

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 12 th July 2022
Report Subject	Welsh Government (WG) Programmes – Summer of Fun and Winter of Wellbeing
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the spring of 2021 the Children’s Commissioner for Wales initiated a discussion with Welsh Government and local authorities about the need to make provision for children and young people to have access to fun activities to try and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on their emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Welsh Government made funding available to local authorities and other national organisations to deliver a ‘Summer of Fun’.

This was successfully delivered in Flintshire alongside our play schemes and reported to Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee in December 2021. The success of the scheme, which was independently evaluated, resulted in Welsh Government providing more funding for a ‘Winter of Wellbeing programme over the winter of 2021-2022 and has recently confirmed additional funding for another ‘Summer of Fun’ this year.

This report provides an overview of the Council’s delivery of these programmes and the Welsh Government evaluation report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members are reassured that children and young people in Flintshire have benefitted from Welsh Government funding through the Winter of Wellbeing Programme.
---	---

2	Members are satisfied with the arrangements for the Summer of Fun programme for 2022.
3	Members acknowledge the feedback from the national evaluation of these Welsh Government programmes which provide evidence of their positive impact on children and young people.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE SUMMER OF FUN PROGRAMME 2021
1.01	Members of the Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee received a report in December 2021 which provided an overview of the successful provision of a 'Summer of Fun' – a Welsh Government funded initiative designed to provide children and young people with positive and fun activities during the summer of 2021. In Flintshire, this was delivered alongside our very successful and long standing summer play scheme offer. This report is attached at Appendix 1 and the committee welcomed the opportunity to receive further updates in the future.
1.02	<p>Initiated by the Children's Commissioner for Wales and funded by Welsh Government, the focus of the Summer of Fun was on developing interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for children and young people from the age of 0-25 that were free and accessible, available in Welsh, English and bilingually. There was a focus on children who were already disadvantaged before the pandemic, including disabled children, children of black, Asian, ethnic minorities, children who are 'looked after' and those on the edge of care, as well as children who had been effected by Covid-19 themselves due to bereavement, trauma and illness.</p> <p>The Council, supported by some of its key partners, delivered a successful programme of activities under the 'Summer of Fun' banner between July and September 2021.</p>
1.03	<p>Welsh Government commissioned an evaluation of the 'Summer of Fun' programme by an independent company, Ecorys. The evaluation aims were to assess the programme; how it was implemented across local authorities; perceived outcomes for its participants and to gather learning to inform future policy and practice within Welsh Government.</p> <p>At the time of the report being presented to the Education, Youth and Culture Scrutiny Committee in December, the national evaluation report on the Summer of Fun Programme 2021 was not available. It has since been published with conclusions and recommendations for Welsh Government and providers.</p>
1.04	The evaluation evidence was gathered from qualitative interviews with 15 senior stakeholders, 19 local authority Summer of Fun leads, and 27 children and young people across Wales. A breadth of views were gained

	<p>from 969 programme participants and 249 providers, who completed an online survey. Management information was analysed from 409 providers. A virtual round table event involved discussion of early findings with local authority leads and providers and co-development of the conclusions and recommendations.</p> <p>Senior officers from Flintshire County Council contributed to this evaluation process through the provision of management information and attendance at national review events.</p>
1.05	<p>The evaluation report for the 'Summer of Fun' 2021 is included at Appendix 2.</p> <p>The reports reflects the positive engagement of children and young people across Wales, which mirrored the experiences and feedback of our children, young people and their families locally. It also acknowledged the challenges that providers had managed to overcome, particularly the need to pull together a comprehensive offer in very limited timescales. The success of our programme in Flintshire was a reflection of the commitment of our staff and the well-established partnership working with other local providers.</p> <p>The outcome of the positive evaluation was that Welsh Government offered further funding for the provision of a 'Winter of Wellbeing' programme.</p>
	EXPLAINING THE WINTER OF WELLBEING PROGRAMME 2021-22
1.06	<p>In late October 2021 the Council received confirmation that it would receive additional funding to provide a 'Winter of Wellbeing' programme totalling £302,753. There was also an additional element of capital funding of £152,000 to improve resources to support children's play by supporting local Play Sufficiency Assessments. Individual schools and funded early years settings also received a funding allocation under the same banner of 'Winter of Wellbeing' to be able to offer enrichment activities to their pupils.</p>
1.07	<p>As with the previous Summer of Fun programme, the priority was to support the wellbeing of children and young people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing the space and time for play, supporting their fun and the opportunity to express themselves through play; • community based interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for all ages; • providing opportunities to develop and build their social skills by providing opportunities to engage with friends and peers; • creating space and opportunity for free play and physical activity.
1.08	<p>Building on the experiences from the 'Summer of Fun' and consolidating partnership working with a number of key agencies, the Council was able to deliver a wide-ranging programme in both English and Welsh across the age range of 0 to 25 years.</p> <p>These included :</p>

