

**LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES – Active Kitchen Options Appraisals**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Dave Cove Interim Head of Leisure & Cultural Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

1.1 Following the Full Council meeting of Bromsgrove District Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 to provide a report to :

- 1) Advise Members on the progress that BDC Development Services has made over the past 12 months developing holiday time positive activities targeted at young people and children experiencing holiday hunger within two Council wards.
- 2) Provide a relevant and evidence based needs analysis, area by area, across the Bromsgrove District with the intention to support the decision making process for members regarding the need to proceed to mainstream the service or not.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That Cabinet **RECOMMEND** to Council they approve that officers continue to pilot the Active Kitchen service in Sidemoor, Charford, Catshill, Rubery and Drakes Cross in 11 weeks of the school holidays and that approval be given for an estimated £34,000 be drawn down from balances 2019/20 to fund the service's operational delivery, marketing, research and development.

2.2 That Cabinet **RECOMMEND** to Council they approve that officers return to cabinet in July 2020 to review the pilot and recommend next steps for the project.

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**Background**

***Background to the decision to bring the report to Council***

3.1.1 At the Full Council meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> January it was duly noted that in 2018 "Active Kitchen" sessions were held in Sidemoor and Charford, in partnership with the YMCA, NewSong Community Church and St Andrews Church Hall

3.1.2 These sessions were held during school holidays since Easter 2018 ensured that local children in the areas concerned could take part in fun sporting activities and enjoy a healthy hot meal afterwards

**3.1.3** Funding for these sessions was provided from the divisional funds of two County Councillors in Bromsgrove.

**3.2.1** This Cabinet report was scheduled for the June 2019 Cabinet meeting and was deferred as a result of the Development Services team determining that not enough evidence and information was available in order to reach an informed decision about the way forward for the scheme. Since then a small but focused amount of local data was gathered at the most recent Active Kitchen activities that took place in Charford during the May half term activity of 2019. That evaluation alongside a wider range of nationally available data determined the following:

***Background information and summary achievements we have about the project April 2018 - April 2019***

**3.2.2** In April 2019 the Sports Development Unit of the new Development Services team presented to the new service manager that :

“Active Kitchen provides a safe and welcoming place for local children aged 9-14 to keep active during the school holidays and fight holiday hunger with home prepared meals and that it aims to have a lasting impact on the lives of young people, empowering personal value and self-confidence.”

The project depended on funding from County Councillors. As a result of the remit of the funding provided by County Councillors the team delivered the project in areas with a higher level of deprivation than others and those were Charford and Sidemoor wards. Anecdotal evidence presented to Council staff and partners during their work in these areas highlighted low levels of aspiration and high levels of issues relating to poor mental health. The project seemed to successfully tackle these issues through physical activity opportunities, nutritious food and passionate staff support. Since the first Bromsgrove Active Kitchen project in April 2018 the projects have proved popular with residents with for example 19 young people attending in the Easter holidays and May half 2018 term seeing 25 young people. All in all the programme ran in the holidays at Easter, May half term, summer holidays and October half term in 2018 and during early 2019 and saw 185 people attend and receive a free hot meal in total. The programme ran across 2 locations in Charford, and Sidemoor.

The project to date has been supported by the YMCA, Newsong Community Church and St Andrews Church Hall. The project continued into the summer holidays in 2018 and provided the opportunity to access sport and physical activity daily, introducing young people to a variety of activities including; gymnastics, dance, skipping, football, rugby, basketball, dodgeball, cricket and more. The project also provided volunteering opportunities for local people to get involved in supporting the project through coaching and cooking. This volunteering has proved invaluable to the project. The following information was determined:

