

Subject:	Acceptance and deployment of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme funding and its use to commission Rossendale Leisure Trust to deliver the programme as an extension to existing arrangements (Spring Holiday Activities and Food Programme)	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	14 th May 2025
Report of:	Director of Resources	Lead Member:	Resources
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Chris Warren	Telephone:	01706 252409
Email:	chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Accepts the grant of £195,430 for the Summer and Christmas Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme
- 1.2 To approve the Director of Resources in Consultation with the Lead member for Resources to commission Rossendale Leisure Trust under existing arrangements to enable them to support the children in the borough who are in receipt of free school meals.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since 2018, the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) has provided support to children in receipt of free school meals through holiday periods. The Government have now confirmed there will be another year of HAF funding for 2025-26.
- RBC will receive £195,429.86 for the Summer and Christmas HAF programme this will come via LCC as the upper tier authority through which funding is channelled.
- The Council has commissioned Rossendale Leisure Trust to deliver the programme since 2021 and it is proposed to continue with this approach delivery which has been successful to date.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since 2018, the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) has provided support to children in receipt of free school meals through holiday periods. Following successful pilots between 2018 and 2020, the programme was rolled out to all upper tier local authorities in financial years 2021/22 through 2024/25. The Government has now confirmed there will be another year of HAF funding for 2025-26. The programme will provide activities for up to 800 children in Rossendale.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The programme has been delivered on behalf of Rossendale Borough Council by Rossendale Leisure Trust since the programme roll out in 2021/22. RLT has employed a part time coordinator to plan and deliver the programme. The coordinator has built up a comprehensive list of local delivery organisations that provide a wide range of activities across the borough,

and has established an excellent relationship with local VCFS groups that are able to provide the meals for the programme.

- 4.2 The HAF programme in Rossendale is steered by a local steering group, of which RBC is a member. Government has announced the roll out of the programme for 2025/26. However, due to the late and single year funding announcement, LCC has offered existing delivery organisations an extended agreement to deliver the programme, as there is insufficient time or future certainty of funding to procure different providers for the service.
- 4.3 As a result of this it is proposed to extend the agreement in place with Rossendale Leisure Trust under the extension procedure of the contract procedure rules given the continuation of existing programme requirements but uncertainty around future funding for the programme.
- 4.4 The continuation of the existing grant agreement with RLT will allow the delivery of the programme which is already in the planning stage.
- 4.5 LCC has advised that districts can continue to commission their existing delivery partner if this is agreed by their finance and legal senior officers.

5. RISK

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
 - If the council fails to secure a delivery partner there is a risk that the programme will not be delivered as required and disadvantaged children will miss out on meals and activities.
 - The single year announcement of funding makes meaningful tender processes challenging especially with an incumbent provider who has developed knowledge and contacts in the programme delivery. Should multi year funding not be forthcoming there is a risk that appropriate value for money assessments by way of tendering are undeliverable.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 All finance issues are included within the report.

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Due to the value of the funding, Cabinet is required to approve acceptance with delegations to officers to sign all relevant funding agreements in line with the Council's Constitution.
- 7.2 There are no other legal implications arising directly from this report but further reports will be presented as and when required to seek the necessary authorisations.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

N/A

9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 Cabinet should agree this decision to ensure there is no break to the Holiday Activity and Food programme and to minimise the possibility of disadvantaged children missing out on meals and activities in the school holidays.

No background papers