required to ensure that the provision is accessible to all relevant communities.

Risk

13. Relevant risk assessments will be required for all provision of the HAF programme.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

14. Progress on implementation of the HAF programme will be provided on a regular basis to Children's Services and Public Health DMTs.

Background papers

15. The Department for Education has recently shared two relevant documents, which are supplied alongside this paper:
 - Grant Determination Letter (Section 31 Grant Determination for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2021: No 31/5325).

- Grants to Fund Local Coordination of Free Holiday Activities and Healthy Food for Disadvantaged Children during 2021 - Guidance for Local Authorities.

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Additional update

16. On Tuesday 2nd March 2021, the Department for Work and Pensions extended the COVID Winter Grant Scheme to cover the whole of the Easter holidays (previously due to end 31st March 2021), with Middlesbrough receiving £229,320. It has been agreed that this funding will be utilised to fund vouchers for free school meal eligible families, leaving the Holiday Activities Fund grant to provider enrichment activities during the Easter holidays. Confirmed plans for this provision will be shared with the Director of Education, Prevention and Partnership, Executive member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and Executive Member for Communities and Education by 19th March 2021.