

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 8 April 2010
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Young People
SUBJECT: Play Builder Project
WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To recognise the significant contribution that the Playbuilder Project has made in respect of National Indicator N199.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive Board:

- (1) note progress, especially in respect of National Indicator N199; and**
- (2) agree proposals for 9 year 3 projects.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Members 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. This is the supplementary report referred to in the Capital Report., which went to Executive Board on 28.01.10.

3.2 Guidance received indicated that Halton must deliver 6 new/transformed playgrounds in 2008/09; and a further 8 in 2009/10 and 8 in 2010/11 making a total of 22 over the 3 years.

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

3.3 Members received a report on the 25th September 2008 of which the Playbuilder project development process was approved and the 6 Yr 1 sites were agreed.

3.4 Members received a report on the 18th June 2009 at which the sites for year 2 were approved.

3.5 Report on Year 1 Sites

Five sites were completed in year 1, (the Spike Island site being deferred to year 2).

Sites completed were; Runcorn Town Hall, Gorsewood, Hale Park, Crow Wood Park, Halton Brook. Total investment in these new facilities was £793,492 (Playbuilder £299,092) (see Appendix 1).

All five sites have proven extremely popular with local children and families and considerable positive feedback has been received; this has been reflected in the results of the Tell Us 4 2009 Survey where N199 Parks & Play Areas has seen a positive increase of 9.7% in the levels of satisfaction with parks and play areas in Halton.

		NI 199 - Parks and play areas		
No	Local Authority	Tellus3 (new weighting)	Tellus4	Change (ppts)
876	Halton	42.4%	52.1%	9.7
NW	North West	44.2%	51.9%	7.7
Eng	England	46.4%	54.1%	7.7

Halton's Playbuilder programme has also received positive feedback regionally and nationally; it's partnership working with the Primary Care Trust being cited as an example of good practice in the National Play Strategy and; included in the DCSF/DCMS new publication 'Better Outcomes Through Play'. In March 2009 the Play Service Manager was invited to give a presentation at a National Play Conference on Halton's Partnership with 'Social Housing' providers in delivering the Playbuilder project.

3.6 Report on Year 2 Sites

Site	Area	Expected Completion Date
Hallwood Park (Roehampton)	Runcorn	March 2010
Town Park (Runcorn)	Runcorn	March 2010
Milton Avenue	Widnes	March 2010
Victoria Park	Widnes	March 2010
Spike Island	Widnes	March 2010
Wellington Street	Runcorn	March 2010
Caesars Close	Runcorn	February 2010
Halton Lodge	Runcorn	April 2010

Total investment in facilities will be C£1,029,740 (£388,472 Playbuilder) (see appendix 2). Projects 1 – 6 are 'in-house' and are being built and will be maintained by landscape services. Sites 7 and 8 are projects developed in partnership with 'Social Housing providers' who will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and up keep of the new playgrounds.

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).

- 3.7 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 approx £48,559 per area.

3.8 The Proposals for year 3 have been considered by the Playbuilder project sub-committee. Projects, highlighted below, are recommended taking into account the following considerations;

- A partnership approach to identify areas, partners include; Landscape Services; Culture & Leisure, Housing Associations; Aiming High for Disabled Children Project; Residents Groups and the Voluntary Sector
- Following consultation with Area Forum
- A whole borough approach to provision
- Identification of major gaps in existing provision
- Targeting resources in areas of need

3.9 Proposed Sites for 2010-2011

The Proposed site for 2010-2011 are;

Site	Ward	Rationale
Upton Green	Hough Green	Recommended by Exec Board (06/2009) as a possible year 3 project
The Glen	Halton Lea	Recommended by Exec Board (06/2009) as a possible year 3 project
Tedder Square	Ditton	Community proposal as a result of local consultation partnership with HHT
Crow Wood Park	Halton View	Successful year 1 project. Extremely well received. Significant community support to extend existing provision
Caldwell Road	Kingsway	Existing, well used provision which would benefit from, refurbishment/enhancement recommended by Landscape Services
Runcorn Hill	Heath	Existing, well used provision which would benefit from, refurbishment/enhancement recommended by Landscape Services
Lamsickle Lane	Heath (Weston Point)	Existing, well used provision which would benefit from, refurbishment/enhancement recommended by Landscape Services
Hough Green Park	Hough Green	Existing, well used provision which would benefit from, refurbishment/enhancement recommended by Landscape Services
The Knoll	Halton Lea	Proposed by Riverside/Four Estates. Partnership project

3.9 cont

A further element of the rationale was to, as far as was possible, to ensure a reasonable geographic distribution of sites over the 3 years of the project. (See Appendix 5, Map of Years 1, 2 and 3 sites).

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 To embed play in local policy. The successful delivery of the Playbuilder project will make a significant contribution to this process, in particular to National Indicator N199 (Satisfaction with outdoor play facilities).

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications.

The Playbuilder funding is a capital grant only and the investment of £1.1 million in new playspaces will have a long-term revenue implication in ensuring the necessary and appropriate maintenance and management regime of this investment.

5.2 The revenue implications for the year 3 proposals have been considered. Of the 8 sites proposed, 5 are existing sites with management/maintenance budgets in place, 2 are partnership projects with Social Housing providers, 1 site Upton will be new site, the revenue cost of which will be covered initially by the 5 year revenue injection from the PCT.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

Meeting the five outcomes

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 also contributes to each of the five outcomes for children specified in Every Child Matters.

Enjoying and achieving

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 afraid 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.

6.6 National Indicator Set

In addition to its direct contribution to N199, Play can, and does, contribute to a range of other indicators (see Appendix 4, Abstract from 'How Children's Play Contributes to the National Indicator Set').

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

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

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 Authorities Aiming High for Disabled Children project to ensure 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 (i.e. hoists).

9.0 REASON (S) FOR DECISION

9.1 To agree (8) projects to be progressed in Playbuilder Project year 3.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

N/A

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

3-year capital programme with annual capital allowance. Implementation of year 3 projects to be completed by 31.3.11.

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