



**REPORT TITLE: Gloucestershire's Holiday Activity and Food Programme**

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| <b>Cabinet Date</b>      | 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2022   |
| <b>Cabinet Member</b>    | Councillor Stephen Davies Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years               |
| <b>Key Decision</b>      | Yes  |
| <b>Purpose of Report</b> | To seek Cabinet approval for the commissioning of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. |

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| <b>Recommendations</b> | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approves the allocation of £239,232 from the £1,594,880 received by the council from the Department for Education (“DfE”) pursuant to a Section 31 Grant Determination for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) 2022 -2023 (No: 31/5854) (referred to in these Recommendations as the “HAF 2022 -2023 Funding”) for the provision the Holiday Activity and Food Programme during the Easter School holiday period (11th – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022) as follows:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 £187,674 shall be apportioned between the six Gloucestershire districts based upon the number of children and young people who are eligible to receive Free School Meals (“FSM”) in the relevant district as set out in Annex One. £36,230 from such sum shall be provided as grants to district lead organisations for the purpose of developing the delivery of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in their district. £151,444 shall be allocated to a grants pot that will be used by local public, private and voluntary sector organisations to deliver enriching activities and food to children and young people who are eligible to receive FSM.</li><li>1.2 The remaining £51,558 shall be allocated to funding the delivery of the HAF programme during the Easter Holiday period 11<sup>th</sup> April to 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022, by funding activities to meet the requirements of the programme and with a view to providing nutritional education, family support, tickets for local attractions, activity packs and other such items in line with the funding guidance from the DFE.<p>The opportunity to receive such grants will be advertised and made available by way of an online grant application and due diligence process using the council’s online procurement system and local voluntary and public sector networks.</p></li></ol></li><li>2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Integrated Children and Families Commissioning to award the grants and funding described in Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 above.</li><li>3. Approves the allocation of £159,488 (i.e., 10% of the £1,594,880 HAF 2022 -2023 Funding) to support the council’s administration costs in relation to the delivery of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme across Gloucestershire during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</li></ol> |
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4. Delegates Authority to Assistant Director for Integrated Children and Families Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children’s Safeguarding and Early Years to:
  - 4.1 Conduct a competitive procurement process in respect of a multi-supplier three year (2022 – 2025) Modified Framework Agreement under which public, voluntary and private sector organisations shall be engaged by the council (subject to receipt by it of additional DfE funding) to co-ordinate the council’s future HAF programmes, comprising the provision of holiday activities, food ; family support; nutritional education, and such other related deliverables as may be required during school holidays (referred to in these Recommendations as the “HAF Deliverables”). Such Modified Framework Agreement shall remain open throughout its term to enable further tenderers to be admitted to it on a rolling basis.
  - 4.2 Appoint each of the council’s preferred tenderers to such Modified Framework Agreement.
  - 4.3 Allocate £988,368 from the £1,594,880 HAF 2022 -2023 Funding to fund the provision of the HAF Deliverables in line with DFE requirements during the period of the Summer 2022 school holidays (1<sup>st</sup> August to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022) and Christmas 2022 school holidays (19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022).
  - 4.4 Conduct mini-competition processes in respect of as many Call-Off Contracts under such Framework Agreement as may be required for the purpose of procuring HAF Deliverables described in Recommendation 4.3 and then award such Call-Off Contracts to the preferred tenderers. If the value of any single proposed Call-Off Contract under such Framework Agreement exceeds £500,000, a separate Cabinet decision shall be required to authorise the procurement of such Call-Off Contract.
- 5 Allocate £207,791 from the £1,594,880 HAF 2022 – 2023 Funding to the delivery, in accordance with DFE of funding guidance, of the HAF programme in the financial year of 2022 - 2023 for the purpose of filling any gaps and shortfalls in delivery that may exist in relation to the HAF deliverables procured under Recommendations 4.3 and 4.4.

