

Report to HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

OLDHAM'S APPROACH TO HOLIDAY HUNGER TO HELP REDUCE CHILD FOOD POVERTY

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Dean, Deputy Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods Services and Chair of Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition Partnership

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is for the Health and Wellbeing Board to:

- 1) Receive an update on the Holiday Hunger pilots in the Summer and Christmas holidays in Oldham.
- 2) Provide input on emerging strategic priorities to help tackle child food poverty.
- 3) Consider how members can support future planned activity on Holiday Hunger approaches.

Requirement from the Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is required to;

- (i) review the information in the report and,
- (ii) to consider the following questions:
 - 1) Are there any key strategic priorities that would support either future holiday hunger provision or an approach to child food poverty?
 - 2) How can we position Oldham to access future funding to support holiday hunger provision?
 - 3) How can the provision of enrichment activity during school terms be improved and increased sustainably, including additional areas?
 - 4) How can the pilot work collaboratively with schools to link to existing activities and to communicate awareness to those children and young people who will benefit?

OLDHAM'S APPROACH TO HOLIDAY HUNGER TO HELP REDUCE CHILD FOOD POVERTY

Background

The summary below contains background information on Food Poverty in the UK, Greater Manchester and Oldham from initial desktop research.

UK

- In the UK, the Trussell Trust has given out 658,058 food parcels, including at least 200,000 to children (many of which are school age)¹
- Four out of five teachers say some of their pupils are coming to school hungry²
- More than four in five parents in food poverty worry that they will struggle to provide nutritious food for their children in the near future and more than 50% of these parents have gone without food to feed their family, with a quarter doing so on a weekly basis or more often.³
- The drivers of food poverty are complex - they include the affordability, availability and accessibility of food, and whether individuals are able to consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food for health

Greater Manchester

- 15% of people in Greater Manchester skip meals because they do not have enough money to spend on food. *Source: Greater Manchester Poverty Commission*
- One in 10 people in Greater Manchester said they skipped meals so a family member could eat, the joint highest number in the UK along with Glasgow and Birmingham. *Source: Greater Manchester Poverty Commission*
- One in five people in the region have cut down on buying as much fruit and vegetables because they cannot afford them. *Source: Greater Manchester Poverty Commission*
- 15% of people in Greater Manchester said they had to borrow money to buy food - the highest proportion of all places surveyed in the UK by Kellogg's. *Source: Manchester Evening News*

Oldham

- Oldham Food Bank provided 7,435 three day emergency food parcels to people in crisis in the last year (primary referral is low income, benefit delays, benefit changes, debt).⁴
- Of this, 2,547 three day emergency food parcels went to children⁵
- Child Holiday Meals account for 0.76% of primary referral causes – though the causes and interdependencies of poverty can reflect a variety of referral causes⁶
- Oldham has an estimated 24,500 people in food poverty (10.7% of the population)⁷

¹ <https://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/mid-year-stats/> (2018)

² https://www.kelloggs.co.uk/content/dam/europe/kelloggs_gb/pdf/R3_Facts%20about%20Food%20Poverty%20ReportFINAL.pdf (2016)

³ <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/1-in-5-parents-struggling-to-feed-children-1.pdf> (2015)

⁴ <https://oldham.foodbank.org.uk/2018/04/24/7435-emergency-food-supplies-given-to-local-people-in-last-year-oldham-foodbank-reveals/> (2018)

⁵ <https://oldham.foodbank.org.uk/2018/04/24/7435-emergency-food-supplies-given-to-local-people-in-last-year-oldham-foodbank-reveals/> (2018)

⁶ <https://oldham.foodbank.org.uk/2017/11/07/new-figures-show-3506-emergency-food-supplies-given-to-local-people-by-oldham-foodbank-in-six-months/>

⁷ <https://committees.oldham.gov.uk/documents/s58856/food%20poverty%20food%20banks%20v1.3.pdf> (2015)

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- In Oldham in 2017, 40.66% of our children lived in poverty (the 7th highest across the UK) including 62.11% of Coldhurst Ward's children, the highest rate in the UK.

