

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES

### PLAY AND URBAN GAMES STRATEGY REVIEW

#### 1. Recommendations

1.1 Area Committee Members are requested to;

- i. Note the content of the report
- ii. Provide feedback on the achievements to date
- iii. Comment on the consultation framework
- iv. Agree to the priorities for future investment in the East area.

#### 2. Current Position

2.1 Members will recall receiving a report consulting on the city's play provision in March 2010. The report requested members to provide feedback on locations they considered would benefit from future investment in play provision. Members were additionally advised that following significant progress against the action plan within the current PUGS, an addendum to the document was to be prepared. The addendum will consider national guidance issued by Play England, seek to review progress and update the action plan.

2.2 Members will recall that the PUGS strategic vision is;

"Sunderland will work in partnership to provide, support and sustain a variety of high quality and accessible play environments and opportunities for all children and young people up to 19 years. The city aspires to a core offer of free provision citywide, which may be supported by affordable supervised provision as appropriate".

2.3 The Strategy recognises six main priorities:

- i. Ensure play is strategically planned and resourced in partnership
- ii. Involve children and young people in the development of their play opportunities and services
- iii. Work in partnership to develop, support and promote high standards for play
- iv. Create, improve and develop free and inclusive play spaces
- v. Seek greater innovation in the development of varied and sustainable play opportunities
- vi. Ensure that in partnership, the city monitors and evaluates the impact of play developments citywide to deliver this Strategy

2.4 Since the Strategy was produced in 2007 and endorsed by Cabinet, the Children's Trust and the Sunderland Partnership, substantial progress has been made, primarily due to the success in achieving Play Pathfinder status and the additional financial support available from the City Council and from developer contributions.

2.5 In January 2008, Sunderland City Council was one of 20 authorities to be awarded Play Pathfinder status, a £2.1million capital investment accompanied by revenue support. The award has resulted in an 18 month transformation programme in the delivery of play and urban games city wide and subsequently, the over achievement against key actions identified within the PUGS in 2007, necessitating the update to the Strategy.

#### 3. Performance Management

3.1 Sunderland has exceeded against many of the agreed strategic priorities within the Play and Urban Game Strategy. The key achievements include:

##### **Objective 1: Ensure that that play is strategically planned and resourced in partnership**

- Play developments have been undertaken in line with the priorities identified in the PUGS. Investment for the development of play has totalled £6m and been achieved through

successful attraction of external funding through Big Lottery (£761,000), Play Pathfinder (£2.1M), Section 106 developer contributions (£2.3M), SRB (£147,000), SIB (£147,000), SIP (£12,000) and a contribution from the capital programme (£545,000).

### **Objective 2: Create, improve and develop free and inclusive play spaces**

- Since 2004, £6 million funds have been invested in the development of play and urban games facilities. Within the lifespan of the current PUGS there has been £4.9 million invested since 2007.
- The development of new or significant refurbishment of 58 plays areas since 2004. Within 34 being completed between 2007 and spring/summer 2010.
- The PUGS updated in 2007, indicated that just **19% (12,856)** of children and young people had access to high quality play 1km from their door. By the end of March 2010, **70% (47,366)** children and young people have access to high quality play facilities.
- Wheeled sports provision has risen from three facilities in 2004 to six facilities in 2010, which has provided increased access for C&YP. The standard being to develop one wheeled sports facility in each regeneration area of the city.

### **Objective 3: Seek greater innovation in the development of varied and sustainable play opportunities**

- Developments have included the city Adventure Play Park which provides a challenging and exciting play environment with facilitated play sessions. The development features of the new provision include indoor, sensory and outdoor play facilities. The Adventure Play Park was developed through a partnership with the Aiming High Pathfinder, from short breaks for disabled children to creating a supportive environment for young people with disabilities.
- The design and development of play spaces has developed significantly, by using more natural features mixed with traditional fixed play.

### **Objective 4: Involve children and young people in the development of their play opportunities and services**

- Elected Member involvement at ward level has been actively encouraged throughout the consultation process, with a main focus to provide links with residents at neighbourhood level. This involvement has included attendance at consultation events, meetings, financial support through SIB and SIP and play area design suggestions.
- Over 6,000 people have been involved in the consultation and engagement process, including children and young people, their families, residents and local communities. Over 500 disabled children, their families and carers have participated in play consultation. 25 schools, community organisations and youth groups involved in delivering consultation arrangements for neighbourhood facilities.

