

SUBJECT:	PLAY OPPORTUNITIES REVIEW
MEETING:	Children and Young People Select
DATE:	14 January 2016
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide members with further details on the proposed future delivery model for staffed play provision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To receive and scrutinise the proposed future delivery model for staffed play provision for 16/17 prior to its consideration by cabinet;

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 This committee considered the review of our current managed play provision (the summer play scheme) at its meeting on 12 November 2015 and it was agreed that the committee receive a further report setting out the proposed model (option 4 in the report by Torfaen Play Service) and specifically how safeguarding issues will be addressed.
- 3.2 To recap, the view is that the current provision is unsustainable on several grounds:
- The changes in the regulatory framework from Welsh Government and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), including more rigorous staff qualifications and training requirements and changes to the registration of childcare (especially for 8 - 12 year olds) from 1 April 2016
 - The equality challenge of the differing treatment of children with disabilities in the current model
 - The pressures in place as a result of reduced delivery capacity, including the financial pressures to meet income targets at leisure centres.
- 3.3 Delivery of the new model will depend on the result of current consultations with partners, most notably Town and Community Councils due to the reliance on their funding and the current review of Families First funding used to support the disability elements.
- 3.4 As a maximum, if funding is all secured, it will comprise:
- full day inclusive sports camps run by Leisure Services at the four leisure centres for a minimum of 4 weeks of summer provision, utilising a well established model,

integrating activities for children with disabilities, where their individual assessment of need allows

- 8 inclusive play scheme sites in community venues across the County for the 4 weeks of summer provision run by Torfaen Play Service utilising the same model as current provision in Torfaen, integrating activities for children with disabilities, where their individual assessment of need allows
- For the higher tier of children with disabilities with complex and challenging needs 4 weeks of summer provision provided by Torfaen Play Service at an inclusive venue, most likely Cwmbran Stadium

3.5 If funding is not secured from individual town and community councils the level of community play provision will vary; minimum provision being the inclusive sports camps at leisure centres supported by provision for the higher tier of children with disabilities. In addition there are already other opportunities available to Monmouthshire children including some schools in the county which also offer supervised play sessions in the summer holiday period. Depending on the funding made available the opportunity to work with existing venues to deliver the inclusive play schemes will also be explored.

3.6 The approach to safeguarding will be as follows:

3.6.1 The sports camps will comply with MCC Leisure Services well-established and audited safeguarding policy and procedures. These include appropriate recruitment, DBS checking, training (including safeguarding and child protection training at level 1 or 2 as appropriate), reporting procedures and management support for staff and any volunteers. Although not regulated child care (as such sports provision is exempted) children attending the sports camps are pre-booked / registered and in the unlikely event of them not wishing to complete a day's activities their parent/carer would be contacted to collect children.

3.6.2 The community play provision will utilise Torfaen CBC's Play Service who have long experience in the delivery of community based play opportunities. The provision is non regulated as it falls below the 2 hour limit and is "open access" play provision. Open access play is an opportunity for children and young people to play in a safe staffed environment in the absence of their parents/carers. With this in mind, all staff and volunteers are appropriately recruited and trained to work with children and young people and the provision will meet all policies and procedures linked to children and young people including safeguarding protocols.

3.6.3 The reason that it differs from closed access play provision is that the provision is centered on the child and not the parents/carers. With this in mind, the provision is not childcare and if a child decides that they no longer want to stay in a provision and they want to go home then their parents/ carer will be contacted to collect them. As a mechanism of good practice Torfaen Play Service do not let any children under the age of 8 leave the site unless their parents/carer comes to collect them. They adhere to the consent of parents/carers for the children over 8 years which is provided in the registration process.

- 3.6.4 Within the registration process parents/carers are requested to state how their child travels to and from playscheme. If it states the child is not allowed to leave playscheme until mum or dad picks them up then this is what is adhered to. If the registration form completed by the parent/carer states that the child is allowed to walk home after playscheme with their older sibling then this is what is adhered to. If the parent/carer states that their child is able to come and go from the playscheme as they please this is adhered to this as long as the child is over the age of 8 years.
- 3.6.5 As an additional mechanism of good practice the play service provides wrist bands to all children attending playschemes (similar to those worn at concerts and festivals). If playschemes are run in shared buildings this enables the immediate identification of children who are registered at sites.
- 3.6.6 A comprehensive and bespoke training programme is provided to both play care workers and volunteers in the necessary skills, including safeguarding risk, benefits of play, inclusion, risk assessment, disability awareness etc leading to a OCN qualification. Over 200 young people were trained in Torfaen in 2015 and the proposal is to extend this approach to staff and volunteers delivering the Monmouthshire part of the scheme.
- 3.6.7 Julian Davenne, Torfaen CBC's Play Service Manager will also attend the committee to answer any further questions. Members may also find the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOTyDkLcrj8> informative of the general approach.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 "Wales: A Play Friendly Country" is Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on assessing for and securing, as far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient play opportunities for children in their area by addressing the defined measures set out in legislation.
- 4.2 The provision of sufficient play opportunities for children contributes to the Single Integrated Plan themes that People are Confident, Capable and Involved and Our County Thrives; supporting families to benefit from positive environments to nurture their children to grow, develop and prosper; and access to flexible and appropriate play opportunities.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There is currently no dedicated budget for play. Existing staffed play provision (excluding the Bulwark scheme which is funded by Chepstow Town Council) is funded via contributions from ten Town and Community Councils (in 15/16 contributing £30K), income from charges (in 15/16, £52K), and Families First access grant money (in 15/16, £20K) to enable children with disabilities to access mainstream play schemes. However despite this funding and income generation the current provision has an unfunded element (in 15/16 of circa £40 -50K), principally staffing costs, which is being absorbed by leisure services and impacting negatively on their trading position.

5.2 Given the reliance on Town and Community Council funding and the review of Families First funding, which will not be completed until the end of January, it is not possible at this stage to present a budget for the future delivery model but the clear principle will be that the unfunded element is not sustainable and that the community based staffed play element will need to be self-supporting.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The significant equality impacts identified in the Future Generations evaluation (substantially unchanged from the 12 November 2015 report) (Appendix 1) are summarised below for members' consideration:

- The positive impact that securing sufficient and accessible play opportunities can have on children, families and communities.
- The positive impact in providing equality of the number of sessions available to children with disabilities.
- The challenges of accommodating children with the highest tier of complex and challenging needs which will require consultation with the parents of disabled children to inform the detailed options.
- The negative impact that changes to staffed play provision could impact on those parents using the current play provision as childcare, but potentially mitigated by the changes allowing the offer of a wider summer sports camp provision in the leisure centres.

The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed annually and criteria for monitoring and review will include:

The impact of the delivered services to children and communities to ensure there is equality of access and opportunities in line with the assessed needs from the Play Sufficiency Assessment.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The presented options reflect the safeguarding requirements for staffed play provision, the legislative and regulatory requirements and the national minimum operating standards.

8. CONSULTEES:

The review carried out by Torfaen Play Services involved extensive internal and external consultation;

Consultations with Town and Community Councils on the staffed play scheme options are ongoing.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1: Future Generations Evaluation

Report to Children and Young People's Select Committee 12 November 2015 : Play Opportunity Review; including Monmouthshire Play Review – A Critical Assessment of Staffed Play Provision, Torfaen Play Service October 2015

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