

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	23 May 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Easter in the City Programme 2023
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/139
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Sharon Skene
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report shares a high level evaluation of the Easter in the City programme and seeks delegated authority to design and deliver a programme for the upcoming school holiday periods (summer and autumn 2023 and spring 2024).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the high level evaluation of the Easter in the City programme;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to design and deliver a programme for the summer, autumn (2023) and spring (2024) holiday periods using the budget allocated by Council, in-line with the recommendation (option 3) as laid out within the options appraisal, Appendix B; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to report to Committee on the impact of the summer, autumn (2023) and spring (2024) programmes following delivery.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

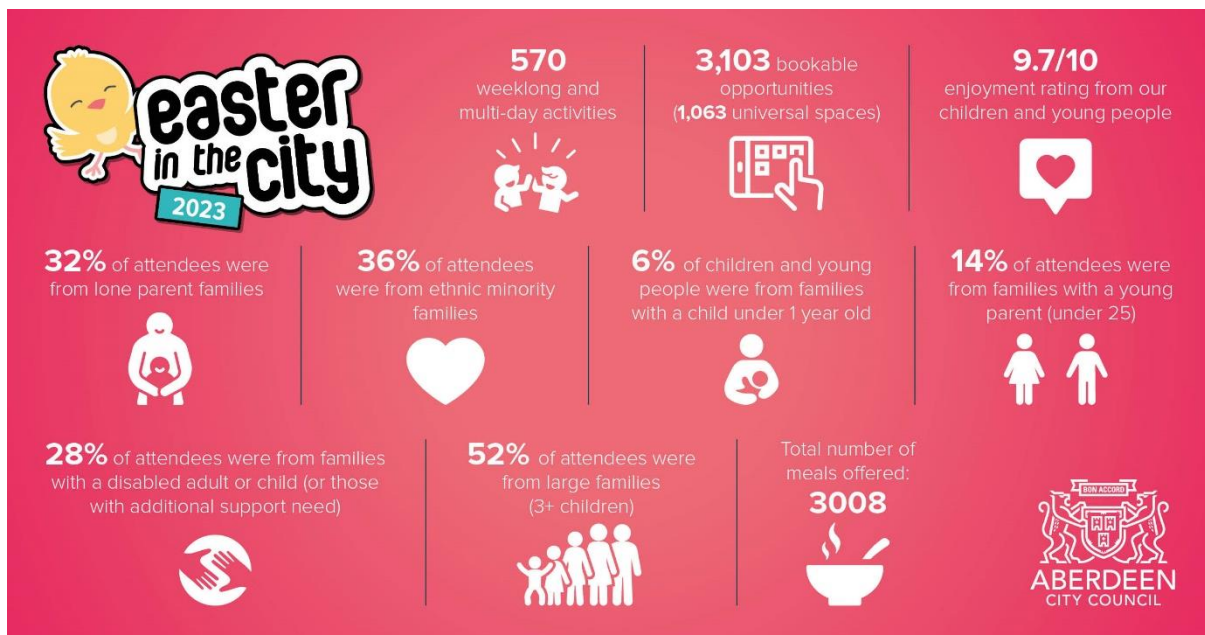
- 3.1 An Easter in the City programme was made available to children and young people across Aberdeen City over the school holiday period. The priority groups were consistent with those identified as being most at risk of poverty and therefore included:
- Children from lone parent families
 - Children from ethnic minority families
 - Children from families which have 1 or more person with a disability or additional support needs (adult or child)
 - Children from families with a young parent (under 25)
 - Children from families with a child under 1 year old
 - Children from larger families (3+ children)

