

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 18th June 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Play Builder Project

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update members on progress with Playbuilder Year 1 2008-2009 and to agree proposals for Year 2 2009-2010 and outline proposals for Year 3 2010/2011.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 Progress made with Playbuilder Project 2008/2009 be noted

2.2 Council be recommended to approve the proposals for 2009/2010 Playbuilder projects.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Executive Board received a report on the 21st May 2008 informing them of the success of the Authority in achieving Playbuilder status and confirmation of the funding awarded.

3.2 Guidance received indicated that Halton must deliver a minimum of 6 new, transformed playgrounds in 2008/09, with a further 16 in 2009/10 and 2010/11, making a total of 22 over the 3 years.

3.3 Executive Board received a further report on the 25th September 2008 whereupon the Playbuilder project development process was approved, along with the six Year 1 sites.

3.4 Year 1 (2008/2009) - Progress to date

No.	Site/Project	Completion Date	Progress
1	Hale Park	March 2009	Operational
2	Crow Wood	1 st May 2009	Operational
3	Runcorn Town Hall	15 th May 2009	Operational
4	Spike Island	Deferred to Yr 2	(See yr 2 proposals)
5	Gorsewood, Murdishaw	Expected Completion June 2009	On site
6	Hillcrest Halton Brook	Expected Completion July 2009	On site

- 3.5 Projects 1 – 4 will be developed in house. Projects 5 – 6 are projects developed in partnership with Social Housing providers who are developing and managing the projects. They will also be responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the new playgrounds.
- 3.6 The Spike Island project has had to be deferred to 2009-2010, as it proved impossible to complete within the required timeframe.
- 3.7 Playbuilder investment in Playgrounds in Halton in 2008-2009 was £299,092. The total investment from all sources generated or pump primed by the Playbuilder input is however, nearer to £1 million (see Appendix 1).

3.8 Sites for Playbuilder Project 2009/2010 (Year 2):

- 3.8.1 The allocation for 2009-2010 is £388,469. The proposal is to allocate this money equally across 8 new target areas, resulting in funding of approximately £48,559 per area.
- 3.8.2 The proposals for Year 2 have been considered by both Halton Play Partnership and the Playbuilder Sub-Committee. Proposed projects take into account the following;
- A partnership approach in identifying areas. Partners being; Landscape Services; Culture & Leisure, Housing Associations; Aiming High for Disabled Children Project; Residents Groups and the Voluntary Sector
 - Consultation with Area Fora
 - A whole Borough approach to provision
 - The identification of major gaps in existing provision
 - Targeting resources in areas of need

3.8.3 Spike Island

Brought forward from Year 1

3.8.4 Victoria Park

The proposal is to enhance the existing facilities at this popular destination, with Playbuilder resources targeted at children with additional needs. This will be developed in partnership with the Aiming High for Disabled Children Project, which is currently investing in Parks facilities to enhance the accessibility. This investment and new equipment will complement the Park's existing provision and make Victoria Park a destination site for a range of families with children with additional needs. There is revenue in place for the existing provision.

3.8.5 Milton Avenue

The proposal is to develop a new play area to replace the existing provision. The current provision is poorly located, subject to regular vandalism and difficult to maintain. The revenue budget is in place.

3.8.6 Halton Lodge

The proposal is to develop a new play area on the “BMX area” adjacent to Woodside Primary School. The proposal has been developed in partnership with Cosmopolitan Housing Association and has included extensive consultation with local children and young people. There are currently no play facilities serving this community. The project would draw down additional capital from other funding sources and would be revenue funded by Cosmopolitan Housing.

3.8.7 Caesars Close

This proposal will be part of the regeneration of Castlefields transforming an existing area which has fallen into disuse. The project has been developed in partnership with the Neighbourhood Management Team and Dane Housing. Additional funding is currently being sought, with the playground being revenue funded by Dane Housing.

3.8.8 Hallwood Park (Rowhampton Row)

The proposal is to complement the existing youth provision, which consists of a small five a side kick about area and a multi use games area with provision for younger children. There are currently no play facilities serving this community.

The revenue Implication will be funded through Landscape Services and Halton & St Helens PCT.

3.8.9 Town Park

The proposal is to develop a new playground on a site adjacent to the Town Park Railway/Ski Slope off Stockham Lane. The new site would replace an old playground, which was poorly sited, regularly vandalised and extremely difficult to maintain.

The proposed new facility in addition to its inherent play value would also complement the existing provision and help to make Town Park a more popular visitor destination.

