

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **THURSDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER – ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE**

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

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 To report with reference to the summer play scheme programme 2014 and to provide information with regard to the financial implications for the delivery of summer playscheme in 2015.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 The county summer playscheme programme was delivered for the 18<sup>th</sup> year in 2014 and the schemes were delivered for 3, 4 or 5 weeks dependant upon the level of contribution from Town and Community Council funding. Appendix A for a summary of facts and figures.

- 2.02 The costs for three weeks delivery of the summer playscheme programme was equally funded in 2014, via partnership funding from Welsh Government 'Families First' grant (Flintshire) at a level of £80,588 which was matched by local Town and Community Councils. The costs for the additional weeks of provision' were met by the local Town and Community Councils.

22 local councils opted for three week schemes (37 sites)

3 local councils opted for four week schemes (6 sites)

7 local councils opted for 5 week schemes (13 sites)

- 2.03 Three playschemes were delivered in partnership with Urdd Gobaith Cymru through the medium of Welsh and were funded via the Families First grant. Urdd Gobaith Cymru directly employed the playworkers with the Flintshire Play Development team providing all training, equipment and supervision.

- 2.04 The Quayplay scheme, held at Connah's Quay Sports Centre was delivered in partnership with Connah's Quay Town Council. Quayplay is funded mainly by the town councils contribution, with the local authority providing all management, supervision coordination, recruitment and training. Quayplay is the largest playscheme setting in Wales and is registered with CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales).

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The availability of grant funding for summer play schemes 2015/2016 and

beyond has not been confirmed by Families First. However, our planning assumptions are based upon continuation of funding to the same level.

- 3.02 The planning and preparation for the 2015 summer playschemes has to commence in December 2014, to enable sufficient time for the recruitment process. As many applicants are students, interviews are held during the Easter break to accommodate their short-term availability.
- 3.03 Early consideration needs to be given to developing an ‘exit strategy’ for ‘summer Playscheme 2016’. This is with regard to the possibility of the local authority not being awarded the grant for the delivery of summer playschemes from ‘Families First in Flintshire’ 2016/2017. The Families First grant has been fundamental in providing match funding with local town and community councils, since 2012.
- 3.04 Subject to confirmation of Families First funding for Summer Play Schemes in 2015/16 and beyond, the Council will need to confirm the future allocation of grant funding for the provision of summer play schemes as outlined in section 2.02. It is intended, subject to consultation, that the same allocation of schemes will be offered to each Town and Community Council as in 2014.
- 3.05 Following on from confirmation of the Families First grant for 2015, the local authority will begin consultation with local Town and Community councils with regard to agreeing partnership funding for summer playschemes, 2015.
- 3.06 Following on from confirmation of the Families First grant for 2015, the Play Development Team will consult with all local town and community councils, children and young people and volunteer organisations with regard to Summer Playscheme 2016 and the possibility of the loss of the Families First grant. The Play Development Team will explore a number of options, as indicated below, to assist local communities, to continue to deliver summer play schemes, for 2016.
- Local town and community councils ‘commissioning’ the Play Development team to deliver summer Playschemes;
  - Engagement with Local town and community councils to assist them to deliver summer Playschemes;
  - Recruitment of local community members and volunteers to deliver Playscheme in 2015, this will then ensure that the necessary skills and knowledge are available within local communities, to deliver Playschemes;
  - Engagement with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and volunteer organisations to support or deliver community based play provision;
  - Explore alternative funding opportunities and charging models.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Scrutiny Committee note the proposed way forward as outlined in this report and make comment in particular on:

- The delivery of Summer Playschemes in 2014;
- The approach outlined for delivery for 2015 Playschemes;
- The approach outlined to potentially prepare for a loss of grant in 2016.

#### **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* at the same level and with continued match funding support, from Town and Community Councils.

5.02 If the Families First grant is not awarded before the end of January 2015. The recruitment process will be suspended, to avoid any financial implications and the 2015 summer play playschemes will not be provided.

5.03 As in 3.03, early consideration will be given to developing an 'exit strategy' for 'summer playscheme 2016. This is with regard to the possibility of the local authority not being awarded the grant for the delivery of summer playschemes from 'Families First in Flintshire' 2016/2017. The Families First grant has been fundamental in providing the match funding with town and community councils since 2012.

5.04 The current level of grant provision from Families First is at £80,588 pa.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 Summer play schemes provide free access for all children regardless of ability or background.

6.02 The withdrawal of the county scheme would directly impact on children, young people and wider communities and reduce the local authority's ability to meet some actions within schedule 1 of the Play Action Plan 2014/2015.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 There are no equalities implications from this report.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The summer play schemes make provision for 'buddying' to enable disabled children to participate. There were 41 families and 45 children provided with a service for 2014.

- 8.02 As outlined in 6.01 the summer playschemes provide free access for all children, in Flintshire aged 5 to 12 years, including those most vulnerable.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 The Families First grant provides the total salary for a part time Community Play-worker (22.2 hours per week) to coordinate the buddying aspect for the summer playscheme and to support the Play Development unit to prepare for the summer playscheme.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 Ongoing consultation with Town and Community Councils, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and volunteer organisations.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

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

**12.00 APPENDICES**

- 12.01 Appendix A – ‘Facts and Figures’ – summer playschemes, 2014

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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