- 3.2 Officers from across the organisation and local partners worked together to plan and deliver the programme. Alongside the priority programme, an offer was once again made of universal activities such as swimming, ice skating and drop-in sessions which were available to all children and young people, including those who did not meet the priority criteria. Moreover, the previous priority grouping of young mother (under 25) was extended to young parent (under 25) to encompass, mothers, fathers and non-binary parents. The full Easter in the City programme delivered is available in Appendix A.
- 3.3 Sport Aberdeen, We Too and community assets involved in delivering the programme operated their own bookings. Microsoft Bookings was used to manage all remaining bookings. Bookings opened on Monday 27 March at 12.30pm and 70% of the opportunities had been booked by the end of day. Families eligible for priority activities were asked to only book 4 activities per child and restrict their ask to one weeklong activity to ensure that as many families had the opportunity to utilise invaluable weeklong activities as possible.
- 3.4 The Council social media channels were used to highlight the programme and available places to maximise uptake. Colleagues in the customer function updated webpages, delivered an associated social media campaign and responded to social media enquiries. The overall campaign saw a 96.1k reach (this is the number of times customers saw our posts on their social media channels). Across the entire campaign we saw 302 likes and 210 shares/retweets. Our Easter in the City webpages had 35,944 page views with 4.6k customers landing on our webpage directly from the links shared on social media.
- 3.5 The universal programme made 1,063 bookable opportunities available to all children and young people in the city as well as numerous drop-in activities in parks, museums, galleries, and local communities.
- 3.6 The programme for priority groups made a total of 2,040 bookable opportunities available. 570 of the 2,040 activities were weeklong and multi-day camps/holiday clubs, and this provided greater flexibility for many parents accessing the programme. The remaining spaces were made up of day long activities (these activities included biking, beach days, scrambling and included lunch) and shorter activities such as dance and art. Figures from the ACC booking system showed over 94% occupancy was achieved on weeklong, multi-day and day long activities. Proactive social media coverage of available spaces is thought to have realised this high uptake figure.
- 3.7 There is clear evidence that the targeted programme benefited those in the priority groups with the ACC booking system showing participation statistics as follows:
- 32% of children and young people were from lone parent families
 - 36% of children and young people were from ethnic minority families
 - 28% of children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)
 - 14% of children from families with a young parent (under 25)
 - 6% of children and young people were from families with a child under 1 year old

- 52% of children and young people were from larger families (3+ children)

3.8 The data above does not take account of those with additional support needs/disabilities who benefited from the We Too and Early Intervention service.

3.9 The average enjoyment rating as given by children and young people who attended the activities was 9.7/10. This high rating was consistent with the previous programme.



3.10 Officers are extremely grateful to all of the partners listed in para 4.1 who helped deliver a varied and high quality Easter in the City programme.

3.11 It is proposed that the Chief Education Officer be given delegated authority to design and deliver similar programmes for summer, autumn (2023) and spring (2024) and report on the impact of the programmes to the Education and Children’s Services Committee following delivery of each programme.

3.12 Officers have conducted an options appraisal and recommendations were made for a scaled-down version of the current programme structure to be utilised moving forward, with both priority and universal offerings focusing on mainly part day activities, offered across all 3 holiday periods, continuing to provide positive opportunities to the young people and families living and going to school in Aberdeen City, while promoting wellbeing and positive interaction. These recommendations were informed by both customer feedback and reasonable expectations for deliverables in-line with the available budget, with the acknowledgement that any approved changes to the current structure will need to be clearly communicated before the launch of each programme. The full option appraisal can be found in Appendix B.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs for the Easter in the City programme were met from underspend from the resource allocated at Full Council, and from the Scottish Government Grant of £279,262 awarded for the summer programme 2022. The total cost of delivery of the Easter 2023 programme was £73,460.92.

Partner	Total Cost
Sport Aberdeen	£25,185.50
Peep	£100.00
Museums and Galleries	£300.00
Techfest	£800.00
Creative Learning	£3,000.00
CLICC	£5,400.00
Kidsize	£1,198.00
AFCCT	£1,500.00
Transition Extreme	£1,200.00
Aberdeen Science Centre	£1,652.00
ASV	£3,500.00
We Too	£4,015.00
Community Groups - Fersands and fountain community project, Stockethill Church of Scotland, FACEYOUTH SCIO, Early Intervention, Balnagask Community Project, Family Learning Team, Shazam Theatre Company SCIO, Middlefield Community Project, Ukrainian Association (in Aberdeen), Station House Media Unit (shmu), Printfield Community Project, King's Church Aberdeen, Befriend a Child, Northfield Community Centre and Ukrainians in Aberdeen	£25,110.42
Cleaning	TBC(Approx £500)
TOTAL	£73,460.92 (subject to cleaning costs)

