

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 07 February 2023

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Grant determination for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme 2023/24 &amp; 24/25</b>		
<b>Ward(s)</b>	All Wards		
<b>Author: Tommy Jarvis</b>	<b>Job title: Senior Project Manager</b>		
<b>Cabinet lead: Cllr. Asher Craig Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Equalities</b>	<b>Executive Director lead: Abi Gbago Executive Director Children’s and Education</b>		
<b>Proposal origin:</b> BCC Staff			
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <b>Decision forum:</b> Cabinet			
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To seek approval from Cabinet to accept and spend a Department for Education (DfE) grant to fund holiday activities and food programmes for school age children entitled to free school meal (FSM) for the main school holidays (not including half-terms) during the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial year.			
<b>Evidence Base:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The impact of Covid-19 has highlighted the economic divide in the poorest areas, and for the poorest families in Bristol, placing further pressure on a system that was already stretched.</li> <li>2. High food and energy costs have placed further pressure on families in receipt of means tested benefits – this has increased food poverty in Bristol</li> <li>3. Based on January 2022 school census data the percentage of children and young people eligible for benefits related free school meals has increase from 26.1% in 2021 to 26.7% in 2022 for primary and from 24.2% in 2021 to 26.3% in 2022 for secondary</li> <li>4. 2023/24 will be the third year of DfE HAF funding – in Bristol HAF has been rebranded as Your Holiday Hub (YHH) which has built on the Healthy Holidays model.</li> <li>5. The programme is planned and delivered in partnership with Playful Bristol, Bristol Association for Neighbourhood Daycare (BAND) and Feeding Bristol with each organisation receiving an annual allocation of £12,000 to support the planning, communication, evaluation, and monitoring of activities leading up to and over the holiday periods</li> <li>6. Over the course of the 2022 summer holidays, 65 delivery partners, mostly from the voluntary and community sector provided over 20,000 spaces for eligible children across the six-week holiday period – this included access to a nutritious meal in line with school standards</li> <li>7. The HAF grant will continue until at least March 2025. Delivery in Bristol will align with the One City Food Equality and the Belonging strategies</li> <li>8. In 2022 Bristol launched a dedicated YHH website, a training package for community chefs, an increase in local food sourcing and production, and improvements to safeguarding practices</li> <li>9. YHH 2023 will launch for face-to-face provision during Spring school holidays – week commencing 3rd April 2023</li> <li>10. It is proposed that BCC officers will continue to work in partnership with key delivery partners (to be formalised) to deliver a grants programme to scale capacity in priority areas of high deprivation working with</li> </ol>			

schools, community, and voluntary sector, and private sector organisations. It is anticipated that the funding split across the three holidays will be - Easter (£324,691) Summer (£974,073) Winter (£324,691). The division of amounts across the different organisations has yet to be determined.

11. 15% of the funding can be used to cover the cost of non-FSM children including children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and those with no recourse to public funds. The intention is to use this 15% to increase access to holiday clubs for vulnerable children not currently entitled to FSM
12. The grant guidance states that up to 10% of the budget can be used for administrative purposes. Approximately £180,000 will be used to cover core delivery costs including, but not limited to management costs, grant coordination, partner contributions, marketing and communications, website development, data management and auditing. BCC management costs and a grant coordinator post will be funded through this element.

#### **Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:**

That Cabinet:

1. Authorises the Executive Director Children and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Equalities to take all steps required to accept and spend the Department for Education (DfE) grant to fund holiday activities and food programmes funding for 23/24 and 24/25 including procuring and awarding contracts (which may be over £500k) where necessary to implement the activities and programmes as outlined in this report.

#### **Corporate Strategy alignment:**

1. Empowering and caring – this grant allocation will provide holiday provision to families in Bristol who have been disproportionately affected by the impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. Free holiday places will empower parents and carers by giving them the time and space to find employment or take part in training and skills development. It will help provide a caring and safe environment for children to rebuild their confidence and social skills
2. Fair and Inclusive – this programme will provide disadvantaged children and young people with access to activities and food in line with what is available to their non-disadvantaged peers. This will help to create a fairer system for our children and young people.
3. Well Connected – this grant will be used to expand existing partnership efforts to eradicate food poverty in Bristol. This One City approach will ensure Bristol can continue to build networks and relationships with partners in all sectors.
4. Wellbeing – activities will focus on improving physical and mental wellbeing of children and young people. Emphasis will be placed on providing engaging activities, nutritional information, and outdoor play to ensure children and young people learn through play.

