

Meeting	Learning & Culture Policy and Scrutiny Committee (Pre Decision Calling In)
Date	24 May 2016
Present	Councillors Taylor (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Dew, Looker, Wells, K Myers and Mason. Dr Dickinson (Co-opted Statutory Member)
Apologies	Councillor Jackson
In Attendance	Councillor Aspden, Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader)

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests not included on the registry of interests, any prejudicial interests or discloseable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. Cllr Taylor declared a personal non prejudicial interest on item 3, Pre-Decision Called-In Item- Review of Play Policy, Playground Investment and Maintenance, as he was a member of the Green Party, the group who called the item in.

2. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

3. Pre-Decision Called-In Item- Review of Play Policy, Playground Investment and Maintenance

Members considered a report that provided background to the pre-decision call-in of the review of the play policy, playground investment and maintenance.

Cllr D'Agorne was in attendance to address the committee and confirm the reasons why himself, Cllr Craghill and Cllr Kramm had called in the intended decision.

He confirmed that their reasons for call in were raised before they had seen the report, so although they agreed with the general principles they hoped the policy would clearly support the different play needs between children and young people and provide effective play areas to support children's natural inclination to play.

Cllr D'Agorne emphasized further concerns and hoped the policy would:

- demonstrate a distinction between a child's play needs and a young persons recreational requirements.
- highlight what playground investment and maintenance would be available for the city centre wards.
- include consultation with all ward councillors.
- highlight what provisions would be available to remove any barriers that may make a playground inaccessible.
- advise on what type of play facilities should be built within new housing developments and how they should be maintained.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader) was in attendance to respond to the reasons for calling in.

He confirmed that:

- he welcomed the refreshed play policy.
- any future decisions would be based on the 5 key principles of play.
- playground investment was an issue for all wards and the play policy was a framework for all ward councillors to utilise.
- children do develop through play and the policy does take charge of those developing needs to include high quality play opportunities for all age groups.
- the play policy worked alongside some Planning policies and the Local Plan Open Space policy where any technical planning or section 106 issues would be addressed.

In answer to Members questions the Executive Member agreed to be more proactive in supporting and guiding communities or groups in the city who wished to create fun, safe spaces and opportunities for play within the urban environment.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to the issues raised and confirmed:

- The Play Policy was aimed at 0-18 year olds.

- They consulted with local communities when considering what type of materials to use and would also consider the longevity of the equipment.
- Working with ward councillors enabled officers to identify areas of greatest need and allowed councillors to access the capital fund to provide the schemes that would benefit children and young people.
- Officers were continuing to look at the accessibility of facilities and to build confidence in the perception for safe routes to play.
- The Local Plan would consider the shortfalls of play areas including areas within new housing developments.
- The 3 new sites that the council were going to manage were based in the Acomb Ward.

In answer to Members questions it was confirmed:

- Officers would work with the housing developers and Planning officers to advise on what type of equipment should be available to suit all different age ranges.
- Councillors could hold a Ward event to promote community cohesion and to explore any local issues with a focus on hearing the voice of younger residents and actively working with residents to find community based solutions.

The Committee debated the call-in and considered the comments raised in the meeting and were satisfied that all their questions had been answered.

Resolved:

- (i) That the reasons for calling in this matter prior to decision, together with all submissions made be considered and that any specific comments/recommendations for consideration be passed to the Executive Member
- (ii) That a decision be made by the Executive Member of Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader) at his Decision Session in light of (i) above.

Reason: To enable the called-in matter to be dealt with efficiently and in accordance with the new pre-decision call in arrangements.

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.05 pm].