***The key partners involved in the delivery of the project to date***

YMCA  
West Mercia Police  
Life Fork and Spoon  
St Andrews Church

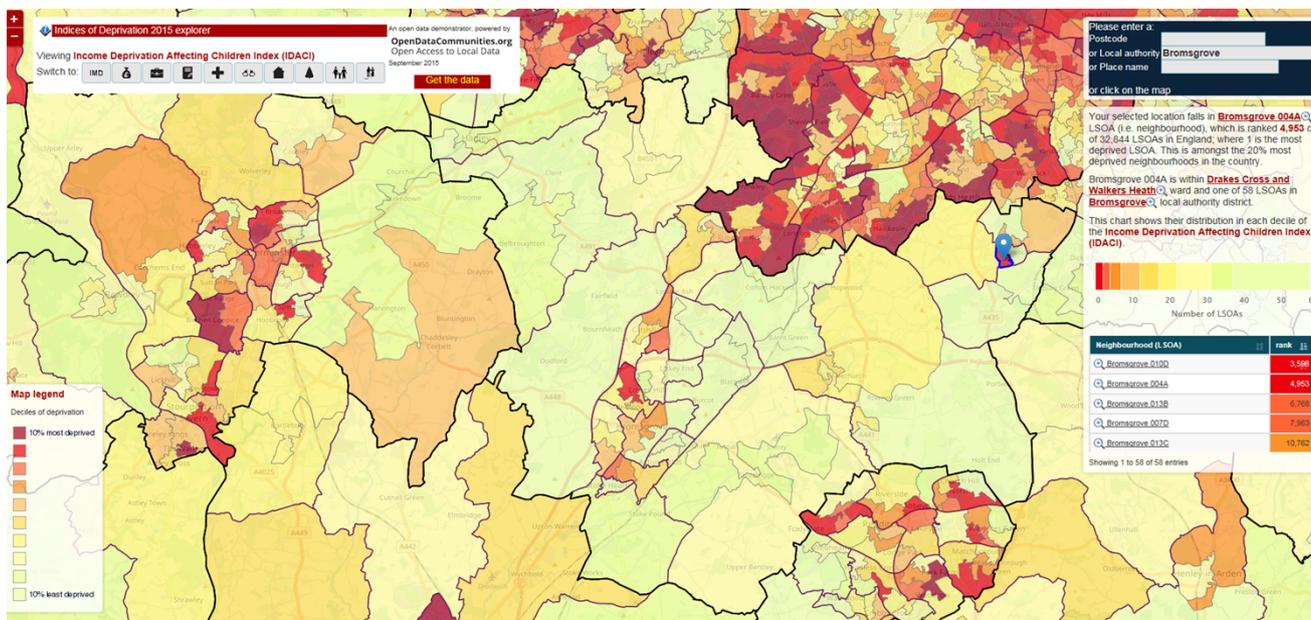
The Bromsgrove Youth Hub  
NewSong Church

***Further research determining needs in Bromsgrove carried out by managers since April 2019***

- 3.3.1** Officers wish to emphasise the feedback provided by partners indicating the intrinsic value of this programme adding considerable value to existing youth work provision in the district. In short more engagement work in more locations leads to stronger relationships within communities and better outcomes for children, young people and their guardians.
- 3.3.2** On further investigation it has come to the attention of officers that the Department for Education are delivering pilot based local coordination of free holiday provision (healthy food and enriching activities) for disadvantaged children in a number of local authority areas across England.
- 3.3.3** This clearly reflects the increasing role of local councils in tackling holiday hunger. The attainment gaps between less well-off children and well off children upon returning to school after school holidays is well documented. Healthy food and activities add real value not just to tackling the issues of holiday hunger and isolation but also have a very positive impact on educational outcomes.
- 3.3.4** The DfE recognises that the school holidays can be particular pressure points for some families because of increased costs (such as food and childcare) and reduced incomes (such as loss of a free school meal, reduced working hours etc.). There is a growing body of evidence of a holiday experience gap - with children from disadvantaged families less likely to access organised out-of-school activities; more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health; and more likely to experience social isolation.
- 3.3.5** According to the DfE free holiday clubs are therefore a response to this issue and their evidence suggests that they can have a positive impact on children and young people and that they work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible enrichment activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch, and when they involve children (and parents/guardians) in food preparation.
- 3.3.6** The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 indicates that the lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the district which are the most relatively deprived are in the following wards:
- Sidemoor (in top 20% most deprived nationally)
  - Rock Hill
  - Catshill South
  - Bromsgrove Central
  - Charford

However, when you look at the Income Deprivation Domain Affecting Children Index, the lower super output areas (LSOAs) affected are in the following wards:

- Sidemoor (in top 20% most deprived nationally)
- Drakes Cross (in top 20% most deprived nationally)
- Rock Hill
- Catshill South
- Bromsgrove Central
- Charford



The **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)** measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. It is a subset of the Income Deprivation Domain which measures the proportion of the population in an area experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests).

Data produced by the End Child Poverty Coalition, provides estimates of child poverty to ward level, defining households as living in poverty if their household income (adjusted to account for household size,) is less than 60% of the median. All poverty rates are calculated on an after housing costs basis. Whilst Bromsgrove District as a whole had the lowest level of child poverty in the West Midlands, the following wards did have significantly higher levels:

- Charford- 36% of children
- Catshill- 32% of children
- Sidemoor- 30% of children

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Fuel Poverty data indicates that LSOAs in the following wards have the highest proportion of households who are fuel poor:

- Sidemoor
- Catshill North
- Rock Hill

**3.3.7** In addition to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation data according to the School Census of January 2018 (Appendix A of this report) we have a very clear picture as a Council of how many children on the school register are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM). This represents another way to determine whether the right young people are accessing the proposed Active Kitchen service. This data supports the view that there are pockets of need in the Charford, Sidemoor, Catshill and Drakes Cross areas and in addition indicates need in the Rubery area.

**3.3.8** There are 39 schools in the Bromsgrove District area. There are 242 in total across Worcestershire.

**3.3.9** There are 1043 children who are entitled to access free school meals in the District of Bromsgrove.

### **Proposed Pilot Active Kitchen Project**

**3.4** Following consideration of the information provided from 3.2.2 through till 3.3.9 of this report officers have made a judgement that recommends that we continue to pilot the project and on an initial basis roll out the scheme to work in 5 areas of the district: Sidemoor, Charford, Catshill, Rubery and Drakes Cross during 11 school holiday weeks in 2019 and 2020.