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| <p><b>Reasons for recommendations</b></p> | <p>These recommendations offer the best option to enable the Council to commission the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>They will ensure that the Easter 2022 HAF Programme is commissioned within tight timescales.</p> <p>Provide the capacity for the management and administration of the HAF programme.</p> <p>The creation of a modified framework will enable the commissioning of Six District Lead Organisations and provides the Council with the flexibility to secure a wide range of local providers, based in communities across Gloucestershire, ensuring that they meet the requirements of the HAF programme and other programmes.</p> <p>They will provide the Council with the flexibility to commission activities to ensure that children and young people across Gloucestershire can access enriching, fun, high quality activities, nutritious food and meet the funding requirements of the Department for Education.</p>   |
| <p><b>Resource Implications</b></p>       | <p>Grant funding of £1,594,880 (i.e., the HAF 2022 -2023 Funding) has been allocated by the Department of Education to the council to deliver the Holiday Activity and Food Programme during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</p> <p>From this sum £239, 232 has been allocated to deliver the HAF programme during the Easter 2022 school holidays, of which £187,674 has been allocated based on the number of FSM children in each District and £51,558 for funding additional activities to meet the requirements of the programme</p> <p>£988,368 HAF Programme funding is being allocated to the provision HAF programme deliverables under the Framework Agreement described in Recommendation 4 above during the Summer and Christmas Holidays.</p> <p>In line with DfE guidance, 10% of £1,594,880 (i.e., £159,488) has been allocated by the DfE to the Council to provide administrative support in relation to the HAF programme during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</p> <p>£207,791 HAF Programme funding is being allocated to ensure the council has the flexibility to fill any gaps and shortfalls in delivery that may exist in relation to the HAF deliverables procured under the proposed Modified Framework Agreement during the 2022/23 financial year.</p> <p>Future allocations for the financial years, 2023/24 – 2024/25 will be notified to the Council by the Department for Education on an annual basis, by way of grant determinations regarding the Holiday Activity and Food Programme.</p> |

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| <b>Background Documents</b>     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cabinet Decision 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 , <a href="#">10 June 2021 - 24 June 2021, Cabinet (gloucestershire.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>2. Directors Decision Report <a href="#">Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) 2021 – 2022 Contingency Allocation</a></li> <li>3. DFE Grant Determination letter December 2021 <a href="#">Holiday activities and food programme - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></li> </ol>  |
| <b>Statutory Authority</b>      | Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence  |
| <b>Divisional Councillor(s)</b> | All  |
| <b>Officer</b>                  | Name: Wendy Williams Assistant Director for Integrated Children and Families Commissioning<br>Tel. no: 01452 328526<br>Email: <a href="mailto:wendy.williams3@gloucestershire.gov.uk">wendy.williams3@gloucestershire.gov.uk</a>   |
| <b>Timeline</b>                 | <p>23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 Cabinet Decision</p> <p>Online grant application process goes live 4<sup>th</sup> March 22 for Easter Provision</p> <p>District Lead Organisations submit application for Easter Provision to meet DFE HAF requirements 11<sup>th</sup> March 22</p> <p>Applications approved for Easter Provision by 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022</p> <p>Easter HAF is delivered between 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022</p> <p>Monitoring report to DFE by end of May 2022</p> <p>Call for organisations – HAF Modified framework for summer provision in April – May 2022</p> <p>Contracts awarded May – June 2022</p> <p>Summer delivery 1<sup>st</sup> August to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022</p> <p>Evaluation and reporting DFE September/October 2022</p> <p>Call for additional organisations to join HAF Modified framework – October 2022</p> <p>Christmas Winter Delivery 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022</p> <p>DFE Grant determination letter sets out allocation of funding 2023 – December 22/January 23</p> <p>Cabinet Report January 2023</p> <p>Call for additional organisations to join HAF Modified framework – Jan/Feb 23</p> <p>HAF delivery 2023 as outlined in the Grant determination letter</p> <p>DFE Grant determination letter sets out the allocation of funding for 2024 in December 23/January 24</p> <p>Cabinet Report January 2024</p> |

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|  | <p>Call for additional organisations to join HAF Modified framework – Jan/Feb 24</p> |
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A call for additional organisations to join the Modified framework to be run as required to fill gaps prior to HAF delivery during each year of the programme

## Background

- 1 The Government announced the expansion of the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) in December 2020, for it to become a national programme from April 2021 to support children and young people who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).
- 2 This new national programme consists of six weeks of services spread out over the main school holidays, (one week at Easter, four weeks during the summer and a final week during the Christmas school holidays). Each week consists of four days of activities, each lasting 4 hours, offering enriching activities, nutritional education, physical exercise as well as a healthy meal and sign posting families to other services.
- 3 The continuation of the programme for a further three years was announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review October 2021, and the Council received the grant determination letter in December 2021 confirming the allocation of £1,594,880 for delivery of the HAF during 2022- 2023.