At Council on 7 December 2018 the following motion was discussed and agreed:

"This Council notes

1. that the numbers of children living in poverty continues to rise. In Oldham in 2017, 40.66% of our children lived in poverty (the 7th highest across the UK) including 62.11% of Coldhurst Ward's children, the highest rate in the UK. Government policy, including welfare reform and the impact of full service Universal Credit, underpins this increase.
2. that Oldham Council, working with many local partners, has taken steps to tackle food poverty and to ensure that children receive award winning nutritious school meals. However, during school holidays many children, especially those entitled to Free School Meals, go hungry.
3. The pilot work done by Oldham Council, If Oldham, the Food Bank and local community and church groups this summer to provide free lunches for children.

This Council believes that every child has the right to a balanced and adequate diet and resolves to support efforts to provide free lunches for those who need them during school holidays including:

- 1. To investigate and apply for additional sources of funding, including using District budgets where possible and appropriate**
 - The Council, working in partnership, will look at opportunities for internal and external funding, including
 - Working with the Oldham Education Partnership and Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition Partnership who have both jointly funded a Holiday Hunger pilot in the Summer 2018 and are committed to a provision during the Christmas Holiday 2018
 - Exploring the potential, eligibility and benefits of the Department for Education funding for Holiday Activities and Food that is expected to be launched in Spring 2019, following an initial pilot in Summer 2018
 - To connect directly as a council, and to connect eligible partners, with additional funding streams where possible an appropriate
- 2. To research different models of tackling holiday hunger including 'Feed and Read' and 'Feeding Britain' and to put together a strategy that best meets Oldham's needs using Council and community resources such as libraries, community and leisure centres and faith buildings.**
 - The Council, working in partnership, will:
 - Research different approaches to tackling holiday hunger: including those listed. This is in addition to existing research carried out around best practice approaches across Greater Manchester – informed through Oldham's role as the Chair of the Children and Young People sub-group for the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance, as well as best practice activity from approaches in Stoke and Greenwich.
 - Develop an Action Plan for a longer term approach to Holiday Hunger that maximises the potential use of existing assets in Oldham, including the many buildings and sites in communities where provision could be increased and securing sustainable funding in the future.

3. To introduce an Oldham programme to alleviate child holiday hunger as soon as practically possible.”

- The Council, working in partnership, has developed a local Oldham programme to tackle child holiday hunger as part of a pilot during the Summer 2018 and is committed to developing a provision for Christmas Holiday 2018 that helps to feed children and families. There is a commitment, subject to securing continued funding from partnership programmes, to increase and expand on the initial pilot for the Summer 2019, and to explore how we can commit to a long term plan that alleviates child food poverty, both inside and outside of the school day.

Current position

The timeline below outlines the steps in relation to developing a Holiday Hunger pilot approach to help reduce Child Food Poverty.

Action	Date
1 The Growing Oldham Feeding Ambition Partnership (local food partnership) approved £10k funding towards holiday enrichment activities and healthy food for disadvantaged children.	April 2018
2 The Oldham Education Partnership agreed to provide £8k matched funding towards the holiday enrichment activities and healthy food for disadvantaged children.	May 2018
3 Partners in Oldham submitted a joint bid to the Department for Education ‘Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund’ seeking investment to deliver a pilot project in the summer. This was between Groundwork and IF Oldham and supported by the Council and was unsuccessful.	May 2018
4 Oldham Chaired the Children and Young People sub-group for the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance to develop aims and actions to address child food poverty as part of the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Action Plan.	June 2018
5 Delivery of the Summer Holiday Hunger pilot during the summer holiday 2018 – providing 3,684 healthy meals across 19 sites in 6 weeks at no cost to children and families in the borough.	July-September 2018
6 Food Partnership Coordinator recruited (secured through external funding from Sustainable Food Cities) to manage and coordinate the local Holiday Hunger provision.	October 2018
7 Oldham Council passed a Full Council motion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To investigate and apply for additional sources of funding • To research different models of tackling holiday hunger and to put together a strategy • To introduce an Oldham programme of action 	December 2018
8 Delivery of the Christmas Holiday Hunger pilot during the Christmas holiday 2018 – providing central access to free food from Oldham Central Library and a number of accessible sites.	December-Jan 2019
9 Review the impact and evaluation of the pilot schemes to inform future	Ongoing

	provision – including calculating the wider contributions and funding from across the system that underpins existing enrichment activity, where food is delivered.	
10	Secure additional funding to provide a sustainable holiday hunger provision in Oldham.	Ongoing
11	Develop and deliver an enhanced holiday hunger provision in Summer 2018 and Christmas 2018	Ongoing

Holiday Hunger – Summer Pilot 2018

The approach

The pilot aimed to combine:

- (i) improving educational attainment during the summer holiday for children and young people by
- (ii) providing access to fresh, healthy, local food. This involved delivering food where there was existing activity planned.