4.2. There is £100,000 within 23/24 budget to fund the future programmes.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified. Good use has been made of outdoor space where feasible to do so.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not fully using the opportunity to support those in our priority groups	Priority access is given to those identified as being at risk of poverty in keeping with national guidance and local intelligence	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Continuing to provide a priority group exclusive programme, in addition to the universal offering, actively increases the opportunity for priority families to participate.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that parents and carers are unclear of how the national policy will impact on opportunities available to their child.	Communicate the parameters of the national guidance clearly with families. Monitor uptake carefully to determine any remedial action required.	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that reduction in the number of spaces offered through the programmes will lead to reputational risk	Pivoting from full-week activities and focusing exclusively on part day and full-day activities will allow for participation opportunities to be maximised within the	L	Yes

		available budget and delivery constraints.		
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>Council Delivery Plan 2022/23 - Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p> <p>Council Delivery Plan 2022/23 - Continue to promote diversion activities for youths and adults in our city with enhanced focused on our three locality areas</p>	<p>The provision of a programme which prioritises those impacted by poverty will help mitigate some of the wellbeing harms associated with those living in poverty and help address the attainment gap by working with partners to provide a range of activity to support wellbeing.</p> <p>Providing activities for those aged 14+ will help complement work to provide diversion activities to youths. Activities for a range of ages have been provided directly in and around the three locality areas, as well as some providers providing transport for young people within the locality areas to attend activities out with their locality.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
<p>Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026</p> <p>1.1 Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty.</p> <p>1.3 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p>	<p>The proposals in this report will help mitigate the impact of poverty on families due to those who are identified as being in poverty, or at risk of being in poverty being given priority access to the programme at no charge.</p>
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p>	<p>The programme has been deliberately tailored to meet the needs of those most in need and this approach will help ensure positive impacts against many of the people stretch outcomes.</p> <p>By prioritising groups who are known to be at risk of poverty and those already experiencing poverty we</p>

Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty

Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups

Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities

95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026

Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need

90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026. This is reflected in interactions, activities, supports and services

Improving health and reducing inequalities.

Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.

As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026

Improving education outcomes for care experienced children and young people.

Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to

are able to work to ensure positive impacts on groups who most need our help including:

- children and young people from lone parent families
- children and young people from ethnic minority families
- children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)
- children and young people from families with a young parent (under 25)
- children and young people from families with a child under 1 year old
- children and young people from larger families (3+ children)

The programme will help provide a range of supports for families which will help mitigate some of the costs associated with school holiday periods and support the wellbeing of children and young people.

The programme has been designed to offer a range of physical activities given the close alignment between good physical health and positive mental wellbeing and will therefore support positive mental health and wellbeing in our children and young people. The programme will also offer opportunities for our children and young people to make positive choices which are not influenced by financial resources which will hopefully help establish positive health habits in the longer term.

The continued prioritisation of our care experienced young people, and those on the edge of care, helps ensure that we effectively discharge our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and promote and support the wellbeing of those in our care. The provision of activities will also provide support for carers.

remain more often at home and or with kin.	
Regional and City Strategies	
Regional Cultural Strategy	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the Regional Cultural Strategy due to close collaboration with our Museums and Galleries team. The programme is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work has been done to address poverty in the Children's services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan, and the National Improvement Framework Plan.
Prevention Strategy	
Children's Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Full Easter in the City Programme

Appendix B- Holiday Programme Options Appraisal and Recommendations

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX A- Easter in the City programme