## Gloucestershire Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2021

- 4 During 2021, Gloucestershire County Council working with District Lead Organisations and local providers successfully delivered the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF), utilising the £1,546,870 (*and contingency funding*) allocated to the county by the Department for Education.
- 5 The HAF programme in Gloucestershire, during 2021, reduced holiday loneliness, hunger, and the loss of education. With over 140 activity providers, the programme enabled, children and young people, to keep active and engaged and have access to healthy food, during the school holidays. The programme reached, 37% of children and young people eligible for Free School Meals at Easter, 57% in the summer school holidays and 49% during the winter school holidays.
- 6 Following Cabinet Member decision, the HAF team, worked with 17 local delivery partners to co-produce a County Wide HAF offer, which was mostly virtual due to Covid-19 restrictions for the Easter holidays during 6th – 9th April 2021.
- 7 During the Easter provision, 3,044 parents/carers with 6,009 children and young people (37%) of those registered for FSM, signed up to receive a Home Cooking Kit. 562 parents completed the evaluation survey with 88% rated the quality of the Home Cooking Kits as either Excellent (57%) or Good (31%).
- 8 During the Easter Pilot, 314 Children and young people accessed Covid-19 secure face to face activities in Communities across the County and 766 unique visits were made to the new HAF webpages on the County Council website.
- 9 Embracing the experiences and learning from the Easter 2021 pilot, a report outlining the approach for the remainder of the HAF grant for the Summer and Christmas holidays was approved by Cabinet in June 21.and the Council worked with the following

District Lead Organisations in each of the six Districts to develop and deliver the programme:

| <b>District</b> | <b>District Lead</b>  |
|-----------------|---|
| Cheltenham      | Cheltenham Borough Council  |
| Cotswolds       | Cotswolds District Council and World Jungle                           |
| Forest of Dean  | Forest Voluntary Action Forum   |
| Gloucester City | The Gateway Trust, The Venture White City and Gloucester City Council |
| Stroud          | Stroud District Council   |
| Tewkesbury      | Young Gloucestershire   |

- 10 The District Leads worked with local providers to develop their delivery proposals, completing an expression of interest detailing how these would meet the requirements of the HAF programme.
- 11 All providers completed application form and completed due diligence process overseen by the GCC HAF Team, who also commissioned providers to fill gaps and to deliver activities on a countywide basis, for example Play Gloucestershire and Bloodhound, other activities and food, also ensuring that barriers like transport in rural areas were overcome.
- 12 A virtual offer was available on the new HAF webpages on the council website, including a wide range of age-appropriate on-line activities.
- 13 Gloucestershire's Summer Holiday Activity and Food programme was a great success, reaching 57% of children and young people eligible for Free Schools Meals.

- 144 providers
- 18,500 activity sessions
- 18,581 meals
- 3622 food boxes
- 773 children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
- 16 days provision during the summer: Primary school aged attended on average 6 days and secondary school aged children attended on average 1 day

- 14 In recognition of Gloucestershire's reach to children and young people eligible for FSM and their families across the County, the Council was invited to provide a presentation to the national network of HAF local authorities leads in November 2021 outlining our approach to successfully delivering the programme.
- 15 Building on the learning from the summer, an online application and due diligence process was implemented for providers to complete, for Christmas, alongside an expression of interest and application form from each District lead which set out how their provision would meet DFE requirements.

- 16 The Christmas HAF provision was delivered between 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021. The monitoring report produced for the DFE and submitted at the end of January 2022 identified that 49% of children and young people eligible for FSM in the county accessed the provision during the Christmas.
- 17 Working with District Lead Organisations and local providers has been key to success of the HAF in Gloucestershire, as these organisations are based in local communities often already working with vulnerable children and families.
- 18 Throughout 2021 the Council worked with district leads and local providers to develop a suite of communications to engage families effectively, including dedicated county wide and locality specific web content, video library, regular digital newsletters, social media and direct communication through schools.
- 19 Over the first year the Council's HAF team, has evaluated the programme with District Leads, Local providers and parents and children and young people using the learning and best practice to enhance the programme. The HAF 2021 – 2022 project overview is attached in annex two.
- 20 This report sets out the proposed approach to deliver the HAF programme in 2022-2023 and beyond subject to future funding being available.

## **Options**

### Option 1: Do nothing – do not run the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in 2022 - 2023

- 21 The County has been allocated the funding by the Department for Education for 2022 - 2023 and had considerable success in delivering the programme in 2021, working with six District lead organisations and over 140 mainly local providers. The programme enabled, children and young people to keep active and engaged and have access to healthy food, during the school holidays. The programme reached, 37% of children and young people eligible for Free School Meals at Easter, 57% during the summer school holidays and 49% during the winter school holidays. To do nothing would leave vulnerable children and families without access to enriching activities, physical exercise, and healthy food during the school holidays.
- 22 Funding will be returned to the Department of Education as it is ring fenced for the delivery of the HAF programme only.
- 23 This option is not recommended.

