

Lancashire Local – Lancaster District
Meeting to be held on 19 January 2010

Part I- Item No. 13

Electoral Division affected:
All in Lancaster District

Allocation of Playbuilder Grant Funding in Lancashire 2010/11
(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

Katherine Ashworth, (01772) 532882, Lancashire County Council, Directorate for Children and Young People, katherine.ashworth@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

This report is about the Lancashire 'Fair Play' Playbuilder Initiative, an external funding scheme currently profiled to invest £1,228,344* capital, to develop 20-25 play spaces for 8-13 year olds across Lancashire offering natural and adventurous play, during a three year period 2008-2011.

(* figure based on Local Authority Circular Ref: 3112080004, dated 26th February 2009. The 2010-11 allocations will be confirmed in March 2010.)

The report presents recommendations for grant funding for Playbuilder schemes in the financial year 2010/11 following an applications process and assessment panel meeting held on Friday 11 December 2009. It identifies ten projects across Lancashire which are initially recommended for funding within the financial limits available in 2010/11 (See Appendix 'B'). These specific projects are recommended for funding as they were those considered to have the highest degree of fit with scheme criterion through a scored analysis and are considered to have provided sufficient evidence that they are deliverable within the financial year. The remaining projects submitted are not initially to be recommended for funding, though it should be noted that two further projects are indicated as first and second reserve projects (See Appendix B), should any recommended project withdraw from the programme under exceptional circumstances. It should be noted that this circumstance has occurred in the previous two years of the Playbuilder Initiative.

Following feedback from the Lancashire Locals across the County, these recommendations will be presented to the Lancashire Children's Trust Partnership Board at their meeting on 4 March 2010 who will be asked to endorse these recommendations. These will then be presented to the Cabinet Member for Young People at a decision making session for agreement.

Decision Required

Lancashire Local – Lancaster District is asked to:

- a) consider the proposal for development at Caton with Littledale and comment as to the Lancashire Local's knowledge of how this project would be considered to meet local needs and priorities;
- b) consider the initial recommendations made for Playbuilder grant funding (2010/11) in the amount of £483,705 and recommend these proposals are endorsed by the Lancashire Children's Trust Partnership Board for a decision by the Cabinet Member for Young People.

Background and Advice

The Playbuilder Initiative flows from the national government play strategy 'Fair Play' and is a key commitment in the National Children's Plan. It is a capital programme investing £235 million nationally on developing new play facilities targeted specifically at the 8-13 year age range. The Initiative is intended to develop (or re-develop) public play spaces close to where children live which encourage free, natural and adventurous play and make use of sustainable and natural resources. These are expected to meet the more challenging and adventurous play needs of 8-13 year olds and be accessible to all children. A key tenet of the programme is the involvement of children, their parents and carers and local communities in development processes.

The Initiative is intended to raise the profile of play as an important feature in improving outcomes for children and young people, further embedding play in planning for children's service provision.

Lancashire has been granted a Playbuilder Grant, which values as follows:

Year	Playbuilder Capital Allocation	Playbuilder Revenue Allocation	Total
2008/9	£315,521	£13,004	£328,525
2009/10	£429,118	£20,307	£449,425
2010/11	£483,705*	£13,538*	£497,243
Total	£1,228,344	£46,849	£1,275,193

(* figure based on Local Authority Circular Ref: 3112080004, dated 26th February 2009. The 2010-11 allocations will be confirmed in March 2010)

Lancashire County Council is the fund holder and responsible for providing strategic leadership for the initiative in Lancashire and it has been determined that this will operate through Lancashire Young People's Service. Project development to date has fully involved District Council play representatives to ensure alignment of the initiative with existing play development strategies and priorities in local areas.

It is aspired that over three years to maintain a measure of equity across the whole County whilst adhering to the specific required criteria for Playbuilder play areas. It is, therefore, intended that the award of Playbuilder Grants will be balanced according to a model which seeks to:

- approve one Playbuilder play area within each District Council area (subject to bids meeting the specific agreed criteria) either in year 1, 2 or 3 as appropriate;
- approve a further eight to thirteen play areas based on their degree of fit with the criteria alone.

During the application and assessment process for 2010/11 projects, we have indicated a scored weighting which awards additional points to district areas which have only had one Playbuilder play area to date and a further weighting to district areas which have not yet received a Playbuilder play area.

In order to achieve the financial targets, each successful Playbuilder play area will normally receive an average unit investment of around £47,000.

