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Agenda Item No: 3 (b)

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

7 July 2020

Report of the Executive Director for Children's Services

ESSENTIAL HAMPERS FOR FOSTER CARERS

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide an update to the Cabinet Member regarding the recent project to supply essentials hampers to DCC Foster Carers. The report highlights some of the cross council working that took place, as well as feedback from DCC Foster Carers.

2. Information and Analysis

Background

Due to Covid 19 pandemic there are more pressures on DDC foster carers. DCC wanted to recognise the contribution foster carers are making, by providing a good will gesture. It is hoped this project will maintain good relations amongst the DCC foster carers.

The hampers were produced by the school catering service and included donations from community partners. The hampers included:

- Essential Food Hamper - value up to £30
- Delivered in cardboard box 65x45x45cm
- Easter Egg for each child in placement
- Cuddly teddy bear per hamper
- Ream of Paper
- Thank you note from Councillor Alex Dale

This project was an excellent example of cross-departmental working in the council. Key areas that exemplified a "can do" attitude are:

Catering Services

Catering services provided an example hamper, ordered the materials and arranged the staff to pack the hampers, ready for collection by taxi's. Collected the printing from Business Services, and linked with external partners delivering other parts of the hamper.

ETE

As a result of Covid19, taxi companies contracted to DCC for school transport, were not being utilised. Staff members spoke to operators, and planned the logistics of 219 individual drops, providing the lists to catering so they could organise the hampers into drops and provided support around Covid19 packing processes.

Fostering Team

Input into the data lists to ensure all Foster families details were correct and helped to define the items that would be best received by Foster Families.

Commissioning, Communities and Policy

Provided template and support with Risk Assessment, specifically around Covid19 and distribution of hampers.

External Partners

We also had input from community partners, namely Operation Orphan and Excel Printing who both contributed to the contents of the hamper (see above)

Enterprising Council

This programme is in keeping with the council's priorities around value for money and working with people to increase their resilience and reduce demand on services. It also typifies a one Council approach.

Outputs and Outcomes

Hampers were packed and prepared by Catering on Thus 16th April and delivered to Foster Families Friday 17th April.

The feedback has been overwhelming. Over 40 comments from foster carers have been received. A selection is shown in appendix 1.

3. Financial Considerations

Having received corporate and third sector donations, it was possible to minimise costs and brought the total cost down to £6570.

4. Legal Considerations

The Council has powers in accordance with S1-6 of the Localism Act 2011 to do that which will be to the 'benefit of the authority, its area or persons

resident or present in its area.’ The proposed benefit of this action is to support the role of foster carers in providing an essential service.

5. Social Value Considerations

This initiative has made use of local suppliers of council services who are currently impacted by the Covid19 crises. Furthermore, the Council has made good use of resources by re-directing services that are not currently able to be delivered to this project (ETE – School Transport Services / School Catering Provision)

The project is also supporting vulnerable children in Foster Care, as well as supporting the Foster Carers with items that may be difficult to acquire.

6. Human Resources Considerations

- Use of catering staff / staff allocated to different areas.
- Cross departmental working

7. Executive Director’s Recommendations

That Cabinet Member notes the positive impact the project has had on relations with DCC foster carers, the feedback received (appendix 1) and the example of cross council working.

**Jane Parfremment
Executive Director for Children’s Services**

Appendix 1

Message
<p>"We have just received a box of shopping and some paper from Derbyshire county council please would you send our thanks to who ever has organised sending them much appreciated"</p>
<p>"We would just like to say thank you for the lovely hamper... it arrived this morning! Knowing XX as you do you will be pleased to know the huge box has been the most exciting gift of all. Thank you"</p>
<p>"Thanks for the hamper it's saved us for going out for the next few days. XX loves his fireman elephant. Thanks again"</p>
<p>"Just to let you know we have today received a large food parcel from DCC which, was a lovely surprise. The boys loved the cuddly toys and it will mean one less trip to the supermarket for XX which, is a great help. Please pass on to whomever coordinates this our gratitude."</p>
<p>"Oh my goodness, I am in tears, thank you so much for our hamper. I can't express how appreciated this is and how much it means. Thank you"</p>
<p>"Just received our hamper. It is lovely. Please pass on our thanks xx"</p>
<p>"hope you well, I just want to say a massive thank you for our hamper the kids loved it it was like Christmas again 😊thanks again stay safe x"</p>
<p>"Hope you are keeping safe and well. We have just received the generous and very unexpected food hamper from DCC. Can you please pass our thanks on to the organisers of this. Some of it will be donated to the local food bank to help those who are struggling in these tough times but the Easter egg has already gone.... Best wishes</p>
<p>"We hope you and your family are well at this most difficult period. We received a Hamper today. May we say a big thank you to yourself, DCC, all the people who donated to it and delivered it. Stay in, stay safe and save lives. Regards</p>
<p>"On behalf of my wife and myself I would like to thank you for the food hamper that we received from you this morning , it is very much appreciated by both of us and the little girl that we are currently looking after . She was very excited to receive the cuddly lion ,book and the Easter egg, we all opened it together. It was a pleasant surprise to all of us ,the food will come in very helpful and it will save me at journey to the supermarket ,we will definitely make good use of it and of all the A4 paper and cards that was sent with it . Many thanks, keep safe</p>