See Appendix 2

3.9 Possible sites 2010/2011

3.9.1 In addition to the above proposals, need was also identified through:

- An audit of existing provision
- Area forum feedback
- Consultation with local community groups

Arising from this, consideration was given to future provision in the following areas:

3.9.2 **Upton;**

This area has a relatively large population of young people, with limited existing provision. It is noted as a youth nuisance 'hot spot'. Playbuilder input into this area has the potential to act as a catalyst to develop a larger project looking at provision for children and young people with a range of partners. It is proposed that this is approved as a potential 2010/2011 Playbuilder project site to afford time for a wider project to be properly considered

3.9.3 The Glen, Palacefields;

The Area Forum has the ambition to develop a 'Locality Park' on the land bordered by 'Flood Brook Clough'/Hallwood Link Road/Halton Hospital site. The land was designated as open space but undeveloped. The Playbuilder Project could help pump prime this. However, other capital funding would be required, and there would be a significant revenue implication.

3.9.4 Beechwood, Farnworth, Halton Village and Windmill Hill

There is currently no play provision serving these communities. No specific sites have been identified as yet, with suitable open space for provision. This could be an issue, particularly in the Windmill Hill area.

The proposal is for Landscape Services/Playbuilder Project to identify sites and undertake design work for Beechwood, Farnworth and Halton Village, with a possibility to deliver one of these in 2009/2010, and an option to deliver the remaining sites in 2010/2011.

The Playbuilder Project will continue to explore opportunities to develop in the Windmill Hill area. Work will therefore be undertaken during 2009/2010 to identify potential development sites for 2010/2011. A further report to Executive Board will put forward options for 2010/2011.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The successful delivery of the Playbuilder project will make a significant contribution to the development of Play in the Borough.
- 4.2 "Fair Play": a consultation on the play strategy announced the Government's intention to introduce an indicator into the National Indicator Set which assess the satisfaction of children and young people with the parks and play areas where they live and go to school. This indicator is to be introduced in 2009 and every top tier local authority will have to report on their success in supporting children's enjoyment through play. (See appendix 3).
- 4.3 The successful implementation of the Playbuilder project will significantly enhance the authority's ability to achieve its targets.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Playbuilder Project funding is a capital grant. The investment of £1.1 million in new play spaces will have a long-term revenue implication in ensuring

the necessary and appropriate maintenance and management regime for this investment is in place.

5.2 The proposed projects for Year 2 (2009/2010) have been drawn up in partnership with Landscape Services. These projects have revenue resources already in place

5.3 Capital

Year 1	2008/09	299,092
Year 2	2009/10	388,469
Year 3	2010/11	437,885
	Total	1,125,446

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People

Play is a fundamental part of a healthy and happy childhood and its enjoyment is recognised by Government as equally important to other outcomes for children. Because it is so fundamental, it contributes to each of the five outcomes for children specified in Every Child Matters.

The essence of play is enjoyment. When playing, children define their own goals and interests, decide what is success or failure and pursue those goals in their own way. Children's enjoyment through play is linked to the control and choice they are able to exercise. Giving children the chance for free, uninhibited play allows them a psychologically safe space in which to try out new roles and experiences and enhances their enjoyment of life.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The continuous quality improvement of play workers and opportunities for development of skills across play and youth qualifications will be explored fully through Halton's Workforce Development Plan.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Play is crucial to health and development throughout childhood, contributing to social, physical, intellectual, cultural, emotional and psychological development. The physical activity involved in energetic play provides children and young people with a significant amount of their regular exercise and is a key element in tackling obesity.

6.4 A Safer Halton

One of the main reasons children give for not playing outdoors more is that they and their parents are concerned for their safety. Fear of strangers, traffic and bullying by other children combine to keep children in their own homes. Good play provision protects children through reducing unacceptable levels of

danger, while allowing them the opportunity to challenge themselves and use their initiative. At the same time, play enables children to take risks, to think through decisions and gain increased self-confidence and greater resilience.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Halton Play Builder proposals will be consistent with Halton's Policies for Urban Renewal and are designed to enhance current play provision.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Play Builder programme is a three-year capital build programme with single year capital allocations/spends targets. Individual project 'risk analysis' will be carried out by each project delivered.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 A major criteria of the Play Builder programme is the requirement to 'ensure' that access and Inclusivity are a key consideration at the design stage.

The Playbuilder Project is working in partnership with the Aiming High for Disabled Children Project to ensure sites are fully accessible. Some sites (Phoenix Park, Victoria Park, Runcorn Town Hall) will have capital input from Aiming High for Disabled Children to enhance existing accessible toilet facilities.

9.0 REASON (S) FOR DECISION

9.1 To agree (8) projects to be progressed in Playbuilder Project Year 2.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10.1 A full consultation programme has taken place where all options were considered.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

11.1 3-year capital programme with annual capital allowance. Implementation of Year 2 projects to be completed by 31st March 2010.

12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Play Pathfinder/Builder Application	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager
Fair Play, DCFS/DCMS	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager
Halton Play Plan 2007-2011	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager