

Review of Casual Play Opportunities - Interim Report

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an update on the information gathered in support of this scrutiny review, and asks Members to agree how they wish to proceed and what further information they require.

Background

2. In deciding to proceed with the review, Members had previously agreed that it should include a comparison between a city centre area and a village location, and should focus on play opportunities rather than just play equipment. At a meeting in December 2009, Members considered a scoping report for the review. They agreed to widen the age range of the provision of play opportunities from 5-11 to 5-13 years old, to coincide with the Government's "Playbuilder" Initiative, and set following remit for the review:

Remit

To participate in the consultation on the revisions to CYC's Play Policy, and carry out a comparison of the play opportunities for 5-13yr olds, within a number of residential areas/wards (one city centre, one suburban and one village)

Objectives

- i. to understand the different types of provision suitable for each type of area
- ii. to assess the potential space within the identified areas/wards that could be utilised for play
- iii. to recommend a strategy for the provision of suitable play opportunities within the identified areas
- iv. To be consulted on the revisions to the Council's play policy and if appropriate, the Local Development Framework (LDF)

Information Gathered

3. The Committee received a list of areas in York with gaps in play provision that had not been included in the 'Playbuilder Initiative'. These gaps were defined as being outside of a 10 minute / 420m catchment for children's /under 8's equipped play areas:

- Burnholme area
 - Clementhorpe / South Bank area, adjacent to Terry's
 - Copmanthorpe - north end of village
 - Deighton
 - Dunnington - north side of village
 - Fishergate - southern part of ward Danesmead area
 - Heworth Without - north east side of ward
 - Lowfield school area
 - Poppleton - south east side of village
 - Stockton on the Forest - north east end of village
 - The Mount - southern end
 - Wigginton - west side of village
4. Areas not included within the 'Playbuilder Initiative' that have identified gaps in provision of equipped play areas for teenagers (aged 8 and above), are :
- along Tadcaster Road - to City Centre to the Groves and Bootham.
 - the villages of Askham Brian, Askham Richard, Rufforth, Hessay, Upper and Neither Poppleton, Strensall, Stockton on the Forest, Dunnington, Wheldrake and Deighton
 - parts of Osbaldwick, Heworth Without, Huntington, Haxby Wigginton, Acomb and Woodthorpe
5. In order to consider the information gathered in support of the 'Playbuilder Initiative' in more detail, an informal meeting was held on 21 January 2010. A summary of the information provided by the Head of Parks & Open Spaces together with an analysis of that information, will be included in this agenda once the information session has been held, and will be shown as Annex A to this report (Annex A to follow).

Options

6. Having considered all of the information contained within this report and its associated annexes, Members may choose to:
- a) arrange a further informal information gathering / consultation session and agree who they would like to invite e.g. other play providers, voluntary organisations etc
 - b) visit the areas of the city the review is to focus on i.e. to view the current provision in each area (if any) and to meet with parents in the locality to gather their views
 - c) set up a Task Group to gather information on:
 - imaginative examples of play opportunities in place elsewhere, both nationally and from outside the UK
 - options for play provision in 'small play spaces in an urban setting', in order to consider how to address the lack of such provision in central York
 - d) agree if any additional formal meeting dates are required, outside of those already diarised

Implications

7. There are no known Financial, HR, Equalities, Legal Crime & Disorder, Property or Other implications associated with the recommendation in this report.

Corporate Strategy

8. A review of this topic would support the Council's aims to make York a 'City of Culture' i.e.

'We want to inspire residents and visitors to free their creative talents and make York the most active city in the country. We will achieve this by providing high quality cultural and sporting activities for all.'

9. A successful review of this topic could also support the Council's aim to make York a 'Healthy City' by improving the provision of facilities for children and teenagers to participate in active play.

Risk Management

10. There are no known risks associated with the recommendation in this report.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - i. Agree which areas of the city the review is to focus on
 - ii. Agree methods for carrying out the review as suggested in paragraph 6 above, and allocate a number of tasks to individual members of the Committee, where suitable

Reason: To progress the work of the review between meetings

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Scoping Report Approved **Date** 1 December 2009

Specialist Implications Officer(s) N/A

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: Scoping Report dated 10 December 2009

Annex A – Summary & Analysis of Information provided at informal session on 21 January 2010