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**Meeting of Executive Members and Children's  
Services Advisory Panel**

14 March 2007

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning and Culture)

## **Lottery funding - Revision to Taking Play Forward Policy**

### **Summary**

1. This paper presents a revised version of the *Taking Play Forward* policy for the approval of the Executive Member.

### **Background**

2. Since its formal approval in 2002, the *Taking Play Forward* policy has provided a collective vision for play in the city. However, with new government policies and changes within the sector it has been necessary to revise and update the document. Play Team Officers have undertaken this revision with direction and advice from the newly formed Play England and from the Big Lottery Fund.
3. The Big Lottery has allocated a total of £155 million nationally for Play in order to provide for infrastructure, the Playful Ideas fund and an allocation for each local authority. The local authority's allocation (£328k in York's case) cannot be accessed unless there is an agreed play policy in place linked to the proposed portfolio of projects to be funded.
4. In January the Executive Member approved the proposed projects to form York's portfolio. This portfolio has now been submitted to the Big Lottery Fund and also includes the additional hours for management costs against its £328k allocation. We will receive the outcome of this bid from the Big Lottery Fund within 3 months of the closing date.

### **Consultation**

5. The policy was initially redrawn around themes arising from the Children's Trust consultation for the development of the new Children and Young People's plan. The Play Team then held 3 local briefing sessions which invited the play sector to:
  - Gain information about the Big Lottery Fund's Play programme
  - Take feedback on the first redraft of the Taking Play Forward policy
  - Submit expressions of interest for the Lottery money
6. The draft document was also sent out to other sectors including schools, the Neighbourhood Pride Unit, voluntary and community and internal and external play partners. A copy of the policy was also posted on the Council web site.

7. Feedback from the consultation has enabled the perspective of partners to be incorporated into the new document, which highlights how play links to other agendas as follows:
  - It has been agreed that the Play Team are informed and will have a contribution and influence on the design and nature of any new development that will be funded through 106 payments.
  - Libraries are ideal places for children to play together with parents and carers and take part in shared activities.
  - The Arts and Culture service recognise the role that the Arts has to play in providing opportunities for children and young people to explore and discover the real and imagined world through creative play.

### **The Revised Policy**

8. From the feedback received, officers have completed a comprehensive re-write of the *Taking Play Forward* policy which reflects the current state of play and vision for the future (Annex 1).
9. The new *Taking Play Forward* document makes clear links to other strategic documents including the Children and Young People's plan. It also covers how play impacts on other sectors, internal and external to the council, including the voluntary sector, sport, arts, libraries and parks.
10. Key Changes include:
  - The age range of the policy now covers children and young people up to 18 years old
  - The policy adopts the Play Safety Forum's 'Managing Risk in Play Provision' document
  - Details of the new PI included in the authority's Local Area Agreement, relating to the number of organisations signing up to the *Taking Play Forward* policy
  - A new look final document which will include photographs taken by children and young people reflecting 'what they like to play'

### **Corporate Priorities**

11. The new Taking Play Forward Policy is written in line with the new Local Area Agreement, the new Children and Young People's Plan and the Corporate Strategy. Of the 13 priorities within the Corporate Strategy 2006 –2006, the *Taking Play Forward* policy recognises that it contributes to achieving the following:
  - Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest.
  - Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the City.

## Implications

### Finance

12. Accessing the City of York Council's Big Lottery Fund allocation of £328k is dependent on having an agreed play policy to which the projects are working to. Without this funding a number of planned projects will not be able to be carried out and the Play Policy Development Worker post can not be extended.
13. There are no human resources, equalities, legal, property, crime and disorder or IT implications.

### Risk Management

14. It is crucial for the authority to have a robust policy document to ensure that it:
  - has a framework to support its work and that of the play sector in York
  - can deliver and monitor its Better Play Grants effectively
  - is able to access its allocation from the Big Lottery fund

### Recommendations

15. The Executive Member is recommended to approve the revised *Taking Play Forward* policy.

Reason: To ensure that York has an up to date framework to promote and deliver play opportunities and to deliver a successful portfolio to the Big Lottery to enable our play sector to benefit from the funding on offer.

#### Contact Details

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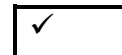
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**Report Approved****Date** 28 February 2007**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

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**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all***All****For further information please contact the author of the report**

### Annexes

Annex 1 – new Taking Play Forward policy

### Background Papers

*Big Lottery: Play* Report to the Executive Member for Children's Services - 22 January, 2007