#### **City Benefits:**

1. Providing enriching holiday activities will support disadvantaged children and reduce the impact of Covid and the cost-of-living crisis on their mental health and wellbeing. This will have a positive impact in future years as this group enter adulthood.
2. By working in a One City way, we can ensure that activities are delivered in a way that improves children and young people's understanding of the world around them, including the environment and food production.
3. Social Value will be created by working with and funding Bristol based partners where possible, mitigating some of the impact of lost revenue due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions.
4. By working with key One City partners, we aim to access further funding and partner contributions to increase access to provision for key equalities groups that usually miss out on holiday provision, for example those with special educational needs or those from BAME communities
5. Bristol's HAF strategy is to use HAF funding to build and strengthen the local voluntary and community sector. HAF funded groups are offered free training, capital funding, centralised support, networking opportunities and partnership development. The aim is to build a legacy beyond the HAF funding.

**Consultation Details:** Strategic planning for 2023/24 is already underway involving external stakeholders. This process takes into consideration key city strategies including the Belonging Strategy and the Food Equality Strategy. The Children and Young People board, part of the One City Partnership will provide support, guidance, and challenge.

**Background Documents:**

[Bristol's Belonging Strategy for Children and Young People - Vision Statement \(bristolonecity.com\)](http://bristolonecity.com)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	£1,848,730	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	Central Government Funding
<b>Capital Cost</b>	£N/A	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	N/A
<b>One off cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Ongoing cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Income generation proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**1. Finance Advice:** The Department for Education (DfE) has made funds available to every local authority in England to coordinate free holiday club/activity provision, including healthy food and enriching activities, for children receiving benefits-related free school meals for the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. This report seeks approval to accept and spend this funding for both 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The Grant allocated to Bristol City Council to deliver the holiday activities and food programme in 2023/24 is £1,848,730. The grant letter and programme guidance were published on the 20th December 2022 and 80% of the funding is expected to be paid to the Council in April 2023. A payment of up to the remaining 20% of the 2023/24 allocation will be made in April 2024 following the satisfactory submission to the Department by 15 February 2024 of a report setting out:

- the actual number of children the Authority worked with during delivery of the programme at Easter, summer and Christmas in 2023.

Similarly, the 2024/25 allocation will probably not be known until December 2023 but will be reported to Cabinet as part of the monthly Finance Reports to Cabinet once known.

Local authorities have previously had flexibility about how they spend this grant and deliver this provision, to best serve the needs of the children and families in their areas. Provision should continue to remain in line with the framework of standards set out in the grant conditions.

Local authorities are able to use up to a maximum of 15% of their programme funding 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 to be in need of this provision.

This flexibility also allows the Authority to spend up to a maximum of 10% of its allocation on its administration costs for the local coordination of the Programme and this should include any assumptions in relation to exit strategy and risk of redundancy costs as set out in the HR advice.

**Finance Business Partner:** Denise Hunt 18 January 2023

**2. Legal Advice:** The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

**Legal Team Leader:** Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 16 January 2023

**3. Implications on IT:** I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity

**IT Team Leader:** Alex Simpson – Senior Solution Architect 18 January 2023

**4. HR Advice:** The report is seeking approval to accept and spend a Department for Education (DfE) grant to fund

holiday activities and food programmes for schools. There are no significant HR implications for Bristol City Council employees arising from this request, however there is one fixed term employee who will have accrued over two years service by the end of the funding. Measures are in place for an exit strategy that would include access to redeployment for the employee, with a redundancy payment being funded by the grant, should they not secure alternative employment during their time in redeployment.

**HR Partner:** Lorna Laing, HR Business Partner – People 18 January 2023

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	Christina Gray Director of Public Health	7 December 2022
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr Asher Craig Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Equalities	12 December 2022
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	6 January 2023

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b> Department for Education HAF Grant Determination Letter 2023/24	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>