

Causeway Coast & Glens

District Council

To: Shadow Council

Date: 26th March 2015

Correspondence report

1. Department for Social Development – Budgetary Position for 2015/16

Correspondence has been received from the Minister, as follows:

I am writing to update you on the budgetary position for 2015/16 and the amount to transfer to Local Government from 1 April 2016. You will be aware of the difficulties the Northern Ireland Executive has faced and the severity of the cuts that Executive Departments have had to agree. Within the context of this difficult budgetary position and following a stringent review of the programmes my Department provides and the services it supports, I have now arrived at what I consider to be the most appropriate financial solution for the 2015/16 year and for the budget to transfer in April 2016.

I appreciate you will be anxious to know about which projects my Department will be able to support in your area during 2015/16. I can only reassure you that I my decisions take full recognition of the value of these projects and appreciation of the positive contribution they make to some of the most disadvantaged people in our society.

I know that you also have concerns about what reduction there will be in the amounts transferring to you for 2016/17. It is anticipated that the level of spending across my Department during 2015/16 for those services for which responsibility is transferring to Local Government will be in the region of £56.5m. Therefore the budget to transfer to Councils from 1 April 2016 will be £56.5m. I have previously declared my commitment to the Reform of Local Government and in recognition of that I have decided to protect the overall budget to transfer from any further cuts from April 2016.

In protecting this amount I have directed that any further potential cuts to my Departments overall budget from April 2016 will be absorbed by my Department. I attach the financial allocation model based on this figure which results in the amount of £3.701m transferring to Causeway Coast and Glens District Council.

I hope that my decision will enable you to effectively plan for and deliver regeneration and community development across your areas, and of course my Officials and I are

committed to engaging with you and assisting you with your planning and decision making process.

When I have finalised decisions about the work programme for 2015/16 my Officials will inform the relevant stakeholders, including Councils. For my part I will continue to engage with Councillors and their Officials to allow meaningful discussion and to address areas of concern. This engagement process has proven useful thus far and I expect to have met with all remaining Councils in the coming weeks.

Going forward I fully expect the good relationships between my Department and Local Government to continue to develop particularly in the area of community planning which Councils are leading on. I have established a community planning group in my Department and Sharron Carlin, who will be your single point of contact for community planning, will contact you shortly to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can best work with you in this area.

I am copying this letter to the representative bodies of Council Chief Executives and Local Government representatives, SOLACE and NILGA, and to Ministers Durkan and Hamilton. I would be grateful if you would ensure Presiding Councillors and deputy Presiding Councillors are made aware of its content.

Yours sincerely



MERVYN STOREY MLA
Minister for Social Development

Allocations to Councils from April 2016

	Teaching Disadvantage Component			Physical Regeneration Component			Landscape		Community Development Component			Total Programme		Total Allocation	
	Income Deprived Population Settlement Bands A-D	% of total	Total	Total Population Settlement Bands A-G	% of total	Total	Average annual cost	Income Deprived Population of District	% of total	Indicative allocation (£,000)	Indicative allocation (£,000)	% of total	Salary & GAE costs in proportion to Programme allocation	Indicative allocation (£,000)	% of total
Acton and Muesborough	22,959	6.67%	1,538	10,020	8.73%	1,622		25,511	5.65%	394	3,554	6.31%	36%		6.94%
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigion	32,327	9.27%	2,205	127,658	9.75%	1,819		44,882	9.94%	694	4,780	9.17%	484		9.21%
Belfast	194,941	32.85%	7,644	332,305	25.54%	4,745	2,712	194,381	25.33%	1,768	16,259	31.63%	1,452		31.36%
Castlereagh, Carrickfergus and Glenties	23,546	6.83%	1,577	86,846	6.69%	1,237		35,125	7.78%	543	3,257	6.53%	344		6.95%
Down and Strabane	46,693	13.65%	3,127	186,807	14.51%	1,654		55,684	12.33%	861	5,643	10.97%	679		11.01%
Fermanagh and Craigavon	12,476	3.57%	836	42,668	3.27%	606		27,367	6.06%	413	1,667	3.63%	101		3.64%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	16,352	4.67%	1,095	161,737	12.47%	1,453		18,406	4.30%	300	2,046	4.53%	252		5.95%
Mid and East Antrim	20,737	5.88%	1,388	93,272	7.12%	1,476		25,001	5.54%	367	3,190	6.20%	327		6.23%
Mid Ulster	16,423	4.70%	1,033	55,707	4.27%	754		33,323	7.37%	525	2,351	4.57%	241		4.93%
Moyle, Mourne and Down	26,753	7.56%	1,732	51,735	3.96%	1,307		44,655	9.89%	650	3,750	7.37%	369		7.40%
North Down and Antrim	22,964	6.47%	1,537	155,807	11.96%	1,534		25,540	5.66%	395	3,096	6.50%	355		7.53%
	354,968		23,772	1,383,462		18,577	2,712	451,447		6,980	51,441		5,659		

2. Children's Play Policy Forum

Information received from the Children's Play Forum is attached.

Children's Play Policy Forum

Media release

Embargoed until 00.01 Thursday 19 March 2015

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BODY CALLS FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO INVEST IN COST-EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY

The UK's Children's Play Policy Forum is calling for all UK political parties to invest in children's play because of the proven benefits to children, families and communities.

'Four asks for play' calls on the UK Government to:

1. Recognise the need for play before school, during play/break times and after school hours
2. Extend the existing Department of Health-funded programme supporting regular sessional road closures in residential streets in England to every major city in the UK
3. Invest in a programme focusing on disadvantaged communities to encourage appropriate play in public space, while reducing neighbourhood conflict and the resulting pressure on police time
4. Provide support for staffed play provision to test innovative community-based health and well-being initiatives.