<p>“just wanted to send you an email to thankyou for the food box/goodies it was a very nice surprise, so thankyou for what you do kindness goes along way at times like this, the 2 children that me and my daughter look after really appreciate the soft toys you sent, again thankyou.</p>
<p>“Hi 🖐️ Just wanted to say a huge Thank-you🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌 for our care 📦 Package today. It was totally unexpected and made us all smile something for everyone, even the huge 📦 box is now a little play den . Again Thank-you ,you didn’t need to do this but it is very much appreciated. Hope you are all well 🙏 And have a fabulous weekend From, XXX 😊”</p>
<p>“Could You please circulate this email to all management. Myself, XX and our 3 boys would like to Thankyou all for the amazing hamper we have just received. It was a big surprise. Not only did you think of their tummy’s, you thought about their activity’s also. Thankyou so much very appreciated Keep safe everyone.”</p>
<p>I just wanted to say a ‘BIG’ thank you to the department for the beautiful hamper we have received this morning for our family. It is greatly appreciated and I’m sure we will enjoy eating the contents.</p> <p>Kind regards to all</p>
<p>“Hi Will you pass on our thanks for the large box that arrived this morning XX was so excited and took great pleasure in emptying it. All items we can use. We are especially thankful for the pack off paper and card as we were starting to run out. It was a massive surprise and just the boost we needed. A great idea and I am sure all Foster Carers will be feeling the same. Thanks Derbyshire County Council.</p>
<p>“Hope you are well. Please pass on our thanks for the Easter box, it’s a really great selection and well thought out. Many thanks from all of us”</p>
<p>“will you say thanks to your foster team for the lovely surprise of the Hamper, XX was so excited when we found it on the doorstep it was like Christmas day watching him go through it and put it all away. It was a lovely surprise for me and XX too it made us feel valued thank you all so much”</p>
<p>“ Hope you are ok and coping with the way life is at the minute. We had a lovely surprise today. DCC delivered us a food hamper with a lovely cuddly toy for baby in too. It really brightened our day along with the message from Councillor Alex Dale . It didn’t have his contact details in though and we’d really like to say thank you. Could you please pass on these thanks Take care”</p>
<p>“Could you pass on thanks for our hamper and the drawing paper, it was a nice surprise. The boys enjoyed opening it.</p>

We really appreciate it, thank you so much.
Take care, stay safe.

“We would just like to say a HUGE thank you for our hamper that has arrived this afternoon - this has been gratefully received, and what a lovely surprise - our placement will love the cuddly toy and Easter egg!
What a lovely gesture. Many thanks again for this.
Hope you are all staying safe.
Kind regards.



“We would just like to say thank you to DCC for the corona survival box and the pack of paper, it was a thoughtful gesture. It was a nice surprise to receive the essential items as well as the goodies. The children and our newest addition to the family, fluffy the elephant enjoyed making, and of course eating the yummy cakes with some of the items from the box.”

Wow wow wow.
Received our delivery today. So after spraying the heck out of it and leaving it a while, intrigue just got the better of me.
What a lovely and unexpected surprise. Made me feel valued and supported, thank you so much 🙏. Little things really help in this crazy situation. Lovely to know we're being thought about. 🖤
Kind regards ”

Even the box was appreciated!!! Thank you

“What a lovely surprise to have a great hamper delivered today.
Full of nice things the Fresh fruit and veg was amazing and the little fruit pots.
This was a lovely thoughtful thing to do, I know that a few carers have felt very down and I'm sure this will give them a boost.
The paper and card was a great idea.
And even a cuddly toy.
XX had great fun looking to see what was in the box and already decided we can melt the Easter egg and make chocolate cornflake cakes.