Projects which secured year one (2008/9) and year two (2009/10) funding are as follows:

District Area	Year	Project	Town/Ward area	Playbuilder Funding Award £
Wyre	1	Marine Hall Gardens play area	Fleetwood seafront	47,000
Ribble Valley	1	Clitheroe Castle creative play area	Clitheroe town centre	47,000
Chorley	1	Astley climbing forest	Chorley just outside town centre	45,000
Hyndburn	1	Lowerfold park	Great Harwood	42,000
Burnley	1	Hargher Clough Play Area	South West Burnley	33,684
Pendle	1	Heyhead Park	Brierfield	49,400
Rossendale	1	Greenfield Memorial Gardens	Haslingden	51,437
Lancaster	2	Happy Mount Park, Morecambe	Morecambe	44,500
Lancaster	2	Halton with Aughton Play Area	Halton Parish, Lancaster	47,000

District Area	Year	Project	Town/Ward area	Playbuilder Funding Award £
Wyre	2	Memorial Park, Fleetwood	Fleetwood	47,000
Wyre	2	Scorton Play Area	Scorton Village, Nether Wyresdale	47,000
Ribble Valley	2	Salt Hill Play Area	Clitheroe	47,390
South Ribble	2	Farrington Park	Leyland	47,000
Preston	2	Mill Lane Adventure Play Area	Fulwood, Preston	47,000
Pendle	2	Sackville Street, Brierfield	Brierfield	47,000
Hyndburn	2	Higham Playing Fields	Accrington	47,000

Identification of Year Three Play Schemes 2010/11, (Appendix 'B' refers)

Opportunity to make an application for funding for Playbuilder funding for 2010/11 was released on 22 September 2009. Application forms and guidance were circulated widely to District Councils, Parish Councils and organisations with the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) through the Third Sector Lancashire 0-19 Reference Sub Group.

The closing date for applications was 7 December 2009.

On 11 December 2009, the Playbuilder assessment panel met to consider all applications that had been submitted against the Headline criteria (Appendix 'A') and against the pre-advised weighting measures for 2010/11 as follows:

- geographic locality not previously featured in Playbuilder programme;
- high level of challenge and adventure;
- design Innovation proving high degree of Play Value.

Potential schemes were submitted for consideration reflecting eleven out of the twelve District Council areas in Lancashire, with three areas submitting multiple schemes.

Following assessment, recommendations for funding have emerged as outlined below with further detail outlined in Appendix 'B'.

It is recommended to initially fund ten projects in year three (2010/11) and indicate first and second reserve projects which could be considered should any of the initially recommended projects have to withdraw for exceptional reasons.

District Area	Year Two Projects	Notes	Recommended Playbuilder Funding Award £	Number of Playbuilders in district area (years 1 and 2)
Lancaster	Caton with Littledale Play Area	Parish Council Project	60,705	2
Wyre	Wyre Estuary Country Park	District Council Project	NO AWARD FIRST RESERVE	3
Fylde	Kirkham Memorial Gardens	District Council Project	47,000	0
Fylde	Ashton Gardens Play Area	District Council Project	47,000	0
Fylde	Newton with Clifton Play area	Parish Council Project	NO AWARD	0
Preston	Goosnargh Green Play Area	District Council Project	47,000	1
South Ribble	Dob Lane Play Area	District Council	47,000	1
South Ribble	Gregson Lane Play Area	District Council Project	NO AWARD	1
West Lancashire	Manor Road Park	District Council Project	47,000	0
Chorley	Yarrow Valley Country Park	District Council Project	47,000	1
Chorley	Euxton Skate Park	Parish Council	NO AWARD	1
Hyndburn	The Hollow, Huncoat	District Council Project	47,000	2
Burnley	Padiham Riverside	District Council Project	47,000	1

District Area	Year Two Projects	Notes	Recommended Playbuilder Funding Award £	Number of Playbuilders in district area (years 1 and 2)
Pendle	Marsden Park	District Council Project	NO AWARD SECOND RESERVE	2
Rossendale	Sharneyford Play Area	District Council Project	47,000	1
Rossendale	Snig Hole Play Area	District Council	NO AWARD	1
Rossendale	Victoria Park, Haslingden	District Council	NO AWARD	1
			SUB TOTAL	483,705
			TOTAL CAPITAL AVAILABLE	483,705

(A summary of all schemes submitted is attached as Appendix 'B').

Lancaster Area Proposal – Fell View Play Area, Caton with Littledale

The proposal relates to the redevelopment of an existing uninspiring play area in the village centre to provide an exciting new challenge for children which is sympathetic to the rural setting. The play area is the only play facility for many miles around, given the rural context.

Sympathetic and innovative design proposals have been provided and fully costed making maximum use of landscape opportunities and use of sustainable resources. A great deal of thought has been given to ensuring the site is accessible for disabled and non-disabled children alike.

