

**Children, Education and Communities
Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

20 December 2022

Report of the Director of Customer & Communities

**Implementation of recommendations from previously completed
scrutiny reviews (School Holiday Food/Community Hubs) and
Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Update**

Summary

1. This report provides Members with an update on the implementation of the approved recommendations arising from two scrutiny reviews completed by this Policy & Scrutiny Committee. The report also contains an update on the current 3-year HAF Programme.
2. Members are asked to note progress and consider when to receive any further updates if required.

Recommendations

3. Members are asked to note the content of this report and agree whether and when further updates are required going forward.

Reason: To raise awareness of progress of approved CEC Scrutiny recommendations and the HAF Programme.

Background

School Holiday Food Scrutiny Review

4. On 19 May 2022 Executive agreed recommendations in response to their request made on 30th September 2021 for this Committee to consider: the effectiveness, impact and funding of the free school meal voucher scheme alongside other grassroots community-based provision and other schemes to address food poverty impacts.

5. At their meeting in January 2022, the CEC Scrutiny Committee resolved to form a Task Group to research, evaluate and consider the key issues in supporting children's food provision during school holidays. Arising from the Committee's extensive consultation and key findings were a number of recommendations for the Executive to consider as outlined in Annex A attached.
6. Alongside each recommendation is a progress report on the action taken against each recommendation since May 2022. It is important to note that the new arrangements following the scrutiny review including the issue of food and fuel vouchers, and wraparound advice is still in place and operating.

Community Hubs Scrutiny Review

7. Also on 19 May 2022 Executive agreed the recommendation from this Committee's scrutiny review to take note of a range of points when setting policy and strategy on Community Hubs. These are listed in Annex B which also contains a response to those points.
8. Since the report was approved the Cost-of-Living Crisis has increased the financial challenges for many residents and the focus of the Communities Team has been to provide associated support as outlined in the recent 'Addressing the Cost of Living Crisis in York' report presented to Executive on November 22 2022. The Good Place Network and focus on warm places have created the opportunity for further hubs to grow within communities and those points raised above are born in mind as new community assets are forming as outlined in the following extracts from the report.

Food Sufficiency, Good Place Network and Warm Spaces

Food sufficiency work has been facilitated by the council funding the Food Officer within the Communities Team and working with York's Good Place Network. The Good Place Network aims to bring together a previous Community Venues Network with community hubs and food projects to share best practice, network and discuss the pertinent issues facing community venues and projects.

In addition the Team are working with Healthwatch York to gather information about available warm spaces in York available over the winter and have developed a Warm Place 'filter' available on the Live Well York community website. A funding scheme is being developed to support community organisations to make the most of the opportunity to

support their communities over the Winter months offering warm welcoming spaces.

Community Hubs

The council's community approach as a priority in the Council Plan, has been to develop Hubs within York's neighbourhoods and wards. The Hubs have been both physical and virtual (virtual throughout the coronavirus pandemic). They provide a focus for communities where residents can build relationships, access support and advice, food supplies/meals, learning and development activities.

The Hubs help to encourage more resilient communities through the support they can provide not just from the council but through community and voluntary organisations and resident volunteers themselves. They help develop life skills as well as providing community contact for those who may be lonely, isolated, or vulnerable.

The Hubs also help provide 'intelligence' to the council on the real issues affecting communities so assumptions are not made. Linking in the Local Area Co-ordinators (LACs) and other community officers to the Hubs within wards helps to provide a network of support across the city. The Hubs form a key part of the city's armoury in supporting residents through the cost of living crisis also providing 'warm spaces' where residents can meet.

9. In terms of the final point g. in Annex B the Communities Team are also currently facilitating the development of neighbourhood action plans through ward teams. They are working through a community asset mapping process that will look at assets, connections and associations and bring residents and communities together around locally agreed priorities. The action planning process will include a variety of networking and engagement opportunities and review of ward priorities. This will aim to find out what the people living in a community care enough about to work on together to change, develop and or sustain and will help to direct any local funding and/or resources available including develop where appropriate any physical hub or other community space.

Holiday Activities & Food Update

10. The HAF government funded scheme supplies food to children along with activities over 10 of the 13 weeks of annual school holiday. The Food (HAF) officer is working with providers across the city to improve the offer working alongside a financial inclusion funded food officer to establish networks on the ground within communities. The integration of these officers within the Communities Team has further enhanced opportunities to ensure that ward funding and other resources can be

matched to need within communities and more activities have resulted on the ground.

11. Over the School Summer Holidays 22 activity providers offered 7,000 places across the city. Planning for the School Christmas Holidays initially proved a challenge in terms of securing sufficient activity providers as many take a break over this period. This is where working collaboratively with community groups and hubs has made a real difference in the number and range of activities available at Christmas and has the added benefit of connecting families into local support which extends beyond the holiday periods.
12. This Christmas 26 activity providers have been secured offering 72 days of face-to-face sessions. This includes 8 family parties, hosted by the Communities Team in partnership with local community groups, in order to maximise the reach of the programme (in particular in areas of high numbers of free school meal eligibility). Many activities will be supplemented with activities and food packs to take home which proved popular last Christmas and makes the most out of available resource. The HAF Christmas Newsletter is attached at Annex C outlining all the activities available this year and other food related offers – this is being send to all schools, ward councillors, communities teams and partners.

Consultation

13. There was no consultation involved in the production of this report. The consultations involved in the two scrutiny review are detailed in the final reports included in background papers.

Options

14. Members may request further updates and the attendance of the relevant officer at a further meeting to clarify/update on any outstanding recommendations or agree that no further updates are required.

Analysis

15. There is no analysis in this report as this is not a decision-making report.

Council Plan

16. The two Scrutiny Review outlined in this report are linked to the following priorities:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- A Better Start for Children and Young People
- Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy
- Safe Communities and culture for all

as set out in the Council's Plan 2019-23 (Making History, Building Communities).

Implications

17. There are no known Financial, Human Resources, Equalities, Legal, ICT or other implications associated with the recommendations in this report. Implications arising from the two scrutiny reviews are detailed in the Final Reports.

Risk Management

18. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy, there are no known risks associated with this report. Risks associated with the review recommendations are included in the two Final Reports.

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Pauline Stuchfield
Director of Customer & Communities

Report Date 8/12/2022

Approved



Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Reports to CEC Policy & Scrutiny Committee:

Holiday Food Scrutiny scoping and draft Hubs Report (minutes 23 and 26)
[Agenda for Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 4 January 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Final Reports (minutes 40 and 41)

[Agenda for Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 3 May 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Reports to Executive:

Original Executive request (minute 38)

[Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 30 September 2021, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Reports (x2) to Executive approving CEC recommendations (minute 126 and 127)

[Agenda for Executive on Thursday, 19 May 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Addressing the Cost of Living Executive Report (draft minute 47)

[Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 22 November 2022, 5.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#)

Annexes

- Annex A Action plan – School Holiday Food Scrutiny Review
- Annex B Community Hub Recommendations Update
- Annex C HAF Christmas Newsletter

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

- CEC Childrens, Education & Culture
- CYC City of York Council
- FIS Family Information Service
- FSM Free School Meals service
- HAF Holiday Activities & Food
- HSF Household Support Fund
- ICT Information & Communications Technology
- LAC Local Area Co-ordinator