

London Borough of Bromley

Report No.
DCYP07111

PART 1 – PUBLIC

Agenda
Item No. **7**

Title:	BROMLEY’S PLAY STRATEGY AND SUBMISSION TO BIG LOTTERY		
Decision Maker:	Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny		Decision Date: 11 September 2007
	Children and Young People Portfolio Holder		18 September 2007
Decision Type:	Urgent	Executive	Non-Key
Budget/Policy Framework:	Within policy and budget		
Chief Officer:	Director of Children and Young People Services		
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Ward:	Boroughwide		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At previous Children and Young People’s Portfolio Holder and Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee meetings (28 June 2007, 18 July 2007) Members have been made aware of the availability of a Big Lottery Fund Grant to develop play opportunities in Bromley. At the meeting on the 31 July 2007 the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder considered developments in relation to the Play Strategy and approved the process for identifying an initial portfolio of projects. He endorsed the Members recommended by CYP PDS who would meet with Officers on 9 August to consider the expressions of interest and select projects to be funded through the Big Lottery. In making the decision as to which projects to recommend for further development, the panel considered emerging themes from the Draft Play Strategy, other Council Plans and Ward Member views which had been received. The Draft Strategy and selected projects form the initial submission to the Big Lottery and will be confirmed following approval by the CYP PH.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee is invited to endorse the proposed development of a Play Strategy and the selected portfolio of projects, which form the basis of the initial submission to the Big Lottery.
- 2.2 The Children and Young People Portfolio Holder is asked to approve the Draft Play Strategy and portfolio of projects for submission to the Big Lottery.

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Following a Department of Culture, Media and Sport review of national play provision (*Getting Serious About Play, DCMS 2004*), all local authorities have been invited to develop and implement a local Play Strategy with the support of funding within The Big Lottery Programme. Bromley has been allocated £594,681 (available over a 3-year period from the point at which the first project begins). To access this allocation Bromley must submit an application to The Big Lottery Play Programme which includes a Play Strategy and Action Plan including a Portfolio of Projects to be funded. Projects must have built into them the defining principles described by the Big Lottery as the 'Three Free-s': be **freely** chosen by children and young people; be **free** of charge to children and young people; and, children and young people are **free** to come and go.

3.2 The Play Strategy

3.2.1 In developing a draft Play Strategy for Member approval, a multi-agency Play Partnership was established through the Children's Trust Board. The membership of the group included representatives of CYP Department, Environmental Services, Community Safety, Police and Private and Voluntary Organisations. This group took account of existing Council plans, play provision across the Borough and consulted with children and families through questionnaire surveys and focus groups and this developed into the emerging themes of the draft play strategy.

3.2.2 The Draft Play Strategy which forms part of the submission to the Big Lottery Play Programme team is based on an analysis of: existing free play provision in Bromley; a range of related indicators such as poor health and community safety data; links to related Council plans and objectives (such as the Children and Young People's Plan, the Community Safety Strategy and Local Area Agreements) and consultation with children and adults. This analysis of available data and outcome from consultation identifies potential areas for development to improve play opportunities and play provision in the borough through:

- improving supervision and support for play;
- extending imaginative and challenging play;
- improving space for teenage play;
- providing space for play in areas of high density housing;
- securing improved access for disabled children to play.

The analysis and potential areas for development with identified priorities was distributed to a wide range of agencies delivering services to children, young people and families. These organisations were invited to express an interest in delivering activities which meet these themes to be considered for Big Lottery funding. The views of all Ward Members were sought on the proposals received.

A copy of the initial draft Play Strategy has been placed in the Members' Room. Because Co-opted Members of the CYP PDS Committee do not have access to the Council Members' Room, a copy of this document will be available for them to view at the Main Reception Desk at Bromley Civic Centre. It is intended that there will be further development and consultation on this strategy as part of Building a Better Bromley.

3.3 Portfolio of Projects

3.3.1 At the member/officer meeting held on 9 August the panel considered the emerging themes included in the initial Draft Play Strategy arising from analysis and consultation with interested children and young people and organisations and outlined above. There were over forty expressions of interest received from different organisations to further develop play in Bromley. Detailed submissions from Ward Members on different projects were presented and also discussed. In reviewing these themes a number of projects were identified as not meeting local needs, Big Lottery funding criteria or could be funded through alternative funding streams. A summary of the panel's assessment of each of the proposals is set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.3.2 The projects endorsed by the panel for inclusion in the Portfolio of Projects were:

1. Dual Use Facility in Biggin Hill

The 'Valley' area of Biggin Hill is, due to its semi-rural location and the physical constraints presented by its situation at the foot of a steep hill, a relatively isolated area. Nevertheless, it serves a growing number of young families who have historically only had access to a small, steeply sloping playground bounded on all sides by housing. No expansion of this over-used facility is possible but consultation in the area revealed a high level of need for physical, challenging and safe facilities for children and young people.