Universal Offer available to all children and young people

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Libraries	Young people are invited to join sessions playing board games.	All	Throughout holiday
	Coding club for young people interested in learning to code	8+ years	4
	Join the libraries team for a story and crafting session	5+ years	10
	Building fun with Lego Club	8+ years	6
	Learn about animation and create your own	8+ years	2
	Bookbug library session	0-5 years	1
Museums and Galleries	Join the springtime fun with a self-led spring trail.	4-12 years and family	Throughout the holiday
	Participate in a spring mural	4-12 years and family	2
Creative learning	Artists Assemble – Storyboarding Aberdeen	10-16 years	1 full week
Sport Aberdeen	Family swimming sessions	All ages	14
	Family ice skating session	All ages	2
Peep	A session of Easter inspired fun for little ones	0-12 months	2
	Big art session for toddlers	1-3 years	2
	Farm fun baby session		
Tech Fest	Sociable science drop-in sessions	All ages	2

Targeted offer for Priority Groups

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Sport Aberdeen	Let's Dance camp	5-12 years	Both weeks
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Beach)	5-12 years	Both weeks
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Cults)	5-12 years	All week
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Sheddocksley)	5-12 years	All week
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces – Aberdeen Tennis Club	5-12 years	Both weeks
	Multi Active Day- Adventure Aberdeen	5-7 years 8-11 years	2
	Burn O Vat day trip	5-7 year	1
	Burn O Vat day trip	8-11 year	1
	Beach day at Balmedie	5-7 years	1

	Biking trail	8-11 years	1
	Biking trail	12-14 years	1
	Hill walking	8-11 years 12-14 years	2
Aberdeen Sports Village	Multi Sports Camp	5-15 years	Both weeks
	Intensive learn to swim lessons	5-10 years	4 days (week 1)
Faceyouth	Have fun, make friends and learn new creative skills	5-17 years	Both weeks
Middelfield Community Project	Holiday club with various trips and activities across Aberdeen	5-12 years	Both weeks
Fersands	Youth led holiday programme- including Easter egg hunt challenge, hillwalking, jump in, gorge walking, archers, cooking, music and art sessions.	12-17 years	Both weeks
	Street play games, The Critters Keeper, drum session, science workshops, Easter Treasure Hunt for children, teenagers and their families.	5-12 years	6
Kidsize	Spring themed activity holiday club	5-12 years	3
Creative Learning / City Moves	Creative dance sessions	5-8 years	3
	Artists Assemble arts and crafts session	8-12 years 5-8 years 9-12 years 11-16 years	9
Family Learning Team	Gardening and outdoor activities	Families	1
	Easter egg hunt, games and activities	Families	2
	Easter crafts & cooking	Families	2
	Songs and drama workshop	Families	2
Northfield Community Centre	Easter holiday club	5-14 years	4
SHMU	Record a song in a day (Northfield Academy pupils only)	11-14	1
	Record a podcast in a day (Northfield Academy pupils only)	11-14	1
	Create a film trailer	11-14 years	2
	One day challenge (film, music & podcasting)	11-14 years	2

Aberdeen Science Centre	Learn to code	6-8 years 9-14 years	4 days (week 1) 4 days (week 2)
King's Church Aberdeen	Easter holiday club	P1-7	2
Transition Extreme	Skate and scrum multi activity session	8-14 years	2
Shazam Theatre Company SCIO	Drama and musical weeklong workshop	7-12 years	1 full week
Ukrainian Association (in Aberdeen)	A wide programme of physical, social and cultural activities for Ukrainian refugee children	7-12 years	1 full week
Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust	Go Fitba sessions with AFCCT	8-11 years	1 full week
Music School	Musical activities at Muirfield Primary School	7-14 years	2 (AM and PM)
Community Link Childcare	Seaton Easter club	5-12 years	1 full week
Stockethill Church of Scotland	Sessions for families including games, crafts.	Families	4
Balnagask Community Centre	Session will include games, sports and crafts.	3-12 years	4 days each week
Printfield Community Project	Easter playscheme will include arts and crafts, a day trip.	P1-P7	1 full week
Befriend a Child	Easter Egg Hunt at Hazlehead Park	5-14	1

Additional Support needs specialised sessions	<p>A range of activities were provided for children and young people with additional support needs and their families including a comprehensive programme delivered by We Too including session such as 'relaxed' activities and gaming based activities.</p> <p>Early intervention Aberdeen also ran workshops, drama & movement, Therapets and sensory play throughout the holidays.</p>
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APPENDIX B- 'In the City' Holiday Programme Options Appraisal and Recommendations

Council allocated £100,000 for holiday programmes to be delivered over school holiday periods (summer and autumn 2023 and spring 2024).

