

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to directly award £60,500 funding to Halo Services Limited to support the delivery of the Covid Recovery plan and deliver swimming activities.
Date of decision:	7 th July 2021
Decision maker:	Paul Smith, Interim Director for Adults & Communities
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Decision taken by Cabinet to approve the Covid 19 Recovery Plan on 24th June 2021: That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy and Place, Director Adults and Communities, Director Children and Families and Director of Public Health be authorised to take all operational decisions to implement recommendation including, but not limited to, the procurement and commissioning of the identified projects (as set out in the detailed action plan)</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=50037702&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI58109</p>
Ward:	All wards
Consultation:	<p>The Covid Recovery Plan was approved by Cabinet on 24th June which provides funding of £6m to support the economy, community wellbeing and organisation with recovery. The plan provided an overview of the schemes for delivery, which included 'Get Active' and all appropriate consultation was undertaken at this time.</p> <p>The section 151 officer has been consulted and supportive of the project.</p>
Decision made:	To directly award £60,500 to Halo Services Limited to support the delivery of the Covid Recovery Plan and provide swimming opportunities across all ages.
Reasons for decision:	<p>The global Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting measures taken to reduce the spread of the virus have had an unprecedented impact on the national and local economy and on people's wellbeing and mental (as well as physical) health. Nationally the magnitude of the recession caused by the pandemic is unprecedented, GDP declined by 9.8% in 2020 the steepest drop since records began in 1948.</p> <p>The pandemic has also had a severe impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, due to long periods of anxiety, isolation, and uncertainty. The Herefordshire Community Wellbeing Survey 2021 found 28% of people reported high levels of anxiety, 32% experienced drop in household income, 33% doing less exercise, and 30% sleeping less well. Wellbeing is lowest in those living in the most deprived areas.</p> <p>The council has worked across all directorates to support businesses, residents and communities throughout the pandemic to remain as safe as possible and to prevent and reduce spread of infection and protect those most vulnerable in our society.</p> <p>Our focus now moves towards recovery. Over the coming months the true impact of the pandemic will become better known for the economy, community wellbeing and organisation.</p>

	<p>To support the recovery cabinet approved a £6m Covid Recovery Plan which includes the economy, community wellbeing and organisation. The recovery plan now focuses on the immediate impactful actions we need to take in the short term. Our priorities are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Establish Safe and Welcoming Places</i> - <i>Support Business Viability and Resilience,</i> - <i>Support Employment</i> - <i>Support Wellbeing.</i> <p>This waiver is to request that direct funding is provided to Halo Leisure Services Ltd to deliver the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive swimming lessons for children during the Summer, October half term and February half term and to offer 3,000 free spaces at the all Halo pools across the remaining school holiday periods up to March 2022. • Free family swimming sessions across the county’s Halo swimming pools targeting children and families during the summer school holiday period 2021 and providing 2,000 families. • Adult swimming lessons free access to swimming lessons for adult non-swimmers. Aim to get non-swimming adults to improve water confidence through weekly swimming lessons. Target is to get 120 swimmers through the programme.
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The covid recovery plan budget allocation must be committed within the 2021/22 financial year and the summer holidays is an important period to encourage participation in activities for all ages with the aim of the projects is to encourage ‘staycation’ families to undertake more physical activity.</p> <p>There is an immediate need to deliver this offer and to directly award the contract to ensure the opportunities are available during the summer holidays. Halo are the only provider with four public swimming pools across the county to be able to deliver this offer and colleagues from legal and procurement have been consulted on this decision.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Halo Leisure Services Ltd have four public swimming pools across Herefordshire and are the only local public swimming pool provider. The swimming facilities are located in Hereford, Ross and Leominster and this offer will be across all of these pools, therefore Halo are the only provider that can offer this opportunity across the county.</p> <p>There is additional funding that will be available to encourage increased activity across the county via different providers and to increase the offer to Herefordshire residents.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>