

EE11. Covid-19 Response – Funding Food Provision Summer 2020

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided information on how the Council was using its £878k share of the Scottish Government's Food Fund and set-out the future costs and funding requirements of continuing various elements of providing food/school meals over the summer period.

Funding had been allocated across 3 distinct areas of provision:-

- a. School Meal Provision – Holidays £ 700k
- b. Supporting FCVS Emergency Food Project £ 100k
- c. Supporting People Initiative £ 78k.

For the Easter holidays, a payment of £35 (£3.50/day) was made to all pupils eligible for Clothing Grants and Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). The total cost of that was c£180k. After Easter, Education Scotland reviewed the varying approaches taken by Councils and found an average weekly payment of £2.37 was made.

The Emergency Executive was invited to consider two options for delivery of a summer food programme:-

Option 1 - to make direct payments to families

- 1a – £3.50/day (in line with Easter payment) Cost c£ 683k
- 1b – £2.50/day (more in line with national position) Cost c£ 488k
- 1c – flat payment of £100 (approx. £2.63/day) Cost c£ 514k

Option 2 - to continue to provide "grab n go" meal bags.

The Falkirk emergency food project administered by CVS Falkirk supported additional supplies for the Community Food Project Network. Additional supplies would be purchased and distributed across the network. This would top up the food provided by the Emergency Food Project and would include fresh produce, special dietary requirements and special ingredients for recipes to be included in food parcels. High levels of demand for food parcels have meant that the average cost of providing the service had increased from c£7k to c£13k per week.

After set-up costs had been accounted for, the £100k allocation was expected to have been fully utilised by week commencing 25 May 2020. Given the significant increase in demand for the service emergency funding was sought to allow it to continue at least until the end of the summer holiday period.

Decision

The Emergency Executive:-

- (1) noted the content of this report and the details surrounding each of the options and proposals contained within it;**

- (2) agreed to make payments directly to families at the level of £3.50/day (option 1a) but make available grab and go meal bags for any children who want them and in particular those not entitled to the payment;**
- (3) agreed to continue to support and fund the Falkirk CVS Emergency Food Project (as outlined in Sections 4.4 – 4.6), and**
- (4) agreed that the Hardship Fund (Section 5.1) should be used to meet any additional costs associated with the decisions that are made.**