

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 12 March 2012

ITEM 7 (g)

Title: Development of
Youth and Play Provision
in North Tyneside

Portfolio(s): Children Young People and
Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr David Lilly

Report from Directorate: Children, Young People and Learning

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Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

To seek Cabinet's approval for a Youth and Play Capital Investment Programme that will deliver a borough-wide network of youth and play facilities for children aged 8 – 19 in partnership with voluntary and community sector providers, key council services, businesses, schools, the police and NHS services.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the establishment of a borough-wide Capital Investment Programme for youth and play to enhance positive activities for young people.

1.3 Forward plan:

This report appears on the Forward Plan for the period 1 February to 31 May 2012.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework

Council Strategic Plan 2011-15:

Priority 1. Our People. To give every family the opportunity to have an excellent quality of life and all our children achieve their potential.

Priority 4. Our Environment. To make living and/or visiting North Tyneside a great experience, where the quality of life is good, communities are safe and our neighbourhoods are clean.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 North Tyneside Council and its partners are committed to making North Tyneside a place where children and young people can grow and develop as happy, healthy, confident and safe individuals, with a sense of responsibility and respect for others and real aspiration and pride for themselves.

1.5.2 The Government has recently launched a 'National Youth Strategy: Positive for Youth' and in North Tyneside we are already spearheading new approaches which offer children and young people high quality opportunities to learn, develop socially and emotionally, acquire vocational skills and make positive choices for themselves:

- In partnership with the North Tyneside Learning Trust, businesses, FE colleges and work-based learning providers we are raising education standards and increasing participation in education, employment and training;
- Through the Widening Horizons programme and the School Sports Programme we have increased participation in sport and leisure opportunities. With specific reference to Widening Horizons 4 Sport (WH4S), 60 plus individual clubs are now engaged in WH4S programme and over 70,000 attendances at various WH4S programmes to date. In addition there are over 140 School Sport competitions that take place annually and as part of the North Tyneside Schools Competition Programme, participation figures have increased overall involving over a total of 1400 young people from middle and secondary schools. The Primary programme started mid February 2012 with over 142 events all linking to the Regional and National competition structure.
- We have transformed playsites across North Tyneside;
- A wide range of youth and play provision exists provided by the Council, voluntary and community organisations, church groups, schools and uniformed organisations;
- We have enabled young people to have their voice heard through the work of the Young Mayor and the Young Cabinet, Youth Council and the involvement of young people as inspectors of service; and
- Over 2011/12 we invested capital to deliver a new youth facility in the Battle Hill multi-use community centre, a water feature and multi use sports area in Whitley Bay Park and a new training facility related to renewable energy and we have worked with the developer of the Dome in Whitley Bay to secure a youth hub in the new facility when it is completed.

1.5.3 However, we recognise that there are many challenges faced by young people and there are priorities to address to tackle disruptive anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse in key locations if we are to enable all young people to reach their potential. This has been identified through consultation with children, young people and parents and has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In response to this, a strong partnership has been formed across council services, voluntary and community sector providers, the Police and NHS services to enable a collaborative approach to a new Youth and Play Strategy for North Tyneside. The group has been:

- Auditing existing provision;
- Consulting with children and young people, including the Young Mayor and Young Cabinet;
- Examining data and information in relation to gaps in provision and levels of need and
- Identifying the level of current expenditure across all sectors to enable a joined up approach to the use of resources.

A strategy document and implementation plan is currently being drawn up. However initial analysis has identified 'hot spot' localities where children and young people are engaged in disruptive and anti-social behaviour, alongside gaps in provision particularly on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. There is also a recognised need for improved facilities and spaces which children and young people have a sense of ownership and value.

1.5.4 The Council has identified in its capital plan for 2011/12 £1.5m and £1m in future years to enhance facilities for children and young people. £2.765m has been allocated to support the delivery of a number of projects:

- Developments at Whitley Park (completed May 2011);
- Battle Hill Multi-Use Community Facility (completion March 2012);
- Renewable Energy Training Facility (in progress);
- Youth Provision – Whitley Bay Dome (planned);
- Skills and Enterprise Centre – Dove Marine Laboratory (planned); and
- North Bank of the Tyne Learning Village (planned)

The uncommitted balances of £0.735m will be available to support the youth and play facility investment programme across North Tyneside.