### Option 2: To undertake a procurement process to secure a lead provider for the delivery of Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Gloucestershire.

- 24 Although the announcement in the Comprehensive spending review was for the continuation of the Holiday Activity and Food programme for a further three years, the programme's funding will be allocated to the Council on annual basis. Given the timeframe for the grant award and the demands of a full procurement exercise It would

be too resource intensive for both the Council, district partners and providers to undertake a full procurement exercise each year. Therefore, it is not viable to run a large-scale procurement exercise for delivery of activities for the summer and Christmas holiday periods in 2022 – 2023 and each of the following years of the programme.

25 This option is not recommended

Option 3: To continue delivering the programme through an Expression of Interest and Grants programme and allocates 10% of the budget to cover the administration of the programme.

26 This approach was used to develop and deliver the HAF programme in Gloucestershire during 2021, as approved by Cabinet 23rd June 2021. Whilst successful in achieving the programme aims, this process was limiting for organisations as they had to apply again for delivery for each holiday. Going forward this could mean applying up to three times a year. For commissioners this approach limited flexibility, for example if providers were unable to deliver or if provision needed to be expanded/developed at pace. The Council has therefore used the learning from the approach to develop the preferred option and to ensure continuity of provision for FSM children and young people and their families across the county.

27 This option is not recommended.

Option 4: To allocate grants to six District lead organisations and local providers for Easter 2022; establish a modified framework for commissioning of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Gloucestershire summer 2022 onwards and award call-off contracts thereunder; to allocate funding to meet the requirements of the HAF programme; and allocate 10% of the budget to cover the administration of the programme.

28 This is the best option to enable the Council to commission the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in Gloucestershire and meet DFE requirements. There are three main areas to the proposal

- Ensuring that the Easter 2022 HAF Programme is commissioned within tight timescales.
- Creates a three-year modified framework enabling the commissioning of HAF related activities from six district lead organisations and which also provides the Council with the flexibility to secure the participation of a wide range of local providers, based in communities across Gloucestershire, ensuring that they meet the requirements of the HAF programme.
- Ensures the Council has the flexibility to fund activities to the meet the requirements of the HAF programme.

29 This approach will allow the council to develop a suitable platform using the modified framework to “call-off” HAF related activities for the lifetime of the HAF programme as detailed within the spending review

30 Providers will submit their applications for the modified framework just once for the whole three-year programme, rather than the current grant model where providers submitted for each holiday period, which for some is three applications each year. Due

Diligence will be undertaken on annual basis or as required for example to ensure that insurances or DBS checks are current and up to date.

- 31 The framework will be modified therefore allowing new providers to join over the period throughout its existence.
- 32 This approach meets both the immediate and long term needs to deliver the HAF Programme therefore this is option is recommended.

## **Risks**

- 33 There is a risk in respect of any grant award that it may contravene subsidy control regime requirements hence, for the purpose of mitigating such risk, the council has satisfied itself that: (a) The proposed grants are for small sums that will be given to truly local organisations only, hence they are unlikely to affect international trade and will therefore fall outside the scope of the subsidy control regime; (b) the proposed grants will not result in more than £332,000 being given to any single beneficiary over three years, hence they are outside the scope of the subsidy control regime; and (c) the proposed grants are payable on an unconditional basis and hence will not to meet the definition of a contract that would need to be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Moreover, the council has carried out an application process for those wishing to deliver activities in the summer 2021 and at Christmas 2021, and which will be run again for the Easter provision in 2022 prior to the introduction of the Framework.
- 34 There is a risk in possible lack of interest in taking part in the process to secure a lead organisation in each district. This is mitigated by the work during the 2021 delivery of the programme, the GCC HAF team has worked effectively with the current six District Lead Organisations. An evaluation of the first year of delivery, as part of the consultation phase, with District Leads, included what worked and what has been more challenging has helped to establish the key characteristics and requirements of District lead organisations in the future.
- 35 There is a risk that providers will not want to participate in the Gloucestershire HAF modified Framework. Raising awareness of the process through providers meetings to be held in February and that training and support will be provided will help to mitigate this risk. There was some concern about meeting the Due Diligence requirements of the Framework, mitigated in part through training offered to all providers in 2021 and future training as part of the requirements of the framework. Further mitigations in include reassurance that the approach offers the opportunity for providers to apply again once they meet the required standards as opposed to a procurement exercise for a longer contract where Due Diligence is pass / fail. Colleagues from procurement will offer support and guidance at the events and once a provider is approved this is a long-standing arrangement rather than an annual exercise.

