

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**

**DATE:**               **TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2015**

**REPORT BY:**       **CHIEF OFFICER (ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE)**

**SUBJECT:**           **CHILDREN'S EQUIPPED PLAY AREAS MATCH FUNDING SCHEME**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To agree the approach to this scheme for this year, and then from 2016/17 onwards.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Since 2010, the local authority, in partnership with local town and community councils, has successfully delivered a match funding programme to upgrade children's playgrounds. The match funding programme has resulted in excess of £1 million being invested for improvements and enhancements to facilities. This programme has been driven by the RAG (Red, Amber, and Green) Play Space Survey, commissioned in 2010 (Appendix 2). The aim of this approach is to raise the play value at the sites most in need, where there is a known deficiency, taking into account the child population.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Fixed Play match funding of £105k will be made available initially in 2015/16 on the same bases as previous years (summarised below):

- Each Town and Community Council will be invited to express an interest in participating in the match-funding improvement scheme for 2015/16.
- County Council funding to be directed at areas of need as identified by the condition survey. Leisure Services will identify those play areas which are in scope ('Red' and 'Amber' sites) and out of scope ('Green' sites) in terms of receiving funding.
- Match funding will be based upon a maximum contribution of £10,000 per scheme.

3.02 Proposals will be required from Town and Community Council's by

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July. Any unallocated funds after considering these proposals will then be available to support organisations who are taking on Community Asset Transfers as outlined in 3.03.

- 3.03 Where a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of a play area is agreed the local authority proposes to make a 'one off' payment of up to £5,000 per play area transferred with a maximum of £10,000 per community per year. This funding can be used to either enhance these play facilities or be put aside to support future replacements costs. For 2015/16 any balance of the 'Play Area Match Funding Scheme' of £105,000 p.a. will be available for CAT. For 2016/17 the full fund will be available for CAT and will be called the 'Play Area Community Grant Scheme'.
- 3.04 From 2016/17 onwards any unallocated funds from the 'Play Area Community Grant Scheme' will then be made available on a match funding basis for the enhancement of children's fixed play areas as follows:
- Match funding will only be available to town and community councils or community groups where the fixed play facility has transferred out of local authority control; and/or
  - Match funding will be available to improve those play areas retained by the Council and agreed as a priority for retaining or developing.

In such instances match funding will be based upon a maximum contribution of £10,000 from the authority per scheme. If the fund is under-subscribed it will then be determined on a priority basis and in accordance with the findings of the Play Survey, with investment targeted to strategically important sites.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Cabinet agree the way forward for the Play Area Match Funding scheme in 2015/16 as outlined in this report, with any balance to be allocated to play areas subject to Community Asset Transfer.
- 4.02 From 2016/17 the Play Area Community Grant Scheme be established, as outlined in this report, with it's primary focus on supporting play areas that are transferred to, or managed by, communities.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

These proposals outline the use of the current £105,000 budget for 2015/16 and for 2016/17.

**6.00 ANTI POVERY IMPACT**

The scheme provides all communities with the opportunity to sustain and develop play areas.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The grant scheme should support the maintenance of play areas supporting environmental quality.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

The grant will be available to each community.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

Communication with Town and Community Councils about the continuation of the grant scheme for 2015/16 and the revisions for 2016/17 onwards.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

Regular consultation has taken place with Town and Community Councils about the match funding scheme.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

None

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

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