**3.4.1** The officers would continue to work alongside our current partnerships : YMCA, West Mercia Police, Life Fork and Spoon, St Andrews Church, The Bromsgrove Youth Hub and NewSong Church to deliver the work in Sidemoor and Charford. Officers are currently in discussions with the YMCA about attaching the programme to current provision in Catshill and Rubery youth club settings. Officers are currently exploring partnership opportunities to work in Drakes Cross. These new partnerships will all be in place in time for the October half term of 2019. Activities are scheduled to take place during the summer of 2019 in Sidemoor and Charford.

3.4.2 The officers will allocate research and development time to explore other smaller scale options to provide support strictly for those limited numbers of children and young people that need the support in areas outside of the 5 key hotspots. A budget will be allocated to this area of work.

3.4.3 Officers have determined that if the project were to continue to improve in quality then we would benefit from a wide collaborative approach to improve the quality of provision, in terms of:

- Partnership working with other stakeholders in order to improve targeting and referral
- Links with local food providers including utilising surplus food from local supermarkets and businesses
- Further exploration of potential usage of existing venues to include but not be restricted to community centres, schools, churches.
- Further exploration of evaluation delivery methods required to establish the background of project users, this issue by far and away representing the most challenging factor for the programme. Without offending our target groups how do we determine the background of the children and their level of needs in relation to access to quality food? One good example of meaningful data collection has been asking questions of the young people. The questions and the answers provided are listed below. These questions were asked in May half term in Sidemoor:

1. What else would you be doing if you weren't here?

- "Sleeping"
- "Playing on my phone"
- "In bed"
- "On my phone"
- "Playing fornite"
- "Going hub"
- "Watching tv"
- "Playing xbox in bed"
- "Causing mischief"

2. If you weren't getting meal here today what would be likely to eat?

- "Mcdonald"
- "sandwich"
- "Bacon"
- "All day break"
- "Chocolate cookie"
- "Pizza"
- "Noodles"
- "Chicken"
- "Chips"
- "Pot Noodle"

- “Burger”
- “something healthy”
  
- A greater co-ordination across local areas to help raise awareness of what provision is available.
  
- Improved minimum standards or guidance in terms of monitoring and evaluation
  
- Measures -how they intend to monitor their provision’s outcomes, for example, by gathering views of parents and children at the start and end of the programme or encouraging the use of food diaries.
  
- Project partners will explore whether it is possible to work alongside schools who have access to the data required to determine our success or otherwise accessing the right target groups. We will potentially be able to report on pupil-level attendance at each session. The Council will therefore require the name, date of birth, school attended and home postcode for all pupils attending each session so that the attendance data can be matched to the National Pupil Database. This should all be collected in adherence with GDPR.

**4. Financial Implications.**

The estimated cost of the pilot roll out programmes will be in the region of £34,000 per annum. This is broken down as follows:

Unit cost of £500 per each individual school holiday week’s provision in one hot spot area facility multiplied by 5 areas and 11 school holiday weeks provision = £27,500

Research and Development budget of £6,000

Marketing budget : £500

Total Estimated Budget: £34,000

**5. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications attached to receiving and considering this report.

**6. Customer, Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 By continuing the work to identify customer need, demand, satisfaction and through the use of relevant and operationally useful range of measures we will access the desired target groups most at risk of holiday hunger.
- 6.2 From an equalities perspective the projects will operate in line with the Council’s existing practices and policies and it will be expected to support the Council’s objectives in this area and respond to reasonable requests for changes to service provision to meet customer needs.

6.3 Officers view the development of this report in part to undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment.

6.4 As part of the rebranding and development of the enhanced marketing offer the project name will be reviewed alongside partners to determine whether it is proving successful. This work may lead to the development of a new project name and brand.

6.5 As part of the establishment of the projects the continued support of our Volunteers is critical to the project's success, as such this will be a key area of work after this report is approved. As part of this, we will review our approach to volunteers to ensure it continues to support and ensure that we reflect the huge benefit they have to the organisation and the contribution they make to keep these key services running by making them cost effective to deliver.

**7. Staffing Matters**

None

**8. Risk Management**

8.1 As part of the project activity there is a risk assessment which fulfils the Council's obligations with regard to delivering a safe, healthy and enjoyable activity.

8.2 The process of identifying need and evaluating the progress of this project's work looks to reassure Council that every step is being taken to ensure that a suitable decision is made regarding the extent to which this service should be provided within a District of this nature.

**9. APPENDICES**

- Indices of multiple deprivation: Income deprivation that affects children index
- School Census January 2018 providing information about Free School Meals
- District wide map indicating location of Bromsgrove based schools.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**11. KEY**

None

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