It was a locally-led approach, working with existing activity providers and community partner organisations. It aimed to reduce the impact of food poverty for children and young people. It was jointly funded by Oldham Education Partnership and Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition partnership.

The model

Incredible Futures Oldham were commissioned for delivery of the food for the pilot which involved.

1. **Sourcing** – the majority of food was sourced from surplus food (e.g. local supermarkets), with a small amount bought in locally where needed and stored in Oldham Food Bank
2. **Production** – the Community Kitchen in the Food Bank was used to prepare, produce and package healthy meal options (wraps with healthy fillings, tuna pasta pots, vegetarian pasta, fruit, cheese bagels, sandwiches, scones, flapjacks, water)
3. **Distribution** – a van transported, distributed and delivered meals to planned enrichment activity sites across the borough, available to children and families
4. **Training** – provided for 12 volunteers to equip them with accreditation for Safer Food, Better Business to successfully deliver the pilot
5. **Storage** – purchasing of hot and cold storage boxes to safely store food
6. **Food Bank** – energy costs to use the Community Kitchen for 6 weeks
7. **Enrichment Activity** – to increase the provision of activity by providers

The impact

- **3,684 healthy meals** provided during the 6 week summer term
- Food cost of **£2,100** (£350 per week for 6 weeks)
- **19 different sites** across the borough
- **Increased access** to healthy meals for children and families
- **Food waste reduced** by sourcing surplus food where possible
- **Low carbon footprint** from a local delivery model (not bringing additional food in from outside)
- **Jobs created** (through matched funding with Get Oldham Working)

Initial feedback from evaluation forms:

“Something to do in the holidays, we don’t worry about food anymore”

“Meeting other children from different cultures/religion-playing together – mixing with others”

“It helps me and my child integrate in the community”

“Good, healthy food - keeps children occupied rather than being on the streets”

Holiday Hunger – Christmas Pilot 2018

The Christmas Holiday pilot operated over two weeks, in a smaller number of sites (due to availability/open hours). Unlike during the Summer Holiday, the Christmas Holiday is shorter, organisations can be closed or open on reduced hours and people are off of work or not easily available.

The pilot including:

(i) a universal, central offer of food and activity, available in Oldham Central Library for two weeks after Christmas when the library is open over 8 days

(ii) a small number (<5) of specific community locations which are open and available during the Christmas Holidays and willing to provide food and enrichment activity

The full impact of the pilot is still being evaluated but the headline findings are that approximately 40 people (children and families) attended each day. Accessing food parcels as well as fresh food.

Next steps and emerging priorities

1. Develop a wider strategy to address Child Food Poverty in Oldham

To develop a strategy that best meets Oldham’s needs using Council and community resources such as libraries, community and leisure centres and faith buildings. Including an Action Plan for a longer term approach to Holiday Hunger that maximises the potential use of existing assets, including the many buildings and sites in communities where provision could be increased.

To consider the links to the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Action Plan, including the aims and actions, and the sub-theme on Children and Young People in Food Poverty.

2. Secure sustainable funding towards key priorities

The Growing Oldham: Feeding Ambition partnership has committed £45k towards a holiday hunger provision during the next 24 months. This will also explore the potential, eligibility and benefits of the Department for Education funding for Holiday Activities and Food (£9m) that has recently been launched for a UK wide approach. It will also review the wider contributions and funding from across the system that underpins existing enrichment activity.

3. Deliver additional and improved provision in the future

There is a commitment, subject to securing continued funding, including from partnership programmes and externally, to increase and expand on the initial pilot for Summer 2019, Christmas 2019, Summer 2020 and Christmas 2020. As well as to explore how we can commit to a long term plan (e.g. 5 years) that alleviates child food poverty, both inside and outside of the school day.

Questions for the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider

1. Are there any key strategic priorities that would support either future holiday hunger provision or an approach to child food poverty?
2. How can we position Oldham to access future funding to support holiday hunger provision?
3. How can the provision of enrichment activity during school terms be improved and increased sustainably, including additional areas?
4. How can the pilot work collaboratively with schools to link to existing activities and to communicate awareness to those children and young people who will benefit?