Objectives and Barriers to achieving objectives

In line with the aims of the 'In the City' holiday programmes, it is proposed that the main focus remains to encourage participation and to maximise the positive opportunities available to young people and their families with a particular focus on those within the Tackling Child Poverty Plan priority groupings.

The funding available is more restricted. It is important that considerable effort continues to be invested in maximising value for money in regard to the number of places offered and the quality of activities in order to offer as comprehensive an approach as possible within the funding available.

Options available

Given the existing popularity of the 'In the City' programmes the below options have been laid out with the assumption of pro rata allocation, making approximately £10,000 of funding available per week of each holiday period. This would allocate as:

- Summer in the City 2023, 10 July to 18 August 2023 (£60,000)
- Autumn in the City 2023, 16 October to 27 October 2023 (£20,000)
- Easter in the City 2024, 1 April to 12 April 2024 (£20,000)

This would enable a reduced programme compared to the previous programmes, however it would provide some flexibility to consider activities throughout the holiday periods, but likely with fewer spaces available. Moreover, it would no longer be possible, due to the proposed budget, to include a substantial food provision included in any of the below options.

Option one – Universal offering only

Providing purely universal programmes, with no targeted priority offering, would provide the opportunity to engage with as many young people and families as possible without the barrier of some activities requiring the families to be matched to target groups. The only qualifying requirement would be for the young people to either be a resident or a pupil in Aberdeen. The programme would continue to target the 5-14 age group with some activities still being made available for those outwith this age range.

In order to maximise the number of places and activities available, the programme would be divided into drop-in and bookable sessions, with an anticipated structure laid out below;

- Drop-in sessions
 - Provided primarily by Aberdeen City Council services such as the libraries and museums teams.

- Bookable sessions (short, family, half-day and full-day session)
 - Provided partly by internal services such as music, creative learning, rangers, peep.
 - Provided partly by external partners focusing on delivering activities such as sports activities (multi sports, football, family swimming), art, music, drama and activities that community assets run.

Option one SWOT Analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of any stigma which may be attached to attending 'targeted activities'. - Makes the programme more widely accessible to more families. - Focusing on one universal programme rather than a mixed universal and targeted offering will cause less of a pressure on the human resource element.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families identifying as being part of a 'priority' group will face more competition to access activities. - The limited budget will mean that there is a smaller offering and fewer number of spaces available.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the current cost of living crisis there is an increased chance that despite not being identified as in the 'priority' groups, families may still be struggling. This universal option would provide an opportunity to engage more with these families. - Potential that the widening of the access to the activities may be positively received by the public. - Reduced strain on human resource as the booking requirements would be reduced and simplified, meaning staff could potentially be utilised in a more diverse way to ease strain in other areas.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased competition for the spaces available may further isolate families who are most disadvantaged. - Potential of there being a poor response to the removal of the protected 'target' offerings.

Option two – Targeted offering only

Focusing on providing a solely targeted offering, with activities available only for young people whose families identify as being part of a priority group as defined by the Tackling Child Poverty Plan. This would place the emphasis on working with families who are considered to be more vulnerable to disadvantage, with no universal provision for anyone who does not meet the criteria. Due to the specific criteria for participation, this programme would most likely benefit from targeted promotions through school or other key colleagues working closely with families, as opposed to publicly on the council website and social media channels. The programme would also continue to target the 5-14 age group with some activities still being made available for those not in this age range.