### **Objective 5: Work in partnership to develop, support and promote high standards for play**

- A range of services have been commissioned from the voluntary and community sector to support the development of play eg. neighbourhood consultation, direct delivery of play activities.
- Launch of the 'Lets Play' campaign, to inspire families to enjoy their local play spaces and to challenge negative perceptions of children playing.

**Objective 6: Ensure that in partnership, the city monitors and evaluates the impact of play developments citywide to deliver the strategy**

- The developments have led to a sustained improvement in resident satisfaction levels. Since 2003, annual resident satisfaction levels have risen from 26% to 50% in 2008. The 2008 measure was taken prior to the Pathfinder investment and it is hoped that satisfaction levels will increase following the next resident survey which will be published late in 2010.
- The PUGS updated in 2007, indicated that just 19% of children and young people had access to high quality play 1km from their door. By the end of March 2010, 70% children and young people in the city have access to high quality play.

3.2 More locally, significant progress has been made and this is evidenced in the performance table below.

Note

C&YP = Children and Young People, MUGA = Multi Use Games Area, DUGA = Dual Use Games Area

<b>East</b>	<b>2004-2006</b>	<b>2007- Spring/ Summer 2010</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total number of play facilities in the area = 16			
Number of new play areas Box Youth MUGA, Beechbrook, Ryhope DUGA, Hudson Road, Grangetown, St Matthews Field, Ryhope Rec –Play, Diamond Hall	2	6	8
Number of refurbished play areas Backhouse Park, Ryhope Rec MUGA, Mowbray Park Play, Mowbray Park kick about	1	3	4
	<b>As at April 2007</b>	<b>As at April 2010</b>	
Percentage of C&YP with access to high quality play 1km	21%	76%	
Investment	£127,700	£867,903	£995,603
Number of C&YP consulted		882	882
Number of VCS organisations engaged		3	3
Lets Play celebration events		2	2
<p>Key highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive development of St Matthews Field with supporting road safety measures.</li> <li>• Two MUGA at Ryhope and adjacent to Box Youth Club.</li> <li>• Gaps in play provision reduced in Hendon and East End by developments next to Hudson Road and Grangetown Primary Schools.</li> </ul>			

**4. Review Process – An Addendum**

4.1 The PUGS 2007-2012 sets out a clear vision for play and recognises key principles which demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that children and young people are able to enjoy their free time and play freely. It is proposed that the six key objectives remain unchanged, but the priority actions are being reviewed in light of achievements since 2007. The challenge within the review is to maintain the vision and principles whilst taking into consideration the rapidly changing environment, including for example, national policy and guidance documents which have

emerged since 2007. The addendum will set out the revised national, regional and local context for play.

- 4.2 The case for play remains valid and the importance play makes to ‘improving life chances and aspirations for each child and young person in Sunderland’ (Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) 2010-2025). The CYPP delivery plan for 2010-2013, highlights the priority 10 outcome as being ‘to have locally accessible and affordable fun, play and physical activities’.
- 4.3 Consultation has and will remain key to the development of play facilities and a clear framework for consultation is proposed within the addendum which, will ensure that all Elected Members, stakeholders and partners have an opportunity to be informed of and importantly influence play developments. The consultation framework is included in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.4 Since 2007, Play England have provided through their national support and challenge guidance, new approaches to play in terms of design guidance and managing risk. As a Play Pathfinder, these guidance documents have been considered and moving forward play development will include these frameworks related to design principles and risk benefit.
- 4.5 One of the main priorities in the PUGS is to ‘Create, improve and develop free and inclusive play spaces’. Our progress to date (outlined in 3.1) demonstrates significant achievements and **Appendix 2** details for the proposed new priorities for 2010 – 2012. The criteria applied to identify the priorities are as follows;
- Feedback from Elected Members on locations they consider would benefit from investment. Consultation will also be undertaken with other city partners such as Safer Communities Partnership, Children’s Services, Voluntary and Community Sector, Gentoo before finalising arrangements with Members.
  - Access - Gaps in high quality provision relating to the core standard of 1km access to high quality play from the doorstep
  - Funding – Investment opportunities for the provision i.e. a developer contribution (Section 106 agreement), other potential opportunities for funding
  - Proximity to other services – supported by informal oversight and/or other ancillary services.
- 4.6 This PUGS review is being presented to Area Committee prior to presentation at Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee (October 2010) and for endorsement by Cabinet in December 2010, as an addendum to the existing PUGS.

