

Draft Play Investment Strategy	12th February 2019
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing
Cost: (If applicable)	£4.129m (<i>indicative investment only</i>)

The purpose of this paper is to seek Members formal approval for the Draft Play Investment Strategy and to outline the proposed approach to implementation over the next five years 2019-24.

Background

In March 2017 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council commissioned PlayBoard NI to develop an overarching Play Investment Strategy for the Borough. Members gave 'indicative approval' in August 2018 for the draft Play Investment Strategy to progress to Section 75 compliant consultation which closed on 4th December 2018.

The Draft Play Investment Strategy and Action Plan

Copies of the complete Play Value Audits and the Draft Play Investment Strategy were made available last year in the Member's library for detailed review. The key recommendations of the Strategy are summarised within the costed Action Plan within the Executive Summary section of the report.

It is important to note that while the Action Plan acts as a tool to prioritise projects for future investment in fixed play, it does not constitute budget approval. All proposed investments in play will be the subject of proportionate business cases and investment decision making in compliance with Council's capital project procedures and delegated approvals.

The Action Plan recommends investment across 7 areas over a 5-year period as follows:

Action Plan	Action	Indicative Cost
1.3	Review of Megaw park play area and ancillary facilities to ensure full accessibility	£150,000
2.1	Develop new high value fixed play areas at 6 locations: 1. Limavady Town (Accessible Destination Play Area – NEAP) 2. Waterfoot (LEAP Play Area) 3. Portrush (Destination Play Area) 4. Portrush (Play installations to stimulate play along key walkways including East and West Strands, Ramore Head etc.) 5. Waterside, Coleraine (NEAP Play Area)	£1,225,000

	6. Ballykelly (NEAP Play Area)	
2.2	Extend and enhance existing fixed play areas at 3 locations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bio Park, Cloughmills (LEAP) 2. Quay Road, Ballycastle (Accessible Destination play area) 3. Rugby Avenue, Coleraine (Destination play area) 	£850,000
2.3	Estimated costs associated with new play development at 4 locations (pending community consultation): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ballymoney South 2. Castleroe 3. Bushmills 4. The Cuts 1 (Coleraine) 	£500,000
3.1	Capital renewal of 12 play areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Landsdowne Road 2. Lisnagrot 3. Alexander Road/Blackburn Path 4. Middle Park 5. Cottage Wood 1 and 2 6. Garvagh Road 7. Swanns Bridge 8. Dhu Varren 9. Daneshill 10. The Warren 11. Anderson Park 12. Larchfield 	£1,175,000
4.1	Transformation of play areas at 5 locations (dependent on community consultation): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shanes Park 2. Islandmoore (Ballylagan Road) 3. Ballyknock 4. Glenullin 5. Ballanagarvey 	£70,000
7.1	Development of non-fixed play services	£159,000
	TOTAL ASSOCIATED INVESTMENT	£4,129,000

In addition to this, PlayBoard NI undertook a condition audit of all 99 fixed play areas. As a key commitment of the Play Strategy (section 7.10) this has resulted in individual reports which in many cases recommend maintenance and repair in addition to the projects listed above in the Action Plan. These repair and renewal recommendations have now been costed by Council's Estates Team and a separate paper will be brought forward with an anticipated budget of £0.5m to protect and reinstate the initial play value of these sites.

To provide adequate budget cover for the Investment Action Plan and Maintenance works above, an indicative provision of £5m has been included within the Stage 1 Capital Planning Budgets agreed by Members at the Capital Workshop on 14th November 2018.

Feedback from Section 75 Consultation

The consultation feedback has been reviewed and will be taken into account in the development of the Outline Business Cases for each play project progressed. The feedback indicates a continuing need to consult further, particularly on the inclusive design and specialist equipment required in Accessible Play Parks to ensure that the complex needs of disabled children are met. (**Annex A** – Updated Draft Strategy includes minor changes to the content to reflect emphasis on the need to accommodate all children. Changes that have been made can be seen at **Annex B**)

Ongoing Work on Play Business Cases

Prior to the development of a Play Strategy, Members prioritised 10 capital projects for progression to Stage 1 – Outline Business Case development. Included within this prioritised list was two Play Parks (Limavady Accessible Play Park and Aghadowey Play Park).

To progress these projects PlayBoard NI was commissioned to carry out surveys and consultation workshops with the local communities of Limavady and Aghadowey and reports are currently being finalised. In parallel, Council's Capital Team is concluding work on site feasibility, playpark design and capital estimates which will allow the Outline Business Cases to be brought forward for formal consideration and approval in Qtr 1 of 2019/20.

In addition, an Outline Business Case for the development of Dunluce and The Bowl Recreation Sites is being progressed which will address the need identified in the Play Strategy for a Destination Play Area in Portrush.

Next Steps

It is proposed that a dedicated Play Workshop is held with Members to progress with the implementation of the Play Strategy and prioritise the remainder of Investment Action Plan. To inform this, Officers will conduct an initial feasibility assessment on those sites listed in the Plan to determine each project's state of readiness within the wider development plans of Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

- **Give formal approval for the Draft Play Investment Strategy.**
- **Note the ongoing commitment to the maintenance and repair of all play parks including those earmarked for significant investment within the strategy.**
- **Agree the proposed approach to implementation over the period 2019-24.**