- Residential adventurous activities at the Urdd Centre at Glan Llyn and at the ROWEN centre in Conwy, building skills and confidence, including health and wellbeing training and a first aid certificate as well as improving Welsh language skills.
- Arts and crafts sessions within ten Flintshire youth clubs, involving over 100 young people, focusing on creative skills as well as mental wellbeing. The funding also supported the membership fees of the Urdd enabling young people to submit their creations into the Arts and Crafts competition of the Urdd Eisteddfod recently held in Denbigh.
- Music/song writing sessions for young people from our Welsh medium secondary school, Ysgol Maes Garmon, to enable them to reflect on their experiences of the pandemic and improve their coping strategies. This has resulted in a Welsh song titled 'Dal i Ddod' (Still to Come) being composed, recorded and published on You Tube. It was formally launched at the Urdd Eisteddfod and Welsh Government celebrated it by having it playing in their official pavilion during the week of the Eisteddfod. A link to the song is included under the List of Accessible Background Documents below.
- 45 health and wellbeing packs being provided to care leavers and other vulnerable young people.
- Play sessions in schools and communities e.g. Kicks for Kids to promote physical and mental health.
- Cultural, sports and leisure activities to families who have sought sanctuary in Flintshire.
- Traditional countryside and farming skills for youngsters aged 18-25 at risk of disengaging from education, employment and training to promote confidence, resilience, perseverance, social skills and collaboration.
- Pathway to Work Programme to increase employability skills through fun activities delivered by Aura. 24 young people gained valuable qualifications in First Aid, Safeguarding, Dragon Sports, Sports Leaders and positively experienced the world of work.
- Emotional Coaching and Intuitive Thinking programmes designed to improve personal decision making.
- 500 book bags distributed through Aura Libraries to promote reading and literacy skills – an English and a Welsh Version of 'The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse' by Charlie Mackesy. School visits to libraries supported.
- Gym sessions in Aura facilities to promote physical health and wellbeing – 360 pupils accessed gym passes.
- Holiday sports clubs – 100 children's places supported
- Football camps – 400 spaces provided
- Skate Parks – 500 free passes provided
- Soft play – 300 free passes provided
- Ten Pin Bowling – 100 hours' worth of lane times
- Family Swimming Pods – 35 families
- Swimming Lessons – 50 blocks of swimming lessons to teens
- Forest Schools Sessions – 40 families with under 5s
- A range of different activities focussed on individuals at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, training or education) and at