In order to maximise the number of places and activities available to targeted families, the anticipated structure would focus on:

- Drop-in sessions
 - Provided primarily by internal Aberdeen City Council services such as the libraries and museums teams.
- Bookable sessions (short, family, half-day and full-day session)
 - Provided partly by internal services such as music, creative learning, rangers, peep.
 - Provided partly by external partners focusing on delivering activities such as sports activities (multi sports, football, family swimming), art, music, drama and activities that community assets run.

Option two SWOT analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities and spaces would be available for those most likely to be in need (priority groups). - Priority families would have less competition for the limited spaces.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fewer families in need will be able to access the programme as those not in a priority grouping, but still in need, will not meet the criteria to participate at all. - Additional strain on human resource due to the referral / direct promotion to families. - Not all families who meet the priority criteria may be known to a colleague, so may not be made aware of the programme.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeting priority families to help those most likely to need additional support directly to give them the opportunity to participate.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lack of mechanism for automatic identification of families that meet the criteria, and the reliance on colleagues to have information to identify families as qualifying for the programme, provides a risk that some families most in need may not be alerted to the opportunity to participate. - Reducing the offering to just priority families poses a threat that families that are in need, due to external factors such as the cost of living crisis, but are not identified to align with the priority groupings would not be able to participate. - Public response to removing universal offering could be negative.

Option three – Combined targeted and universal offer

Following the structure which has been used in the previous 'In the City' programmes, a reduced offering for both a universal and targeted offerings could be provided. This would look to engage with the widest demographics, providing

opportunities for both priority families and those who do not identify as part of a priority group to take part. The programme would also continue to target the 5-14 years age group with some activities still being made available for those not in this age range.

In consideration of this option being the most complex, there would be a considerable reliance on signposting families to existing services and activities as well as the activities which are provided directly for them through the 'In the City' programme. This would essentially open the drop-in sessions to the universal offering, but keep core bookable sessions to those in the priority groups.

Universal offering (no more than 5% of the budget)

- Drop-in sessions
 - Provided primarily by internal Aberdeen City Council services such as the libraries and museums teams.
- Signposting to existing services
 - Provide families with information on services and activities, including paid for, which they can access independently of the holiday programme.

Targeted offering (no less than 95% of the budget)

- Bookable sessions (short, family, half-day and full-day session)
 - Provided partly by internal services such as Music, creative learning, rangers, peep.
 - Provided partly by external partners focusing on delivering activities such as sports activities (multi sports, football, family swimming), art, music, drama and activities that community assets run.

Option three SWOT Analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opens the programme up to the widest demographic. - Would not require any additional strain on human resource as this is the current structure used. - Signposts activities which may incur a charge for families who are able to pay. - Could be promoted publicly, removing the need for direct promotion to families through colleagues. - Continues to protect some activities for priority group families who are most likely to be in need.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited human and financial resource mean that there would be a drastically reduced offering, compared to previous programmes.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to engage with the widest range of families. - Ability to promote other activities and services outside of the programme.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public response to a reduced offering could potentially be negative.

Recommendations

Based on the options detailed above, with the intention to provide a holiday programme which continues to meet the objectives and aims laid out, it is the recommendation of the coordinating officer that option three would be the most appropriate to bring forward.

Continuing to provide activities universally as well as part of a targeted offering, affords the widest demographic of families to engage in free / affordable activities while also protecting some activities exclusively for priority families who are most likely to require additional support over the holiday periods. Given financial constraints, a significantly reduced offering would need to be made, however by retaining universal drop-in sessions this would allow for there to still be a flexible option for families who do not identify as part of the priority groups while still protecting a budget for priority bookable activities.

Option three would not require any additional human resource and would offer a modified version of the structure that the families of Aberdeen City have come to expect.

Conclusion

The positive impact and reception of the 'In the City' programmes has been substantial and it continues to be the aim to look to provide positive activities to the young people and families living and going to school in Aberdeen City, promoting wellbeing and positive opportunities. While financial and human resource limitation does pose a barrier, it is the understanding of the coordinating officer that it is possible to continue to provide positive opportunities during the next three holiday periods, where modification to the current structure is made.