A space adjacent to the nearby Oaklands School has been identified as a potential space to develop a much needed community play area. Given that the site is currently within the school's domain, the scheme has been developed as a 'dual use' site whereby during school opening hours pupils will have shared use of the play space with public access for all continuing beyond school hours including weekends and holidays. The play equipment that would be installed would be for all ages and abilities and would include equipment designed specifically for improving fitness through play in order to support the national Healthy Schools initiative.

The 'dual use' nature of the proposal allows the Council to develop a much needed facility in an area where space is at a premium and also provides a model for future development of community based children's play provision that links into the emerging extended services agenda. There are also positive implications for issues relating to supervision, maintenance and sustainability.

Panel indicated general agreement to commit £190,000 to the Oaklands School project.

2. St Paul's Cray Recreation Ground

St Paul's Cray Recreation Ground has an existing playground in a secluded and screened area of the park overhung by trees. It has a limited range of equipment and has a history of repeated vandalism. The predominant use by young people inhibits access by younger children and consultation revealed that local mothers with toddlers deliberately avoid taking their children to use the play area. Residents have requested the playground be re-sited.

The project is designed to respond to these issues by establishing a new inclusive play facility featuring equipment for toddlers to teenagers in an alternative area of the park. This space provides a safer, overlooked location. In addition, Riverside school (for children with severe/profound learning difficulties) has recently opened adjacent to the proposed site and the project will work in partnership with the school to ensure that its pupils can benefit fully from access to it. By providing an exciting range of challenging play equipment for all age groups and by ensuring that the equipment is accessible to children with disabilities, it is possible to create a safe, inclusive and family friendly play area for the community. In addition, given the involvement of Riverside school, it is possible to develop the site as a 'dual use' provision so that it can be accessed by the school to promote the physical, emotional and play needs of its pupils.

The play equipment will be selected and, where possible, designed in conjunction with local children (including the school's pupils) and is likely to include dynamic equipment such as a zip line, spinners, toddlers multi play unit, and an area for older children with a multi use games area.

Panel indicated general agreement to commit £150,000 to the St Paul's Cray project.

3. Mobile Provision

The proposal from the LBB Youth Service aim to build on existing detached statutory youth work provision and extending provision from early years upwards. It will be targeted to children and young people aged between 8 and 19, with some work being undertaken with under 8's. It will also work with 19 to 25 years olds with disabilities.

The aims of the project are to reduce offending and antisocial behaviour amongst children and young people, support a reduction in levels of obesity and unhealthy behaviour and increase engagement in education and employment. It is also expected to significantly increase children and young people's participation in decision making at a local and borough wide level. The project will also develop capacity amongst the voluntary sector and local communities to enable a greater sense of involvement and responsibility of young people, parents and local residents in their own communities, eventually leading to effective and sustainable community projects around play.

The project will provide a range of mobile provision, including a number of vans and a range of interchangeable project equipment. The vans will be supported by a team of full time and part time youth workers and playworkers. The funding will be used to pay for 2 additional mobile vans (to compliment the 2 existing youth service mobiles, a range of equipment 'packs' (i.e. a sports pack, an IT pack, a music pack etc.) and youth and play worker staffing spread over 3 years from the start of the project.

This approach will allow targeting in areas where there is transient or longer term issues to be addressed. Areas of priority will be identified on an ongoing basis through consultation with safer neighbourhood panels, Community Safety, schools, police etc. A schedule will be drawn up and advertised widely in the priority areas. Areas of priority would include Penge and Anerley, the Crays, Mottingham, Biggin Hill and Bromley, Beckenham and Orpington Town Centres. Shorter term projects will be designed to be more flexible and responsive to need and will involve more intensive work with young people.

In the call for project proposals undertaken as part of the Play Strategy, 10% of ideas referred directly to mobile play provision and approximately 50% referenced some kind of play worker. This project would therefore act as a catalyst, enabling all those with ambitions to develop mobile provision and/or play personnel to develop and deliver a shared outcome. For example, the project would work in partnership with Broomleigh Housing Association's 'OK to Play' zones and would ensure links with the Integrated Youth Service, Common Assessment Framework and localisation of services agenda.

Panel indicated general agreement to commit £254,861 to the mobile/outreach play project.

