

Subject:	Brighton & Hove City Council Project Plan for Playbuilder Scheme		
Date of Meeting:	23 April 2009		
Report of:	Director of Children's Services and Director of Environment		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Jan Jonker	Tel: 29-4722
	E-mail:	jan.jonker@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB8753	
Wards Affected:	East Brighton; Hangleton & Knoll; Hanover & Elm Grove; Moulsecoomb & Bevendean; North Portslade; Patcham; Preston Park; Queen's Park; Rottingdean Coastal; South Portslade; St Peters & North Laine; Stanford; Stanmer & Hollingdean; Withdean; Woodingdean		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove City Council will receive £1.1 million of capital funding to build or renew 22 play spaces across the city. The sites have to be developed in two tranches over the two financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11. The funding was brought forward a year which has reduced time available to plan the work from over one year to less than 3 months.
- 1.2 To ensure the funding is properly allocated a needs analysis of play has been carried out based on:
- The condition of existing play areas in the city
 - The value of existing play areas
 - Geographical areas of deficiency
 - Demographic information including number of households, number of 0-15 year olds within catchments, number of schools and youth clubs and indices of deprivation.
- 1.3 This analysis has been used to recommend 22 sites for investment from Playbuilder funding.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the proposed 22 sites for Playbuilder investment.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the establishment of a Play Task Force (which is a pre-requisite for the funding).

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Background

- 3.1 Through the National Play Strategy, £235m of dedicated investment is available for up to 3,500 play areas across the country. The funding is for the building and renewing of innovative and stimulating equipment and landscaping, accessible to children with disabilities. It should deliver physically active play opportunities which are attractive to all children, including 8-13 year olds.
- 3.2 Brighton and Hove was expecting to be included in the final wave of this *Playbuilder* funding due to be available in 2010/11. In December 2008 it was announced that this funding is being brought forward to 2009/10. This has reduced the time available to plan the project from 15 months to three months.
- 3.3 The funding consists of £1.1 million capital funding to develop 22 new play spaces and £45,000 revenue funding to assist in the delivery of the project. The work has to be delivered in two tranches, 11 sites in 2009/10 and further 11 in 2010/11. Money not spent within the time-scale will be clawed back. The time-scales for the project are very challenging given that community engagement, site design, procurement and installation all need to be completed.
- 3.4 The funding has generated a high level of expectation as there are many communities wanting to see further investment in play in their areas. The funding is not sufficient to meet all these expectations and therefore when the announcement was made to bring the funding forward a needs assessment was carried out to ensure it is properly allocated by means of a robust and transparent methodology.

Needs Analysis

- 3.5 Groundwork Solent, who have a lot of expertise in play development, community engagement and delivery of Playbuilder projects were appointed to assist with the development of site selection criteria and the project plan. The needs analysis was based on:
 1. The condition of the existing play areas in the city
 2. The play value of existing play areas taking into account the numbers and types of play facilities
 3. Geographical areas deficient in play facilities
 4. Demographic information including areas of deprivation, sizes of catchment in terms of number of households and numbers of 0-15 year olds, number of schools and youth clubs.

- 3.6 Input was also obtained from relevant officers the Children’s and Young People’s Trust (CYPT) and the Environment Directorate and from the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum and Amaze, an organisation representing parents of children with disabilities.

Proposed Sites for Investment

- 3.7 The information was used to identify 22 sites considered to be priority for investment for Playbuilder funding. These are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Proposed sites for Playbuilder Investment

Site	Ward
Year 1	
Bexhill Road	Woodingdean
Carden Park	Patcham
Chalk Pit	North Portslade
Dyke Road Park	Stanford
Hodshrove Wood	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean
Mile Oak Recreation Ground	North Portslade
Preston Park	Preston Park
Queens Park	Queens Park
St Nicholas	St Peters/ North Laine
Swanborough Drive	East Brighton
William Clarke Park	Hanover & Elm Grove
Year 2	
Barn Rise	Westdene
Blakers Park	Preston Park
East Brighton Park	East Brighton
East Hill Park	South Portslade
Greenleas Recreation Ground	Hangleton & Knoll
Haig Avenue	Hollingbury & Stanmer
Happy Valley	Woodingdean
Mackie Avenue	Patcham
Saltdean Oval	Rottingdean Coastal
Woollards Field	Moulsecoombe & Bevendean
Whitehawk Senior	East Brighton

- 3.8 A number of sites have been identified as being relatively high on the priority list for investment but have approved funding from other sources. Where this is the case they have not been allocated Playbuilder funding. These sites are listed in Table 2 below. Priority will be given to the Playbuilder projects as the time-scale for expenditure is critical.
- 3.9 Further detail of the needs analysis is presented in Appendix 1