## **Financial implications**

- 36 The grant funding £1,594,880 for the HAF delivery in 2022 - 2023 has been ringed fenced by the Department for Education and allocated to the Council as set out in the

SECTION 31 Grant determination letter for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) 2022 -2023 (No: 31/5854).

### **Climate change implications**

- 37 Throughout the commissioning process consideration will be given as to the impact of the provision and to the considerations that need to be undertaken regarding the provision being affected by climate change.
- 38 The DFE has provided guidance for local authorities regarding reducing the environmental impact of the programme, for example reducing plastic and food waste during the delivery of the programme, which will be used to support the commissioning of the programme.

### **Equality implications**

- 39 Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? Yes
- 40 The Equalities Impact Assessment originally produced to support the Cabinet decision in June 2021 has been updated. Alongside the protected characteristics of age, gender and disability of the children and young people participating in the programme, in December the CRM system was updated to enable the collection of non-mandatory ethnicity to be collected.
- 41 For future provision, and as part of the renewed DPIA, the protected characteristics age, gender, disability, and race, although these will continue to be non-mandatory requirements, parents and carers who register will be encouraged to complete all sections. This will enable the Council to track the reach of the programme to a wider range of children and young people across the county, supporting our strategic planning for the programme going forwards with a further two years of funding.
- 42 District Lead Organisations and provider's performance will be assessed against their ability to ensure that the provision across the district is accessible to the widest range of children and young people as possible and is reflecting the diversity of communities in the wider County.
- 43 Extensive work was undertaken during 2021 with local providers to support them to make small adjustments to ensure that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) were able to access provision, through the commissioning of training and advice from Active Impact and the provision of 60 sensory tents available to providers across the County.
- 44 The expectation is that the SEND work continues, with feedback from parents and young people tracking continual improvement in accessibility of activities. The HAF team also intends to work closely with Commissioning colleagues within the Hub, to ensure that the HAF and short breaks for Disabled children provision maximising the availability of school holiday provision for Disabled children and their families.

- 45 Cabinet Members should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.

### **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications**

- 46 A DPIA has been created for the CRM Database and work is underway with IMS to address risks to personal data. Privacy notices have been completed for both the database and website

### **Social value implications**

- 47 Provision of Holiday Activities and Food, for children and young people eligible for Free Schools meals, increases the opportunities to be active, access nutritious food, and enriching activities, increasing wellbeing and quality of life.
- 48 The modified framework tender process will invite providers to include how they would deliver increased social value as part of their bid submission.

### **Consultation feedback**

- 49 No formal public consultation has been completed; however, feedback has been sought from parents and carers following the Easter, Summer, and Christmas delivery of the programme. District lead organisations and providers have also completed feedback alongside children and young people who have attended the programme. This has been used to shape the development and delivery of the programme and annex two contains the HAF 2021 Gloucestershire Evaluation report summary.

### **Officer recommendations**

- 50 That the Cabinet approves Option Four as set out in the recommendations to this report.

### **Performance management/follow-up**

- 51 The Gloucestershire HAF project will be accountable to the Assistant Director for Integrated Children and Families Commissioning. Expenditure against the grant will be monitored and reported to a Steering Group that will meet quarterly to review provision, identify approaches to fill gaps in provision and ensure that the programme dovetails with other initiatives for children and families in the county.
- 52 The DFE has issued new guidance, including further information to support local authority ensure that the provision meets the framework standards, and the council will continue to ensure that provision commissioned is of high quality, embeds safeguarding good practise and ensures that the voices of children and young people are listened to and shaping provision for the future.
- 53 Required monitoring and evaluation reports and Statement of Expenditure will be provided in line with Department for Education requirements

## Annex One

| <b>District Allocation<br/>Easter based on % of<br/>FSM children</b> | <b>Total Easter<br/>Allocation per<br/>District</b> | <b>Developing delivery<br/>of the programme –<br/>District Lead</b> | <b>District Lead<br/>Organisation</b> |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Cheltenham 17%   | £31,904.52  | £5,424  | Cheltenham Borough<br>council         |
| Gloucester 30%   | £56,302.10  | £16,891   | The Venture White<br>City             |
| Cotswold 9.5%  | £17,829.00  | £2,050.   | Cotswolds District<br>council         |
| Tewkesbury 14%   | £26,274.31  | £3,678.   | Young Gloucestershire                 |
| Stroud 15.5%   | £29,089.42  | £4,509  | Stroud District Council               |
| Forest of Dean 14%   | £26,274.31  | £3,678  | Forest Voluntary<br>Action Forum      |

**Annex Two**  
**HAF 2021 – 2022 Project Overview**