
Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	3 November 2020
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/52/20/HS
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Subject:	Scottish Government 'Access to Childcare' Fund		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of Inverclyde Council's award of £250,000 from the Scottish Government Access to Childcare Fund.
- 1.2 The report outlines the fund criteria and Inverclyde Council's application and gives an update of the Summer 2020 Childcare Hubs and the proposed spend of the Fund in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Access to Childcare Fund is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by the national charity, Children in Scotland. The fund's primary aim is to provide grants to establish models of delivery of out of school care, with a focus on priority family groups most at risk from living in poverty. A total of £1.5 million was allocated nationally in the first funding round, which closed in July 2020.
- 2.2 Inverclyde Council submitted an application to the Access to Childcare Fund seeking £250,000 towards the delivery of Holiday Hubs, providing childcare for children aged 5-8, aged 8+ and children with additional support needs. Pending a successful outcome of the grant application, the Holiday Hubs would operate in local secondary schools Monday to Friday between 0800 and 1800. Whilst Inverclyde Council would coordinate each hub, this would be supported by a range of partners and providers under the umbrella of a Holiday Hub Collaborative
- 2.3 In September 2020 it was confirmed that Inverclyde Council had been successful in its application and awarded the full £250,000. This award will allow for Holiday Hubs provision from October 2020 until October 2021 covering the two October holiday periods, Easter (2021) and Summer (2021) holiday period.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the award of £250,000 from the Access to Childcare fund

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The first Child Poverty Delivery Plan due under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 was published by the Scottish Government in 2018 and outlines action for the period 2018-22. The document 'Every child, every chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2019-22' contains a number of actions that the Scottish Government will take during the lifetime of the plan. This plan included new support for childcare after school and in the holidays to help low income parents reduce childcare costs, work more flexibly and increase their incomes.
- 4.2 The Access to Childcare Fund provided grants to establish models of delivery of out of school care, with a focus on priority family groups most at risk from living in poverty. The fund is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by the national charity, Children in Scotland. In the first round of funding a total of £1.5 million was allocated. Inverclyde Council in its submission applied for £250,000 and was one of only fifteen applicants to receive a grant, being allocated the maximum amount allowed, from approximately 200 applications made, recognising both the level of need in Inverclyde and the determined and effective measures Inverclyde Council is adopting to address it.
- 4.3 Under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 there is a requirement for all local authorities and relevant Health Boards across Scotland to reduce child poverty. The Act sets out four national statutory income-based targets to be achieved by 2030. The Act requires that each local authority and relevant Health Board must jointly prepare annually a Child Poverty Local Actions Report (LAR). Cost of living has been identified as a direct driver of poverty and the provision of Holiday Hubs is seen as crucial to supporting families across Inverclyde.
- 4.4 Inverclyde Council led on Holiday Hub provision during summer 2020 providing childcare for keyworkers' children and vulnerable pupils. 10 hubs provided childcare to approximately 192 children per day over the entirety of the summer holiday period from Monday to Friday.
- 4.5 The Holiday Hub provision during summer 2020 included a range of activities relevant to age and stage of the children in attendance. Outdoor play, health and wellbeing and creative arts were significant features of the offer.
- 4.6 Inverclyde Council has identified a need to expand existing provision of out of school care to meet local needs whilst developing accessible opportunities to support local families as detailed in the Inverclyde Child Poverty Local Action Report 2019/20.
- 4.7 The application proposed to establish 2 Holiday Hubs providing childcare for children aged 5-7 years, 8+ years and children with additional support needs. The Hubs will run Monday-Friday from 0800 until 1800 and will be located in local high schools. Co-ordination of each Hub will be led by Inverclyde Council but involve a range of different partners and providers via a Holiday Hub Collaborative. This approach will enable Inverclyde Council to maximise the use of local skills, knowledge and experience as well as increasing the reach to those families most in need.
- 4.8 The Hubs will provide activities which are relevant to age and stage of children in attendance. Outdoor play, health and wellbeing and creative arts will be significant features of the provision across the 3 strands of the model (5-7 years, 8+ years and children with additional support needs). Funding will be used to develop inclusive provision for children with additional support needs. Inverclyde Council seeks to increase the number of places offered to families and support delivery within the mainstream hubs, demonstrating a commitment to ensuring all provision is inclusive, safe and with children's needs at the centre.
- 4.9 The funding has allowed Inverclyde Council to provide more accessible and affordable out of school care. Priority will be given to lone parent families, families which include a disabled child, those experiencing in-work poverty and children who are vulnerable. The funding will allow provision to be offered to families at low cost or no cost. Criteria will be based on current criteria for clothing grants and free school meals. Transport will be funded and provided to those most in need to remove any barriers with regards to access. This was available during the Holiday Hub provision during Summer 2020 and has proven to be a valuable element of

the current delivery model.

- 4.10 Inverclyde Council in its submission applied for £250,000 and was one of only fifteen applicants to receive a grant, being allocated the maximum amount allowed. The award of this grant will ensure that Inverclyde Council and the wider Holiday Hub collaborative can offer Holiday Hub provision for October 2020, Easter 2021, Summer 2021 and October 2021, and extended to March 2022 if necessary.
- 4.11 With funding approved to Inverclyde Council, it has been confirmed that 150 places will be available for those aged 5-8 years of age, 75 places for those aged 8 years plus and 75 places for children with additional support needs.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A		2020/21 2021/22	60k 190k		Scottish Government Funding

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

5.2 Legal

N/A

5.3 Human Resources

N/A

5.4 Equalities

Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

- (b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

X	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

X	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
	NO

5.5 Repopulation

A reduction in poverty levels will improve the quality of life for many residents in Inverclyde. Improved satisfaction levels may encourage more young people to stay in the area and may make Inverclyde a more attractive place for those considering moving to the area. Repopulation remains a key priority within the Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 CMT have been consulted on the paper

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A