Investing in the 'Four asks for play' will result in improvements in children's health and wellbeing, the Children's Play Policy Forum says, and hence a reduction in the pressures on the National Health Service and the public purse.

Studies show that the long-term health benefits of playing include boosting physical activity levels which helps to tackle child obesity, and supporting children to become more resilient. Play initiatives also benefit the wider community by encouraging neighbourliness and improved community cohesion.*

Robin Sutcliffe, Chair of the Children's Play Policy Forum said:

'We know that playing provides immediate and long-term benefits to children, young people and the wider community. We all have a responsibility to ensure children have opportunities to play in their communities. We are calling on all political parties to provide for play initiatives across the UK – the level of investment needed would be relatively modest yet extremely cost-effective.'

Northern Ireland's representative on the Children's Play Policy Forum and PlayBoard NI Chief Executive Jacqueline O'Loughlin said:

'Play is a critical part of our children lives, helping to deliver a wide range of benefits which support positive growth and development. Through 'Four asks for Play' we are calling on all political parties to include an explicit reference to the importance of play

within their manifestos either with play as a policy in its own right or as a strand within an existing policy.” Jacqueline continued ‘It is my firm belief that fulfilment of the ‘Four asks for play’ has the potential to make a significant difference to the lives of children, young people and indeed the wider community.’

– ENDS –

Notes for editors

For more information or if you have any media queries please contact:

Play England/UK – Carmen de Silva: csilva@playengland.net / 07775 830740

Play Wales – Angharad Wyn Jones: info@playwales.org.uk / 029 2048 6050

PlayBoard Northern Ireland – Susan Kehoe: susan.kehoe@playboard.co.uk / 028 90803380

Play Scotland – Sharon McCluskie: SharonMcCluskie@playscotland.org / 131 440 9070

The ‘Four asks – for play, for health, for children, for everyone’ is also available at: www.playwales.org.uk/eng/playpolicyforum

About the Children’s Play Policy Forum

The Children’s Play Policy Forum promotes the importance of children’s play and argues for high-quality, inclusive play provision. It works with devolved, national and local government; and the voluntary, public and private sectors throughout the United Kingdom.

The Forum is a cross-sector grouping of leading organisations with an interest in children’s play. Members include: Play England, PlayBoard Northern Ireland, Play Scotland, Play Wales, Fields in Trust, Association of Play Industries, Kids, London Play, SkillsActive and Black Voices Network.

Supporting evidence/research

* *The Play Return: A review of the wider impact of play initiatives* shows how investing in play improves the health, wellbeing, social and educational development of children; and also supports families and communities. The Children’s Play Policy Forum commissioned independent researcher and former government adviser Tim Gill to carry out the work in 2014. The review is available at: www.playwales.org.uk/eng/playpolicyforum

For more information about the Department of Health funded street play project visit: <http://www.playengland.org.uk/streetplay>

Four asks

for play, for health,
for children, for everyone

Every parent knows that playing is good for children.
And there is a growing body of solid evidence of the long-term benefits.
Studies show that play projects:

- Are just as effective as sport and PE programmes in boosting physical activity levels and hence helping to tackle child obesity;
- Support children to become more resilient through the development of their emotional and social self-management skills;
- Provide powerful opportunities for children to engage positively with their school and the wider community, and with nature and the environment;
- Encourage neighbourliness, volunteering and social action, and improve community cohesion.

The Children's Play Policy Forum is calling on all political parties to support the following set of initiatives:

1 In schools: Recognition by UK Government and regulatory authorities – and their equivalents in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland – for the need for play before school, during play/break times and after school hours. This would involve playtime support including training and awareness-raising for school staff and parents, coupled with the provision of suitable equipment and materials for active, creative play.

2 In streets: development of existing Dept of Health-funded programme in England supporting regular sessional road closures in residential streets – extended to every major city in the UK, with an additional focus on streets around schools, and linked to active travel policies. Support parents and residents by reducing red-tape around traffic regulations, consultation, insurance etc.

3 In parks and public play space: Investment programme focusing on disadvantaged communities to encourage appropriate play in public space, while reducing neighbourhood conflict and the resulting pressure on police time. Delivered through a partnership of local authorities, play providers, crime prevention agencies and neighbourhood mediation services.

4 In staffed play services: Support for staffed provision to test social prescription models with health agencies. Develop 'Parents 4 Play' programme in partnership with registered social landlords so that play projects in disadvantaged areas can run practical ideas sessions on active, creative play for local parents to encourage volunteering, social action and asset-based community development.

Based on the evidence, decision makers can be confident that investing in these asks will result in improvements in children's health and well being, and hence a reduction in the pressures on the National Health Service and the public purse. What is more, the level of investment needed would be modest and cost-effective.

About the Children's Play Policy Forum

The Children's Play Policy Forum works to advocate for, promote and increase the understanding of the importance of children's play and quality, inclusive play provision by working with devolved, national and local government; and the voluntary, public and private sectors throughout the United Kingdom.

Members of the Forum include:



References

Beunderman, J./Demos (2010) *People Make Play*. London: Published for Play England by National Children's Bureau.

Gill, T. (2014) *The Play Return: A review of the wider impact of play initiatives*. Children's Play Policy Forum.

Lester, S. and Russell, W. (2008) *Play for a Change: Play, Policy and Practice: A review of contemporary perspectives*. London: National Children's Bureau.