

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
**DATE:** 20 SEPTEMBER 2012  
**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING  
**SUBJECT:** NORTH EAST WALES COMMUNITY PLAY PROJECT

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To provide the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the North East Wales Community Play Project (NEWCPP).

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 NEWCPP is a partnership project across Wrexham, Denbighshire and Flintshire county areas. It is hosted by Flintshire County Council via Public Open Spaces within Culture and Leisure Services.

2.02 NEWCPP is funded by round two of the Big Lottery's Child's Play programme in Wales, it has secured £964,850 in grant-aid and Flintshire County Council is the grant recipient. The project is a three year funded scheme, the commencement date was August 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 (when the Project Manager was appointed) and delivery of staffed play sessions in the first targeted community began on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 NEWCPP has provided a major investment of funding into the provision of play opportunities in North East Wales. It has the full support of all regional partners and has been assisted by the audit of existing provision undertaken by NEW Play (North East Wales Play) Funded via round 1 of the 'Child's Play' Programme. The project is managed by a regional project management group

3.02 The staff are based within three peripatetic teams (one in each of the three counties) and consist of three play workers (one Senior and two Play Workers), supported by a Project Manager and Resources Officer. Each team will target five play deprived communities over the three years of the project with a total of fifteen communities across the three county areas. The target age range is 5 -15 years with an emphasis on children aged 8 -12 years. The communities have been identified via a number of considerations e.g. on the basis of indices of

deprivation, child population and Flintshire County Council's Play Strategy 2011 -2014.

- 3.03 The project aims to demonstrate that by enhancing opportunities for play within a community, that the level of play activity will increase and raise the profile / significance of play in the life of the community. It will also engage with and support local organisations and volunteers to build up a legacy for the work. There is also a research element built into the project which will engage Glyndwr University to measure the effectiveness of the programme.
- 3.04 The Flintshire project team worked within Higher Shotton between January and June 2012. During this time, the team engaged with the Town Council, local schools, professionals / organisations and residents. The project provided five two-hour after school play sessions per week, together with lunchtime play sessions in four schools. 34% of children living within the LSOA (Lower Super Output Area), a total of 194 children, attended a session on at least one occasion. A combined total of 1,406 attendances were recorded during the six-month period, with an average session attendance of 30 children.
- 3.05 The Flintshire team began its engagement in Sealand on 1 July 2012; the third community will be Connah's Quay from January to June 2013. The remaining two communities will be identified by the project management group using the criteria which have guided previous selections; including population density of children and young people, deprivation statistics, status of existing play provision in the area, Flintshire Vulnerable Families Mapping 2011 and Flintshire Play Strategy 2011 -2014.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 The Committee is asked to note the report.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 The total amount of funding awarded from the Big Lottery Fund is £964,850; of which £764,394 is specifically for salaries to employ a staff team of eleven (including a redundancy settlement figure). This project is completely funded by the grant award and the project finances are currently managed by Flintshire County Council.

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

- 6.01 This project will assist the Council to respond to the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, provision 11, Play Opportunities, which places the following statutory duties on local authorities in relation to play:  
"A local authority must assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in

its area for children in accordance with regulations" and "A local authority must secure sufficient play opportunities in its area for children, so far as reasonably practicable, having regard to its assessment under subsection (1)."

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 The project contributes towards the waste minimisation agenda by creating a resource service that operates on the reduce, re-use, recycle principles. The Resource Officer will develop partnerships with local businesses to divert waste away from landfill sites and into a more positive end use, as materials to enhance children's play experiences.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 Opportunities to play have become increasingly limited for children over the course of the last 50 years. Present day societal attitudes and beliefs deny children a sense of freedom that past generations had. A community focused approach to play provision is intended to promote change in attitudes and behaviour towards children playing.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 This project has created eleven full time posts for three years across the region.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Further consultations across the play sector in North East Wales will continue for the duration of the project

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 This project has been based upon consultation and research which highlighted the need for this model of provision.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

None

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

**Contact Officer:** Lawrence Rawsthorne  
**Telephone:** 01352 704400  
**Email:** lawrence.rawsthorne@flintshire.gov.uk