

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	29 th March 2016
Report Subject	Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016 including future plans for consulting on Summer Play Schemes and Play Areas
Report Author	Chief Officer Organisational Change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The local authority are tasked with a statutory duty, Children and Families Measure (Wales) 2010 to report to Welsh Government with regard to the Play Sufficiency Assessment, 2016. By incorporating this assessment with future proposals for sustaining play areas and summer play schemes, this provides a full overview of play provision in these areas.

Details are provided about the summer play scheme programme 2015 and to provide information with regard to the financial implications for the delivery of summer playscheme in 2016 and 2017.

In terms of the safeguarding of children's equipped play areas in the county. Libraries and Leisure Services have developed proposals for an alternative delivery model (ADM) which presents the council with an opportunity to reduce the impact of budget reduction on children's equipped play areas helping to safeguard children's play opportunities in the county.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To seek scrutiny committee's comments on the play sufficiency assessment.
2	To seek scrutiny committee comments on the consultations with town and community council's about the future of summer play schemes and a core offer for children's equipped play areas.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT, SUMMER PLAY SCHEMES AND PLAY AREAS
1.01	The Welsh Government's (WG) vision for play for children in Wales is set out in its Play Policy (2002) and Play Policy Implementation Plan (2006). WG recognises that to achieve the aim of creating a play friendly Wales and to provide excellent play opportunities for children it is necessary for Local Authorities, their partners and other stakeholders to work collectively towards this purpose. A section on play opportunities was included in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure which received royal assent in 2010.
1.02	WG issued regulations in October 2012 requiring all Welsh Local Authorities to undertake Play Sufficiency Assessments and develop action plans to address identified shortcomings and deficiencies. The regulations place a duty on Local Authorities to assess and then subsequently secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, so far as is reasonably practicable.
1.03	The scope of the measure is not confined to fixed and staffed play provision. The measure is more about the time, space and ultimately the freedom children have to play. It is envisaged that the subsequent securing of play sufficiency will be about how the Council and its partners strategically plan to remove the barriers that prevent children accessing their right to play.
1.04	The Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016 aims to promote inclusion and improve access to play opportunities for all children in the county including those most marginalised, segregated, and disabled.
1.05	The attached reports within the appendix show the progress made by the authority on the Play Action Plan 2013 – 2014 and sets out the revised actions for 2016-2017.
1.06	The Local Authority has made good progress and remains committed to delivering schedule 1 of the Action Plans, although this has been challenging within the current economic environment. The Welsh Government feedback from the Play Sufficiency Assessment is included in the appendix.
1.07	Reforming the Flintshire Strategic Play Forum will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory obligation to monitor and evaluate the Play Action Plan 2016.
1.08	The county summer play scheme programme was delivered for the 19 th year in 2015 and the schemes were delivered for 3, 4 or 5 weeks dependent upon the level of contribution from Town and Community Council funding.
1.09	The costs for three weeks delivery of the summer play scheme programme

	<p>was equally funded in 2015, 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.</p>
1.10	<p>Three play schemes 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 play workers with the Flintshire Play Development team providing all training, equipment and supervision.</p>
1.11	<p>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 play scheme setting in Wales and is registered with CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales).</p>
1.12	<p>There were 4,010 children registered to the scheme in 2015, with 18,000 attendances. The play scheme is free at the point of access for all children in Flintshire aged 5 to 12 years. The summer play scheme has also traditionally provided annual employment and training for 100 young people in the County.</p>
1.13	<p>Welsh Government funding will not be available to support delivery of the summer play scheme in 2016. However the Council has committed to finding funding for one year to ensure there are funds available for the summer of 2016. The impact of this will have implications for the delivery of the summer 2017 programme.</p>
1.14	<p>Town and Community Councils have been informed that the play delivery was at risk and they have therefore been asked to consider increasing their contribution and to explore alternative delivery models to sustain the provision of play schemes in their areas. Planning and consultation now needs to take place urgently to enable a pathway to delivery for summer 2017.</p>
1.15	<p>Leisure and Libraries alternative delivery model (ADM) presents the council with an opportunity to reduce the impact of budget reduction on children's play grounds helping to safeguard children's play opportunities in Flintshire.</p>
1.16	<p>In additional town and community councils have fed back during the community asset transfer process that it will be much easier if they know which play areas the Council is able to continue providing and which it is not.</p>
1.17	<p>Therefore it is proposed to consult town and community councils with the core offer that the Council will be able to potentially provide in the future including the number of play areas in each community.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The cumulative resource implications of the actions within Schedules 2 & 3 would require the provision of dedicated officer time to initiate and co-ordinate actions. As a result there are financial implications within Schedules 2 and 3 which will be assessed and reported via the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning and budget setting process.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	There is a duty for the Council to ensure that key documents are shared with the public via the FCC Website. The Council will need to continue to engage with parents, carers and children and young people in the implementation of the Action Plan.
3.02	Consultation with Town & Community Councils has been undertaken in relation to the Flintshire Summer play schemes 2016. Planning and consultation now needs to take place urgently to enable a pathway to delivery for summer 2017.
3.03	Consultation with local Town and Community Councils and other partner organisations will be required with regard to Play Areas.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Reforming the Flintshire Strategic Play Forum will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory obligation to monitor and evaluate the Play Action Plan 2016.
4.02	Funding for play schemes will not be available for summer 2017. The impact of this will have implications for the delivery of the summer 2017 programme.
4.03	Town and Community Councils have been informed that the play delivery was at risk and they have therefore been asked to consider increasing their contribution and to explore alternative delivery models to sustain provision of play schemes in their areas. Planning and consultation now needs to take place urgently to enable a pathway to delivery for summer 2017.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016 & Play Action Plan 2016/17 Appendix 2 - Welsh Government feedback from the Play Sufficiency Assessment

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p><i>Flintshire Play Sufficiency</i></p> <p>Cabinet Report 22nd March 2016: Play Sufficiency Assessment 2016</p> <p>Contact Officers: Ian Bancroft Telephone: 01352 704511 E-mail: ian.bancroft@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) - A duty under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010