	<p>risk of substance misuse or anti-social behaviour e.g. fishing lessons, graffiti workshops, Lego project, photography, cookery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre projects – workshops, theatre groups, music lessons in the community, creative wellbeing packs. • Welsh Language parent and toddler groups - 22 families supported. • Spring Half Term Holiday Play sessions in a registered childcare setting – 45 children supported. <p>This list is not exhaustive but demonstrates the range of activities that were offered, particularly for the ‘harder to reach’ group of older teens and the increased provision for activities through the medium of Welsh.</p>
1.09	The Winter of Wellbeing programme has also been independently evaluated but the publication of the report has been delayed until the autumn.
	EXPLAINING THE ‘SUMMER OF FUN’ 2022
1.10	In March 2022, Welsh Government confirmed that funding would be made available again to deliver a ‘Summer of Fun’ programme for 2022. Flintshire’s allocation is £276,559.
1.11	<p>This package of support aims to build on the success of the previous schemes and to continue important support for the wellbeing of children and young people aged 0 – 25 years.</p> <p>The guidance issued to all providers requires us to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a universal entitlement to free at the point of entry play, sporting and cultural activities for all children and young people aged 0-25 to help towards reducing the cost of living for families across Wales; • further support for the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of participating children and young people aged 0-25, enabling them to better engage with learning and to reengage with wider society; and • further sustainability for the providers operating in this space, to move towards a more sustainable footing both financially and in terms of what they can offer to children, young people and their families.
1.12	<p>In their bids, providers should :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is an inclusive and balanced programme of age appropriate activities, easily accessible by all children and young people who want to take part; • Provide equality of access for children and young people – this may mean tailoring or increasing some services to address inherent disadvantages; • Offer a range of play, sporting, cultural and other activities for children and young people in a variety of settings; • Make provision available in Welsh or English. Bilingual provision may be appropriate in some circumstances, but

	<p>should not be used in place of specific and dedicated Welsh medium provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever possible, activities should be held in accessible locations that can be accessed on foot or by public transport.
1.13	<p>The well-established team of officers and key partners have reconvened to develop the summer offer for 2022 within the funding envelope and plans have been submitted to Welsh Government which have been approved.</p> <p>There has been significant learning over the delivery of the last two programmes to understand the range of activities which are valued by children, young people and their families and many will be repeated again this summer as they have proven to be successful and rewarding.</p> <p>The offer will encompass all ages and consolidate our partnership working with key organisations such as Theatr Clwyd, Aura Libraries & Leisure, NEWCIS, Menter Iaith Sir y Fflint a Wrecsam as well as joint working across Council departments including Education & Youth, Children's Services and the Early Years/Childcare Team.</p> <p>The Summer of Fun offer will also enhance our traditional summer play scheme programme delivered in conjunction with Town and Community Councils. The funding will support children with disabilities to participate in their local play scheme by the provision of 'buddies' and will also have a stronger element of Welsh language provision after the positive feedback received from children about having the opportunity to use their Welsh language skills informally at play scheme sessions.</p> <p>The Summer of Fun programme will be advertised through the Council's social media channels, website and Family Information Service. Partners will also use their usual communication channels and Welsh Government have provided a media support pack.</p> <p>The tag line is: Haf o Hwyl / Summer of Fun.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>There are no additional financial resource implications in relation to this report as the Summer of Fun is a fully grant funded Welsh Government programme.</p> <p>There has been, however, a significant commitment of officers' time in addition to their usual roles and responsibilities to develop and deliver the Summer of Fun programme.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	N/A.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Welsh Government have undertaken consultation and evaluation activities in relation to the 'Summer of Fun' and 'Winter of Wellbeing' programmes.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – EY&C Scrutiny Report Summer of Fun Dec 2021 Appendix 2 – Summer of Fun 2021 Evaluation Report Appendix 3 – Welsh Government Guidelines for Summer of Fun

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Dal i Ddod Song – https://youtu.be/Y3lnoWA_Gq0

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Claire Homard, Chief Officer (Education & Youth) Telephone: 01352 704190 E-mail: claire.homard@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Summer of Fun – a Welsh Government initiative to provide a range of activities for children and young people aged 0-25 during the summer holiday period 2021. Menter Iaith Sir y Fflint a Wrecsam - an independent community organisation working to increase and strengthen the use of Welsh locally. Menter Iaith organise community events, host activities for children and families, and help businesses and services who wish to use more Welsh.