## 5. Background Papers

- 5.1 The following background papers were relied upon to compile this report.
- i. Play and Urban Games Strategy 2007-2012
  - ii. Children and Young People’s Plan 2010-2025
  - iii. Children and Young People’s Three Year Delivery Plan 2010-2013
  - iv. Play England - Design for Play 2008
  - v. Play England - Managing Risk in Play Provision 2008
  - vi. Big Lottery Fund Children’s Play Programme Guidance 2006
  - vii. Play Pathfinder Programme Guidance 2008

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## **Appendix 1: Consultation Framework**

Consultation is a key part of developing high quality play provision and in the spirit of the Principles of Play (within the existing Play and Urban Games Strategy), with children and young people at the heart of consultation. What does this mean to children and young people? From our research they describe participation as 'working together, having fun, sharing ideas, communicating, making decisions, being asked, solving problems, needing some support, giving an opinion, being listened to, and having a choice.

However, it is recognised that the whole community must be engaged and have the opportunity to participate in play consultation. The wider community must be encouraged to understand the value of play space and where reservations are evident, these need to be resolved.

Consultation and community engagement are therefore essential pre-requisites for good play space design. In order to ensure an inclusive approach a consultation framework will be applied. The framework shall be used for all play refurbishments /developments valued at £20,000 and over.

### **Stage 1**

Elected Members\* advised of project plan and requested to make suggestions of local partners, organisations, children and young people (C&YP), and residents who should be included in consultation.

\* Local projects shall consult Ward Members, Area Chair, Vice Chair and the Portfolio Holder for Attractive and Inclusive City. Area provisions shall consult the Area Chair, Vice Chair, all area Elected Area Members and the Portfolio Holder for Attractive and Inclusive City.

### **Stage 2**

To advise partners, organisations, C&YP, residents of the project plan, including 'when', 'how' and 'on what' they will be consulted about. The numbers of C&YP involved will be proportionate to the catchment area and the value of the project. For example, play area developments may engage 20 C&YP and larger wheeled sports parks may involve 50 C&YP. As a minimum, residents whose properties directly overlook or adjoin the area will be consulted. Planning applications for new provisions (where required), will be coordinated by the Council's Planning Section and will be informed by statutory planning obligations.

### **Stage 3**

Participation and engagement with C&YP to develop ideas and a design brief. Design developed by appointed designers. Design developed and checked with C&YP to ensure that it matches their design brief.

### **Stage 4**

Elected Members, local partners including the Local Area Multi Problem Solving Group (LMAPS), organisations and residents consulted on design. Feedback captured and design refined.

### **Stage 5**

Final design provided to Elected Members prior to the release to, local partners, C&YP and residents. The project plan for development widely communicated.

### **Stage 6**

Elected Members advised of progress on developments.

The methods of consultation will be appropriate to scope of the project and may consist of, meetings, letter drops, open days, workshops, surveys, media releases, and on-line activities.

## Appendix 2: Identified Priorities for East Area

### Elected Member suggestions:

Play is to be considered by the Area Committee as part of their priorities for 2010-2011.

### Other suggestions received:

None

### Investment available:

Play Area	Section 106	Projected Funding Gap
Backhouse Park	£9,195	£50,000 if both 106 amounts used in Back house Park
Mowbray Park, Hudson Rd or Backhouse Park	£21,120	none
Burdon Lane area – Ryhope (new site)	£60,000	£100,000

### Gaps in High Quality Provision:

Identified by applying the core standard of 1km access to high quality play from the doorstep to the nearest facility. Research has identified the current gaps in provision;

Hall Farm/ Burdon Lane – Doxford  
East / City Centre Wheeled Sports Provision.

### Recommended Actions:

Taking into account the above the following play areas are identified as priority development opportunities. However, in order to enable such development to be undertaken additional funding would be required.

- To identify the preferred location for play development in the Hall Farm/ Burdon Lane area and progress development of a high quality play area.
- Refurbish and add value to play facilities in Backhouse Park. Adding value SIP funding secured by the Friends Group the parks improvements.
- Undertake consultation to establish if need exists for Wheeled Sport Provision.
- Consider funding options