In order to progress the development of this partnership approach it is therefore proposed to launch a play and youth capital investment programme which will:

- Strengthen partnership working and help release the potential within the voluntary and community sectors and across partner agencies to transform play and youth services;
- Develop a network of age appropriate facilities in town centres and neighbourhoods that are valued by children, young people aged 8 – 19 years; and
- Ensure children and young people are engaged in shaping the developing provision

The programme will be targeted towards:

- Increasing participation in positive youth and play activities;
- Increasing the involvement of young people in volunteering;
- Reducing levels of anti-social and disruptive behaviour;
- Promoting healthy lifestyles; and,
- Enabling young people to develop the skills they need for their futures.

The investment pot will act as leverage to attract additional funds from the charitable sector, businesses, partner agencies, and from national government through the Positive for Youth programme.

1.5.5. Youth and Play Capital Investment Pot

Delivery agents will be invited to bring forward proposals to develop new youth and play facilities or revitalise existing provision.

The Council will work in partnership with voluntary and community sector partners to deliver a capital investment programme that will deliver a borough-wide network of youth and play facilities.

The investment programme will be phased, with priority given to those areas demonstrating the greatest need for youth and play provision. The initial phase will target those communities identified as 'hotspots' for anti-social and/or risk taking behaviour by young people. Much of the work has already been completed in gathering data on youth and play provision across the borough. This will be refreshed and used as a baseline for service delivery that supports both town centre and local communities as part of the development of the North Tyneside Youth and Play Strategy.

Subject to Cabinet approving this report, it is proposed to seek initial expressions of interest by the end of May 2012. Following this the Youth and Play Strategy and detailed implementation plan will be presented to Cabinet.

1.6 Decision options:

- a. To agree the proposals that take forward the youth and play investment programme for the borough.
- b. Not to agree the proposals and for the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Learning to consult further and formulate alternative delivery arrangements.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Cabinet is asked to endorse approve Option a. Young people have requested the services on offer. Youth and play is an important and valuable part of the borough's offer to young people. It provides fun and enjoyment and supports them to contribute to their community as they develop into responsible citizens. The impact of diversionary activity is established. It improves the life chances of vulnerable young people, provides them with new skills and positive experiences and many, because of it, are not engaging in risk taking and disruptive activity. Finally young people can be proud of their achievements, adults in the community will have a positive view of young people in the borough and engagement in schemes like the National Citizenship Award and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme are positive and rewarding activities.

1.8 Appendices:

None

1.9 Contact officers:

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1.10 Background information:

North Tyneside Children and Young People's Plan 2010-2014
14 November 2011 Cabinet Report: Response to the Recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny regarding Youth Facilities
HM Government National Youth Strategy: Positive for Youth

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The proposed youth and play investment programme will be funded through the council's approved Capital Plan of £3.5m for the years 2011/12 and beyond (Youth Facilities reference ED177). £2.765m of this funding has already been directed to the delivery of a number of important projects.

This Cabinet meeting has also received the budget monitoring position as at 31 January 2012. This report included the reprogramming of £0.600m previously identified to support youth provision linked to Whitley Bay Dome. This amount of funding is included within the £2.765m identified above. The available balance of £0.735m will therefore be utilised to launch the youth and play facility investment programme across North Tyneside.

In addition, the funding of £0.325m, awarded as part of the Local Area Agreement reward grant (LAA), will also support the borough-wide investment proposals.

2.2 Legal

The youth and play programme offers broad support to the aims of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, to provide for services to children and young people that assist them to develop as positive and contributing members of their communities.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Consultation with our young people via the Young Mayor and her Council, the Children in Care Council, school councils and with users of the services through the Council's Engagement Team has shown the youth and play programme is based upon what children and young people are requesting and wish to see in place in the borough.

2.4 Human rights

The youth and play programme supports the rights of children and young people to a secure and enjoyable childhood.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The youth and play offer is available to all children and young people in the borough and particular regard is placed upon ensuring children with a disability engage safely with a full range of youth and play activities.

2.6 Risk management

The proposals will be appropriately risk managed to ensure the Council and partners are not exposed to unmanageable operational risks.

2.7 Crime and disorder

The proposals support the action plans of the Children and Young People's Plan and the Safer Communities Strategy to address issues of crime and disorder amongst young people.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Strategic Director(s)
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Strategic Director with responsibility for community engagement

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