Site	Ward	Funding
The Level	St Peter's & North Laine	£137,000 section 106
Tarnerland Park	Hanover & Elm Grove	£80,000 section 106
Saunders Park	Hollingbury & Stanmer	£122,000 section 106
Knoll Recreation Ground	Hangleton & Knoll	£40,000 section 106
Newhaven Street	Hanover & Elm Grove	Improvements being funded from Estates Development Budget
St Ann's Well Gardens	Goldsmid	£65,000 Section 106
Rottingdean Field	Rottingdean Coastal	Community group (PARC) raised money for site improvement

Types of Play

- 3.10 The funding is for the development of play spaces in line with the latest design guidance set out by Play England. One of the requirements is to move away from traditional play spaces and move towards more adventurous play areas, incorporating landscape features and bring risk back in to play as an important element in children's development.
- 3.11 The funding is primarily targeted at 8 to 13 year olds. The play areas have to be inclusive and accessible and the funding may not be used for sport.

Community Engagement & Play Task Force

- 3.12 The sites have been identified based on need and following consultation with council officers CVSF and Amaze. Following approval of the recommendations by Cabinet we will consult with communities in the locations identified.
- 3.13 It is proposed to establish a *Play Task Force*. This group will have a city-wide remit and will advise on the development of the City's play strategy implementation of the Playbuilder project. It will help further integrate all the services relating to children's play. Membership of the task force would consist of representatives from:
1. City Parks strategy and operations
 2. Children's and Young People's trust responsible for Play Strategy
 3. Neighbourhood management and environmental improvement teams
 4. Relevant members of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum
 5. Amaze, a charity representing parents of disabled children
 6. The Youth Council or area based Youth Forums.

- 3.14 Input from children in to the process will be essential to the success of the project.
- 3.15 In a local level we will engage with communities and particularly children at all the sites to allow them to have a real say in what is developed in their area.
- 3.16 The designs of play areas will also need to take in to consideration types of materials used to ensure they are sustainable and robust as they will have to be maintained from existing revenue budgets.

Procurement

- 3.17 Given the shortened time-scale of the project it is imperative that there is no delay in procurement as this could risk the delivery of the project, as money not spent within the two tranches will be clawed back. A plan has been drawn up with procurement to minimise these risks.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Community engagement is a critical part of the project and will be carried out as detailed above.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The capital grant totals £1.127 million and must be spent by the end of March 2011. A condition of the grant is that at least 11 play areas are developed in both 2009/10 and 2010/11. There is a revenue grant of £45,000 to fund development of the schemes.
- 5.2 There are no direct financial implications for the council as all the works will be funded from the grant and as the grant will be used to develop existing sites rather than building new play areas, there will not be any additional maintenance requirements to be funded from ongoing revenue budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice Date: 02/04/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.3 The Play Pathfinder and Playbuilder, Capital and Revenue, Grants will be paid under Section 14 (2) (j) of the Education Act 2002 for the purpose of the promotion of the welfare of children and their parents.
The proposed refurbishment of playgrounds is a 'mixed' contract for the purposes of the EU Directive, covering services, supplies and works. The majority of the money is due to be spent on the supply of new equipment, therefore the relevant threshold for EU purposes is the one for supplies, which is £139,893. As the total spend is over this threshold, it is a contract which needs to be advertised in the OJEU. The proposed timescale for tendering the contract(s) is tight, but given the new 'accelerated procedure',

it is possible that the tender process could be completed within the timescale. Contracts over £75,000 must be prepared in a form approved by the Head of Law. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer Consulted:

Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 02/04/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 One of the requirements of the funding is that the play areas developed are inclusive, and in particular that they can be enjoyed by all children including those with disabilities. An equalities impact assessment is in place for playgrounds. This has been reviewed and will inform the development and design of each of the 22 play spaces.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 The funding is aimed at natural play making use of existing features in the landscape and where possible use natural materials rather than only relying on fixed play equipment. Environmental and sustainability will be criteria used in the procurement evaluation process.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 The funding will mainly be used to improve and upgrade existing play areas and will result in more children and families enjoying them. This is expected to have a positive impact on reducing crime and disorder.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 The revised project time-scales, requiring the development of 11 sites in 2009/10 and the remaining 11 in 2010/11 are very tight given the procurement, community engagement, design and build processes that need to be completed. A robust project plan has been developed to minimise this risk.
- 5.8 The funding is being made available to 86 local authorities which may limit the availability of suppliers and designers. The procurement plan reduces this risk.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The proposed sites are spread throughout the city and will result in improved play opportunities for all children.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The proposed sites have been identified based on a robust and transparent needs assessment. All alternative sites have been included in the assessment.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The accelerated availability of Playbuilder funding has reduced the time-scales available to successfully deliver this project. The needs analysis has identified the sites which should be a priority for investment based on condition, play value, areas of deficiency and demographic information, subject to community engagement.
- 7.2 The recommendation to establish a Play Task Force will help coordinate the delivery of the project and integrate delivery of children's play between council departments and with the wider community.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of proposed sites and selection criteria

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. Play England Design For Play: A Guide to creating successful play spaces 2008

Background Documents

None

