

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES
CABINET MEMBER**

WAVE 2 PLAYBUILDER STATUS 2009 - 2011

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Member of the award of Wave 2 Playbuilder status 2009 – 2011 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and its implications.
- 1.2 To seek the Cabinet Member's approval for the governance arrangements for delivery of the project.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Towards the end of 2008 councils were invited by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to bid to become a Wave 2 Playbuilder authority. In December 2008 the DCSF notified the council that it had been awarded Playbuilder status.
- 2.2 At this time the council was informed that the award of Playbuilder status would involve capital funding of around £1 million (weighted by child population, deprivation and taking into account regional variations in building costs) and around £45,000 revenue funding to develop 22 play spaces in North Lincolnshire. The council has now received details of the actual amounts involved and the Deputy Chief Executive (in his capacity of Director of Children's Services) has formally signed the grant letter from the DCSF on behalf of the council.
- 2.3 The capital funding covering the two-year period will be £1,120,932 and revenue funding over this period will be £45,158. Further details are set out at Paragraph 5 of this report.
- 2.4 It should be noted that the timescale for delivery of the Playbuilder programme is challenging and project planning has already begun to enable the council to be in a state of readiness on 1 April 2009. A Playbuilder Project Board has met twice under the chairmanship of the Assistant Service Director – Neighbourhood and Environmental Services (the Lead Officer). Membership of the Board is made up of relevant

officers from various service areas and a representative from Play England as well as two Council Members from the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel, the latter having already carried out some useful data gathering work as part of its Play brief.

- 2.5 Using a template provided by the DCSF, the Lead Officer has submitted a draft project plan to the government department. A more detailed project plan must be submitted by 31 March 2009. The DCSF requires the council to identify the 11 play areas to be developed in the first year. Consequently an evaluation panel has been created and will meet in March with the immediate purpose of recommending the 11 sites using an objective set of evaluation criteria based on that previously used for The Big Lottery play project.
- 2.6 The DCSF expects the council to use deprivation statistics as part of its evaluation process and not simply identify those existing play areas where the play equipment has deteriorated and needs replacing. In addition it expects some new sites to be developed if required following consultation with local communities. Finally a proportion of the sites should be allocated to Town and/or Parish Councils, but realistically these would form part of the second year tranche.
- 2.7 Governance arrangements must be confirmed in the final version of the project brief. It is apparent that the project covers the portfolios of three Cabinet Members, namely the Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood, Environment and Communities; Leisure, Arts and Culture; and Children's Services. It is proposed that the Lead Officer will provide regular reports for all three portfolio holders at joint Briefings.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 That reports for decision concerning approval of the sites to be refurbished/developed are presented to joint meetings as required of the three relevant Cabinet Members – the Cabinet Members for Neighbourhood, Environment and Communities, Leisure, Arts and Culture and Children's Services.
- 3.2 That the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood, Environment and Communities takes all decisions concerning approval of the sites to be refurbished/developed.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 All three Cabinet Members are relevant stakeholders in the delivery of this project. It therefore appears appropriate for key decisions e.g. site selection to be taken at joint meetings as required.

4.2 Whilst the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood, Environment and Communities can perhaps be seen as the lead portfolio holder, the adoption of the second option would not recognise the legitimate stakeholder interests of the other two portfolio holders.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 The DCSF has now formally notified the council that the following sums will be allocated (note that the 2010/11 figures are indicative and will be confirmed in March 2010):

Capital

Year 1	Year 2	Total
£526,950	£593,982	£1,120,932

Revenue

Year 1	Year 2	Total
£27,095	18,063	£45,158

5.2 The Lead Officer and other officers of the council will undertake work on this project as part of their normal duties. There remains a question at this time as to the appointment of a project manager, which is a critical role. The revenue funding set out above will contribute towards the cost of this function but there will also be additional pressures on this limited budget e.g. for publicity, consultation.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 The government's view is that the Playbuilder project will make a significant positive contribution to minimising anti-social behaviour by young people.

6.2 The experience of Wave 1 Playbuilder authorities is that local communities gain a sense of ownership of local play facilities, and in doing so this minimises crime and anti-social behaviour.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 To date consultation outside the council has not taken place as efforts have been focused on bidding for the grant and on gearing up for the 1 April 2009 launch. As soon as possible consultation involving local communities and the local children themselves will begin in earnest. During the first year the Lead Officer will organise consultation events with Town and Parish Councils.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the content of the report be noted.

8.2 That the Cabinet Member approves the joint governance arrangements as set out in paragraph 3.1.

SERVICE DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD & ENVIRONMENT

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Letter sent to the Director of Children's Services from the Director, Child Wellbeing Group at the DCSF dated 10 December 2008

Letter sent to the Director of Children's Services from the Play Lead at the DCSF dated 26 February 2009.