An extensive planting scheme will help to soften boundaries and enhance the natural setting with use of multiple textures for loose fill surfacing. The design provides a considered choice of adventurous and challenging fixed equipment pieces focusing specifically on 8-13yr olds needs.

The total cost of the proposals at Caton is £184,748 with £49,488 being the total cost of the Playbuilder elements with some additional landscape works, paving and planting.

£24,000 of contributions has already been secured which, if matched with a Playbuilder grant of £25,488, would suffice to provide the basic junior play area (Play Zone A). However, it is recommended that an award of £60,705 is made to provide additional funds to also deliver significant elements of Play Zone B and/or the proposed aerial

cableway which would both add significant value to the adventurous experience for older juniors.

A further £110,000 of grant applications has been made by the community group to various bodies, which are under consideration and which would allow an overall upscale of aspirations and new ideas to be funded eg toddler facilities.

Consultations

The development of the project has been supported by the involvement of a wide variety of agencies that have impact on play development and improving health outcomes for children. These have included:

- District Council Play/Parks Development Leads;
- Lancashire County Council Environmental Projects Team;
- Independent Play Design consultants;
- Groundwork Pennine Lancashire;
- Barnardo's;
- Primary Care Trust;
- Green Partnerships Environment Action Fund;
- Community Futures;
- Planning Services;
- Transport and Highways Department;
- Young people.

Membership of the applications assessment panel has been drawn from this range of expertise.

Further to this, the project has received consultancy support from Play England who has been appointed national support body for the Initiative by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). All potentially funded projects are required to be cleared by the DCSF before allocation can be confirmed.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk Management

In general terms, risk implications of the proposals in the report are focused around the completion of the play area development by the funded body. These are required to be within the financial year indicated and costs to fall within the specified budgetary allocation (grant), unless other additional sources of supplementary/match funding have been sourced and secured. Conditions relating specifically to individual schemes will be set out in a service level agreement, acceptance of which is essential as a condition of the 'offer of grant'. These arrangements have been operational in years one and two.

Responsibility for the delivery of schemes within these terms and conditions is discharged to the funded body from Lancashire County Council within the service level agreement. This includes the right to reclaim funding not utilised for the agreed purposes, or for projects not delivered within the agreed timelines.

Individually funded schemes are closely monitored throughout the duration of their development and delivery phases by a project officer reporting to the County Council. This enables regular risk assessment of the projects progress towards completion within the agreed timelines.

Regular reporting to the DCSF is required on the progress of the programme overall as a condition of grant and the above project management approach allows the County Council to uphold its commitments in this area.

Financial

It is critical that funding decisions are reached at this early timetable stage (pre beginning of relevant financial year) in order to ensure that projects have sufficient time for implementation and completion within the financial year. This is in order to ensure our compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant from the DCSF for Playbuilders which requires spend to be defrayed within the financial year, otherwise any balances may be reclaimed by the DCSF.

It should be noted that financial allocations are based on instructions issued to Playbuilder Authorities within Local Authority Circular Ref: 3112080004, dated 26 February 2009 which is scheduled for deletion on 30 June 2010. The precise 2010-11 allocations will be confirmed by the DCSF in March 2010. It is not anticipated at this stage that these allocations will vary from those declared at this stage.

Legal

Conditions of grant making to each project are governed by a Service Level Agreement which has been prepared in conjunction with Lancashire County Council's Legal Services. The principle/detail of this agreement was followed with existing projects funded in year one and two.

Any representations made to the Directorate prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name:	Organisation:	Comments:
N/A		

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Council/Tel
National Children's Plan		Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Report to Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on Lancashire Fair Play Playbuilder Initiative	22 July 2008	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Report to Lancashire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership on Playbuilder Project	10 September 2008	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Report to Cabinet on Development of Lancashire Locals Appendix A Appendix Ai Appendix B Appendix C	4 December 2008	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Report to Full Council on Development of Lancashire Locals Annex A1 Annex A2 Annex A3	11 December 2008	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
DCSF Fair Play National Play Strategy	December, 2008	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Reports to Children's Trust Partnership Board on Lancashire Fair Play Playbuilder Initiative	16 January 2009 25 June 2009 17 September 2009	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882

Paper	Date	Contact/Council/Tel
<u>Report to Lancashire Local - Lancaster District on Allocation of Playbuilder Grant Funding in Lancashire 2009/10 Appendix 'A' Appendix 'B'</u>	17 March 2009	Katherine Ashworth, Lancashire County Council, 01772 532882
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		