

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 16 JULY 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

SUBJECT: **PLAY DEVELOPMENT: SUMMER PLAY SCHEMES**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To report progress identification of sustainable play provision from April 2014 with reference to the summer play scheme programme.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 *Families First* (formerly *Cymorth*) grant funding has, to date, been central to the delivery of the six Priority Development Areas identified in the Flintshire Play Strategy 2011-14. The award for 2013/14 of £80,588 represents a 54% grant reduction on Year 2011/12. This has impacted significantly on the delivery of the 2013 summer play scheme programme.

2.02 In a response to the reduction in funding and to ensure that the service could operate within budget, the Head of Culture and Leisure wrote to all Town and Community Councils advising them that the number of play schemes available to them during summer 2013 would be limited to a maximum of two each and that summer play scheme provision would be reduced from five weeks to three weeks at locations to be agreed in local consultation.

2.03 At its meeting on 1 March 2013, the County Council made a one-off allocation of £12,000 for the 2013 summer play scheme to ensure that requests for additional provision by Town and Community Councils could be met on a match-funding basis.

2.04 Plans for delivery in the summer of 2013 are now advanced. The level of take up and impact of the 2013 programme will be evaluated by the Play Unit and will inform the planning for future years.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The availability of grant funding for summer play schemes in 2014/15 and beyond has not yet been confirmed by *Families First*. However, our planning assumptions are based upon continuity of funding.

3.02 In the course of consultation with Town and Community Councils about the reduced funding for 2013/14, various representations were made about the fairness of the allocation of two 3-week schemes for each Town and Community Council area. Comments included the need for additional provision in rural areas with dispersed populations at a distance from leisure and other community facilities and the need for additional provision in urban areas with high concentrations of young people. There were also references to the increased contribution being sought from Town and Community Councils as a result of the reduced grant funding. It has not proved possible to reconcile these conflicting concerns within the available grant funding.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Subject to consultation with Scrutiny and confirmation of *Families First* funding for Summer Play Schemes in 2014/15 and beyond, to confirm the future allocation of grant funding for the provision of summer play schemes on the basis outlined in section 2.02 above with the same allocation being offered to each Town and Community Council on the present match- funding basis.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The recommendation would enable the Summer Play Scheme to operate within budget subject to confirmation of grant funding from *Families First* and continued match funding support from Town and Community Councils.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Summer play schemes provide free access for all.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The summer play schemes make provision for 'buddying' to enable disabled children to participate.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing consultation with Town and Community Councils.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Regular consultation has taken place with Town and Community Councils concerning the operation of summer play schemes.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Cabinet Report (23.04.13) *Flintshire Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan*.

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