Breakdown of allocations:

(i)	Oaklands	£190,000	(Capital)
(ii)	St Paul's Cray	£150,000	(Capital)
(iii)	Mobile Provision	<u>£254,861</u>	(Revenue)
	Total	<u>£594,861</u>	(Capital/Revenue)

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Improving the outcomes and safety for children and young people in the Borough are key themes for the Council under the community plan "Building a Better Bromley". The Children and Young People Plan, *Every Child Matters in Bromley 2006/09*, outlines the needs and priorities under the new Trust arrangements to ensure that outcomes for children and young people are improved, including the key role for the voluntary and community sector as partners in service provision. The Play Strategy would support and contribute to a range of Council plans and priorities.
- 4.2 The Local Area Agreement for 2008 includes an obesity stretch target which refers to the importance of physical exercise such as play in meeting this target. This target also references the importance of developing activities in areas of deprivation where health inequality is significantly greater. These aspects will be taken into account within the strategy. As the Play Strategy includes young people up to the age of 16 (24 for young people with additional needs) there is scope for significant synergy with the Council's plans to develop Integrated Youth Support Services. In September 2006 the Select Committee on Youth Provision in Bromley completed an Implementation Plan based on ten Select Committee recommendations. Several of these recommendations and related actions have strong links with the Play Strategy.
- 4.3 The Bromley Community Safety Strategy aims to achieve 'a Borough where people can live, work, play and learn safely'. The Strategy sets out a number of priority areas for development that relate to issues identified during the development of the Play Strategy.

- 4.4 The Environment and Leisure Portfolio Plan aims to enhance the provision of leisure facilities and encourage access to arts, sport, play and childcare activities, with reference being made specifically to ensuring quality leisure to all sectors of the community. The Plan also aims to conserve and enhance Bromley's parks and open spaces enabling access and promoting greater understanding of the natural environment. There is within this section of the Plan reference to the delivery of diversionary activities to young people where they gather. This links to the Youth Matters agenda in relation to providing 'somewhere to go', and 'something to do'.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Funding for the Play Strategy and Action Plan comes from The Big Lottery Children's Play Programme from which £594,681 is available to the Council subject to a successful application. This allocation can be used to fund a portfolio of capital or revenue projects that can be delivered by the Council and/or its partners in the community. The Local Authority is required to act as the accountable body for the grant and the delivery of the portfolio of projects in the Action Plan for the period (three years) of the grant agreement.
- 5.2 With reference to paragraph 7.1 below (Personnel Implications), the Mobile Provision project is intended to be sustainable at the end of the three year Lottery funding period. This is likely to be achieved through a realignment of provision within the Youth Service. However, there remains a risk that redundancy costs (estimated to be £14,000) would arise, that would be absorbed within existing budgetary provision.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Big Lottery funding is granted contingent to the provisions of the National Lottery Act etc 1993, National Lottery Act 1998 and the National Lottery Act 2006
- 6.2 The Big Lottery Fund is a non departmental public body empowered to make grants from lottery funds by distributing money to voluntary, community and other eligible groups. The fund is sponsored by the Department for Culture Media and Sport.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any staffing arrangements which arise from grant funding will follow the Council's Human Resources procedures and guidance. Staffing appointments which arise from the implementation of the play strategy will be made on a temporary fixed term or secondment arrangement basis due to the fact that the project is grant funded and time limited.
- 7.2 The Fixed Term Employees (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2002 provide that from 1 October 2002, a contract that expires when a specific task has been completed or a specific event does or does not happen is a dismissal in law. The non-renewal of a fixed term contract is already a dismissal in law. Employees on a fixed term contract accrue statutory employment rights (Fixed Term Employees (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2002) in the same way as permanent staff including redundancy payments calculated at the same level as permanent employees. Those staff who have 2 years continuity of service with the employer at the date of expiry of the fixed term contract will have accrued an entitlement to a redundancy payment. In certain instances they may also be entitled to early release of pension benefits the cost of which to the employer can be significant. Costs will therefore be incorporated within the overall budgetary framework for the project. Wherever possible, redeployment opportunities will be sought for staff at risk of not having their temporary contract renewed.

Non-Applicable Sections:	N/A
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<p>Bromley Play Strategy (Draft)</p> <p>The Big Lottery Children’s Play Programme Guidance.</p> <p>Expression of Interest forms sent to Council partners and community groups via electronic circular.</p> <p>Copies of Expression of Interest forms received by the Council.</p> <p>Correspondence to Ward Members.</p> <p>CYP PDS Report on Development of a Play Strategy 18 July 2007.</p> <p>CYP PH Report on Development of a Play Strategy 28 June 2007</p> <p>Papers presented to Member/Officer meeting on 9 August 2007.</p>

